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## What are the Ingredients for Bio/Pharma Career Advancement?

Amid business and regulatory uncertainty, bio/pharma experts reveal opinions on salary, recognition, and training.

Dec 02, 2017 By [Rita C. Peters](#)  
 Pharmaceutical Technology  
 Volume 41, Issue 12, pg 14–18

*Editor's Note: This article was published in Pharmaceutical Technology Europe.*

An efficient, effective drug development and manufacturing operation is crafted by talented, experienced pharmaceutical scientists and engineers. Synthesizing the recipe for success can be daunting, especially in the current uncertain business and regulatory environment.



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Wait. What?



Sergey Nivens/Shutterstock.com; Dan Ward

More complex molecules demand more sophisticated formulation methods. Advanced technology for pharmaceutical manufacturing will increase the required skill sets of bio/pharma workers. The industry also faces gaps in know-how and expertise as experienced employees retire.

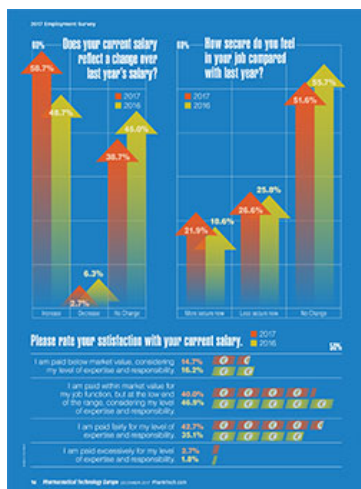
These factors suggest a challenge for bio/pharma employers and a positive employment picture for bio/pharma employees seeking to start or advance careers in the bio/pharmaceutical industry. Mix in financial pressures from shareholders and payers, pressure to reduce costs, and business and regulatory uncertainties related to Brexit, however, and the final result may be conflicts between employer priorities and employee career paths.

Respondents to *Pharmaceutical Technology/Pharmaceutical Technology Europe's* annual employment survey (1) shared opinions about the current employment environment, expressed reservations about compensation and workloads, and indicated that better career opportunities were a top priority. While respondents based in Europe generally agreed with their counterparts in the United States and around the world, there were some significant differences.

More than 45% of the Europe-based respondents reported that business increased in 2017 compared to 2016. Respondents felt "more secure" in their positions in 2017 (21.9%) versus 18.6% in 2016 (2); however, more respondents said they felt less secure in 2017 (26.6%) compared with 25.8% in 2016 ([Infographic 1](#)).

Opinions about the job market varied. Nearly one-half of the Europe-based respondents said the job market was moderately competitive, compared with 44.3% for the global audience. Alternately, 21.6% of the Europe-based audience (25% for global audience) said the market for jobs was competitive; there are more qualified candidates than open jobs. The remaining 30% said there are few qualified applicants for open positions and employers must compete for qualified candidates.

#### Survey respondent profile



#### Infographic 1.

[Click to view PDF.](#)

Graphics: Dan Ward.

companies (40.4%), publicly traded companies (40.2%), and non-profit/academic/government groups (14.2%).

Respondents reported a range of job responsibilities, from R&D, to manufacturing, to quality control/assurance. Similar to the global responses, more than 47% of the Europe-based responses work for companies with more than 5000 employees; 32% work for companies with fewer than 500 employees.

Compared with previous years, the Europe-based respondents reported more experience working in the bio/pharma industry; 26.8% had fewer than 10 years of experience, 30.8% had 10-20 years, 35.9% had 20-35 years of experience, and 6.4% have worked in the industry for more than 35 years. About half of the respondents worked outside the bio/pharma industry for up to five years.

## Columnists



**APIs and Excipients**  
**Cynthia Challenger**  
Stability Testing for Small  
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**Regulatory Watch**  
**Jill Wechsler**  
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Rebukes



**EU Regulatory Watch**  
**Sean Milmo**  
Out with the Old and In with the New  
European Commission

## Outsourcing

### FDA Revises Compounding Guidance

FDA revised the guidance after industry feedback and to clarify CGMP requirements for outsourcing facility operations.

### Catalent Biologics Announces Senior Leadership Appointments

Karen Flynn rejoins Catalent as president of biologics operations; regional presidents named for US and Europe.

### Catalent Launches Direct-to-Patient Clinical Supply Services

Catalent's FlexDirect service offers sponsors multiple delivery options from a single inventory.

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More than 480 bio/pharma professionals from around the globe--nearly 20% from Europe--responded to the survey, which was fielded in September and October 2017. Respondents primarily were full-time, permanent employees (87.3% of respondents) at innovator bio/pharmaceutical companies (33.8%), generic-drug manufacturing companies (11.6%), contract research and manufacturing organizations (15.8%), and consulting firms (6.4%).

The represented companies develop or manufacture both small- and large-molecule drugs, vaccines, and cell therapy or regenerative medicines for privately held

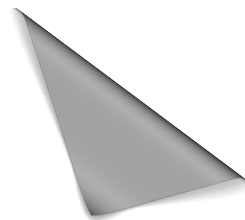
## Recommended Reading

**Building a Better Bio/Pharma Career**

**Career Consensus: 2016 Employment Survey**

**Formulating a Recipe for Bio/Pharma Career Success**

**Wanted: A Highly Skilled Bio/Pharma Workforce**



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