

Ted Shih

Department - School of Pharmacy
Interview Date, 7/24/07

Title: Sr. Clinical Science Manager

Company: Exelixis, Inc., San Francisco, CA

Describe a typical day?

Typically, design and write study protocols for oncology clinical trials, formulate clinical development strategies for existing oncology pipeline and review safety and efficacy data from ongoing studies. Attend clinical working group meetings and participate in investigator meetings on-site.

What do you enjoy most?

The cutting-edge science and challenge of oncology drug development. Being part of a growing company and hopefully seeing the successful launches of products down the road.

What are some of the challenges?

Meeting aggressive timelines. Getting used to different work personalities and styles and getting up to speed on the latest advances in oncology.

What is the biggest misconception about your career field?

Pharmaceutical companies spend a lot of money in R&D on compounds that eventually fail (only 10% make it through the pipeline) and the high prices consumers and 3rd party payers indirectly pay for are the past "failures". Pharma companies are definitely not (at least most of them) as profitable as people think, oil companies do much better.

How did you find out about your current position?

Online company search for biotechnology companies in CA.

What strategies or resources did you find most helpful during your job search?

Resume review and advice from OPS, contacting alumni associations. Several recruiters were helpful but most were not. GSK mentor and other employees were helpful too.

Looking back on your time as a postdoc or your job search, what do you wish you would have done differently?

Probably not posted my resume on large job boards (i.e., Monster and CareerBuilder, etc.). They didn't help too much and I still get calls for irrelevant jobs from headhunters even though I took it off months ago.

What career planning and/or job search advice do you have for current postdocs interested in your career field?

Work on the CV/resume and practice interviewing skills. Sometimes you can still find a job online, but always try to network to make yourself stand out and get your foot in the door quicker. Having good communication skills (written and verbal) are very important, even for scientifically oriented jobs.