

## Career in biotech is a lucrative professional option

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The science we need and the needs of science are interdisciplinary in the current era. Especially life sciences focusing on living beings can be done on multiple platforms. Starting from monoclonal antibodies to stemcell therapy, modern biotechnology can have a colossal effect on the world. Further promise of the field to cure diseases to relieve sufferings is an impetus that drives a lot of youngsters like me to follow it with passion. Although, antithesis to this lies another truth, especially in developing economies like India where research oriented professions initially are not very lucrative. Hence most graduates in biotechnology and bioinformatics (willingly or unwillingly) end up in IT industry. One must concede that the path for making a successful life science career is long and there is no short cut to success. However, with proper planning and right approach success can be achieved much easily.

I graduated with an engineering degree in bioinformatics from Jaypee University of Information and Technology (JUIT) with two job offers from some of world's best IT companies (Wipro and Dell computers). However my strong inclination towards life sciences always kept me asking myself, "Having trained in biotechnology and bioinformatics, why should I follow a core IT career?" Yet, options were limited and biotech opportunities largely mirror those with higher education. So to hone my skills, I moved to Germany for further studies. It was there at the University of Bonn where I completed by masters degree with scholarship from the German government by far exceeding in amount than what I was offered by IT firms back home. Hence it's my plea to all young aspirants that, don't give up before working out on options. Also, particularly in science "international exposure is a must". One should always be prepared to adapt to different cultures, other education systems and research principles. All this certainly pays off, as you will return back home being a "global person" able to network over the entire planet.

Currently, I am an employee of the Fraunhofer Institute (Europe's largest application-oriented research organization) and also pursuing my PhD from the University of Bonn. At Fraunhofer, we deliver solutions to the pharmaceutical, biotech industries enhancing their competitiveness through mediating knowledge and technology transfer from academic research to industrial applications. My role and research is focused in the area of "neurodegenerative diseases" where currently I am working

closely with Merck Serono on multiple sclerosis and with UCB pharma on a project aimed at the identification of biological markers that can be used to expedite drug development and improve therapeutic intervention in Epilepsy and Parkinson's disease.

Driven by a strong need of offering better food and healthcare solutions in future, life sciences industry can be an excellent career option for individuals with aptitude in science. Biotech and pharma have been performing exceedingly well in recent years and becoming one of the most lucrative professional option. However as stated above, the demand of this business is that of more qualified professionals when compared to other industries, which may rely heavily on graduate manpower. A combination of good education, good collaboration, time management and some good luck may be just the right essentials for your professional success. All pharma and biotech firms are investing billions on scientific research hoping to reap billions in return. And while obstacles and challenges lurks beneath the shadow of every firms growth, overall the future looks bright in life science sector.