

Trends in Pharmacist Employment in the Pharmaceutical Industry

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BACKGROUND

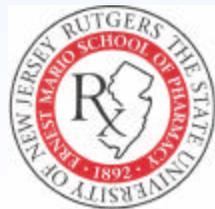
- Currently there is a myriad of career opportunities available to pharmacists
- The number of pharmacists entering the pharmaceutical industry is at an all time high
- Although the number of industry pharmacists has been increasing over decades, there is a paucity of information concerning why this is happening
- Pharmacists currently employed in the pharmaceutical industry are a great resource to help shed light on this topic

OBJECTIVE

- To examine, through currently employed industry pharmacists, any changes over the past 30 years in:
 - why and when pharmacists pursue industry careers
 - where, i.e. which departments, pharmacists are first employed within industry
 - how pharmacists enter industry
 - the desired attributes that contribute to a successful career in the pharmaceutical industry

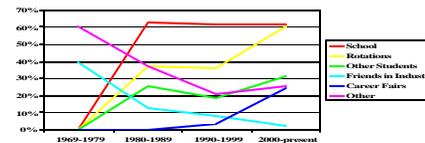
METHODOLOGY

- A 12-question retrospective survey was electronically sent to 375 pharmacists currently employed in the pharmaceutical industry
 - 270 were sent to alumni of the Rutgers University Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program
- Pharmacists in over 50 pharmaceutical companies were sent surveys in order to represent a reasonable cross-section of pharmacists working within the industry
- The 115 completed surveys were divided into four decades according to the year respondents received their first pharmacy degree:
 - 1969-1979 (n=5), 1980-1989 (n=8), 1990-1999 (n=39), 2000-present (n=42)
- 21 responses were not included in the results due to unknown year of graduation



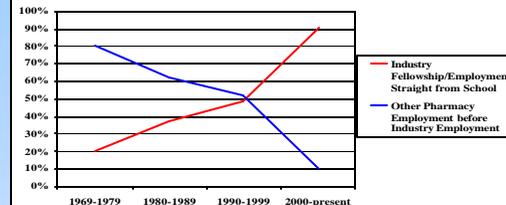
RESULTS

Career Opportunities for Pharmacists in Industry: Awareness Drivers



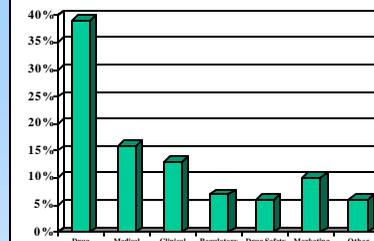
- Respondents were asked to indicate how they became aware of available career opportunities within the pharmaceutical industry:
 - Awareness drivers that exhibited increased utilization over time included: school, rotations, other students, and career fairs
 - Awareness drivers that exhibited decreased utilization over time included: friends in industry and other sources

Pharmacists Entering Industry: Initial Career Path vs. Second Career Path



- Respondents were asked whether they had entered the pharmaceutical industry immediately after completing their formal pharmacy training or as a second pharmacy career option.
 - Over time, there was a sharp increase in the number of pharmacists who entered industry as their initial career path, accounting for >90% of responses in the 2000-present group
 - Concurrently, there was a sharp decrease in the number of pharmacists who chose other career paths prior to entering industry, accounting for approximately 10% of responses in the 2000-present group

First Department of Employment Within Industry



- Respondents were asked to indicate the first department in which they were employed upon entry into the pharmaceutical industry.
 - The majority of respondents (n=45) indicated Drug Information, which could be related to the fact that a large percentage were sent to current Drug Information specialists

DISCUSSION

- Pharmacy school has been an increasing awareness driver for pharmacists exploring industry career options.
 - Over the last 30 years more sources of information regarding industry opportunities have become available
- Pharmacists appear to be entering the pharmaceutical industry for the same reasons, most notably, job satisfaction
- Presently, most pharmacists interested in a career in industry enter the industry directly upon completion of pharmacy school
- Drug Information and Medical Affairs seem to be predominant areas of employment for pharmacists in industry, however, results may be skewed due to a large proportion of DI specialist respondents.
- As compared to 30 years ago, more of today's pharmacists have completed some type of post-graduate training prior to full-time employment in industry.
 - May be related to the phasing out of the BS degree and the evolution of PharmD programs
- Communication skills has continued to be one of the most valuable attributes for pharmacists to be successful in industry.
 - Clinical knowledge is perceived to have become less important due to the emergence of non-traditional opportunities in marketing, regulatory, etc.

LIMITATIONS

- Survey was not comprehensive of all pharmacists employed within the pharmaceutical industry
 - large proportion of surveys were sent to pharmacists currently employed in Drug Information departments
- Approximately 45% of respondents were alumni of the Rutgers University Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship Program
- Approximately 86% of evaluable respondents graduated in 1990 or later

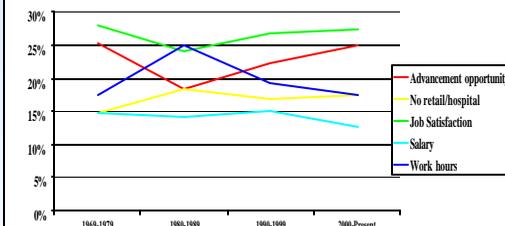
CONCLUSIONS

The results of this survey highlight some interesting trends with respect to pharmacist employment in the pharmaceutical industry. While there have been few changes in the overall reasons why pharmacists choose to enter the pharmaceutical industry, it is striking to note that job satisfaction has remained the single most important reason why pharmacists choose industry as a career. Opportunities available in the pharmaceutical industry have become more obvious to today's pharmacist as evidenced by the change in awareness drivers over time. Today's graduating pharmacists who enter industry have overwhelmingly chosen industry as their first career path as compared with earlier pharmacists, who predominantly entered industry as a second career option. Also, there have been an increasing number of pharmacists who complete post-graduate training programs prior to their full-time employment in the pharmaceutical industry. The skill sets required of pharmacists to succeed in industry have remained constant. Importantly, it is clear that at many of these skills sets are not learned in pharmacy school but are obtained through postgraduate training and on the job experience. While the results were very interesting, this survey was distributed to a relatively small subset of the number of pharmacists employed in industry. It would be interesting to repeat the survey with a broader population of industry pharmacists.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

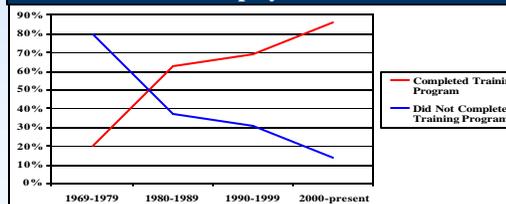
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Most Important Reason(s) for Pursuing a Career in the Pharmaceutical Industry



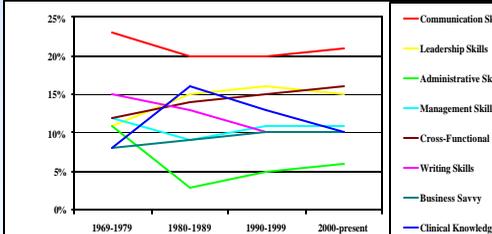
- Respondents were asked to rank the above five aspects in terms of what was most appealing in regards to pursuing a career in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Excluding the 1980-1989 group, there was no real difference among the groups in the reasons why pharmacists entered the pharmaceutical industry.
 - Job satisfaction consistently ranked first, followed by opportunity for advancement, work hours, no interest in retail or hospital, and salary.

Completion of Industry Fellowship or Other Training Program Prior to Full-Time Industry Employment



- Respondents were asked whether they completed a post-graduate training program prior to their full-time employment within the pharmaceutical industry.
 - Over time, there was a sharp increase in the number of pharmacists who completed a post-graduate training program, accounting for approximately 86% of responses in the 2000-present group
 - Concurrently, there was a sharp decrease in the number of pharmacists who completed a post-graduate training program, accounting for approximately 14% of responses in the 2000-present group

Most Important Attribute(s) for Advancement Within Industry



- Respondents were asked to rank the above eight attributes in terms of what they considered most valuable for pharmacists to possess in order to be successful within the pharmaceutical industry.
 - Over time, respondents ranked leadership skills and the ability to participate in cross-functional teams higher than previous years
 - Over time, the number one most valuable attribute was communication skills
 - Over time, there was a decrease in the perceived importance of clinical knowledge
 - The importance of writing and administrative skills decreased over time with administrative skills ranking last overall
- It is important to note that no single attribute ranked considerably higher than the others, with attributes consistently ranking 10-20% in value. This indicates that they are all important for success within the pharmaceutical industry.