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Tips for a successful technology transfer in life sciences

The relevance of technology transfer has been demonstrated from the early stages of microbiology (e.g. industrial cases with Louis Pasteur). Technology transfer allows the deployment of science into society. It is an evolving field of knowledge combining science and business approaches. It is a process that requires focus and persistence. There are some essential parameters to consider in that process. There are intellectual property aspects such as confidentiality, patenting, individual and institutional commercial rights. The developmental stage of a technology is key to deciding what steps to take to increase the chances of success of the transfer. It means partnering with the appropriate organizations involved along the process. There are many mechanisms to add value to an invention disclosure to make it more amenable for a transfer in the forms of a license or a start-up. Some typical agreements are commonly used in technology transfer, such as confidentiality agreements, material transfer agreements, R&D licenses with or without commercial option, commercial license agreements, and creation of spin-off companies. Excellent science does not necessarily mean an entry to the market. Understanding the drivers and the needs of a relevant market can prove to be difficult, but there are some ways to overcome this. There is a cultural encounter between business and science; both fields of knowledge have to reach common goals. The conditions sought in pharmaceutical sector for in-licensing are different than in other fields of life sciences due to the multi-million-dollar cost of clinical research trials prior to market authorization. There are common indicators used in technology transfers, from rules of thumb to complex financial valuations. This presentation aims to provide some insight on the elements described above.



Biography

Alain Richard completed his BSc in Microbiology and MSc in Microbiology-Immunology & PhD). He has dedicated his 20 years' career to innovation in biotechnology and biopharma, acting at crossroads between science and business: 8 years in biotech companies and more than 12 years in technology transfer in the Province of Québec, Canada (university or government - industry liaison). He is currently active in this particular field at the National Research Council of Canada as a Client Relationship Leader in Human Health Therapeutics.

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