

# From lab chemist to patent searcher? Why, what, and how?

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# Introduction

- ◆ My audience
  - Lab chemists
- ◆ Why would one want to become a patent searcher? Fit?
- ◆ What do patent searchers do?
- ◆ How one might become a patent searcher.

# Why?

- ◆ Information Field “friendlier”
- ◆ Patent searching in specific
  - Like the hunt
  - Sticklers for accuracy/detail
  - Intellectual rigor
  - Learn when to quit
  - Work alone
  - Learn continuously

# Why . . . . (cont.)

- ◆ Doable by intelligent chemists
- ◆ Average pay better
  - (especially for technical BS)
- ◆ Freedom, autonomy, & responsibility
- ◆ Downside – Rodney Dangerfield?
- ◆ Variety in skills

# What

- ◆ Kinds of searches
  - Freedom to operate
  - Patentability
  - Validity
- ◆ Typical day in the life of . . .
- ◆ “more with less” versus human limitations

# What . . . . (cont.)

- ◆ Will often work alone
  - But teamwork skills still important
- ◆ Analysis
  - No “perfect search”
  - Weeding, culling
  - Acquired skill

# What . . . . (cont.)

- ◆ \$\$\$ riding on search, but . . .
- ◆ 2000 Stephen Adams article in EContent

# How

- ◆ Pattern seemed to emerge

lab several years →

searcher several years →

patent searcher

- ◆ Varied backgrounds
  - BS, Ph.D., MLS, MS



# How . . . (cont.)

## ◆ My story

- 12 years in lab with BS
- Even a couple graduate chem. courses
- Wasn't sold on getting Ph.D.
- Attracted to information field. The more I saw, the more I liked it.
- networked
- Started on MLS
- Given job in corporate library
- Switched to patent searching

# How . . . (cont.)

- ◆ Patience
  - Can be long journey
- ◆ Graduate degree can be helpful
- ◆ More than one path
- ◆ Find a mentor

# How . . . (cont.)

- ◆ Avoid fear and inertia
  - Instead (suggestions)
    - ◆ Strive for confidence
    - ◆ Make incremental advances
    - ◆ Training/education can help to show dedication to field
    - ◆ Perform well in current position

# How . . . (cont.)

- ◆ Find what you like to do.
  - Not just “pie in the sky”
    - ◆ i.e. Strong Campbell  
Interest inventory
    - ◆ Myers Briggs
  - Get out of bed every morning
  - Motivated to excel

# Conclusion

- ◆ Do you feel limited in the lab?
- ◆ Do you like “the hunt”, detail oriented, like the literature?
- ◆ Patent searchers are specialists
  - can be rewarding fit
- ◆ Strive for confidence & make incremental efforts
- ◆ You are in control