

“On the cutting edge of biological science...”

Bio-economy Career Profile

Position: Director of Product Development,
Biotechnology

Name: Gregor Awang

Company: Cangene Corporation

Salary Range: \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year

What I do:

I develop ways of making pharmaceutical drugs using biological materials, such as bacteria and mammalian cells.

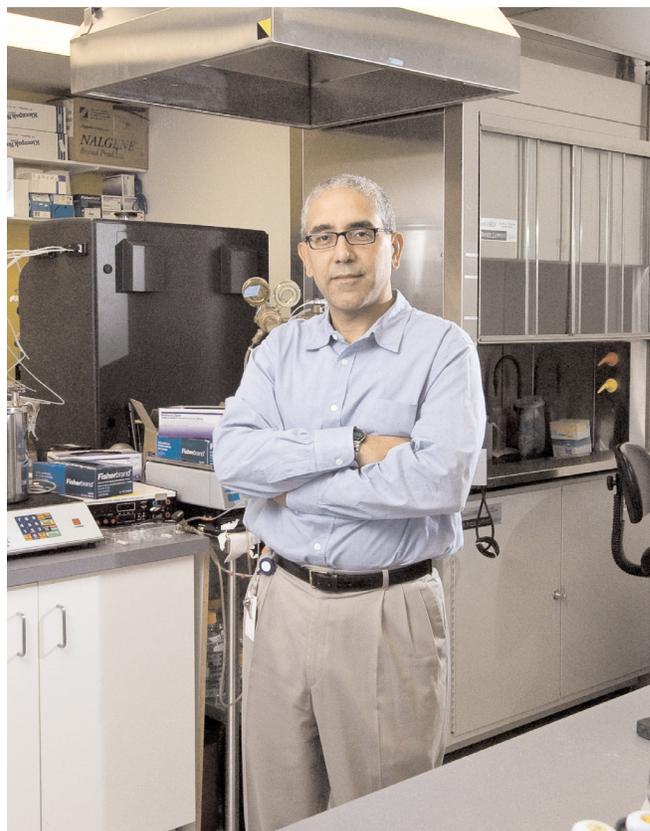
I mostly design protocols and procedures for carrying out biological pharmaceutical manufacturing. There are two groups that report to me, so I direct what they're doing. We develop process at lab scale and then I work with the manufacturing plant staff to scale it up to a larger facility. I coordinate all of that within my groups and with the manufacturing group.

What education and skills do candidates need for this position?

You need a Ph.D. in microbiology, biochemistry or one of the biological sciences. Or you can have a combination of education (i.e. bachelor of science) and years of industry experience. It is private industry, so if you're a gifted amateur, you won't be held back.

What we're finding is a lot of different scientific disciplines are converging, so a lot depends on the company's needs. You need to know your basics, not just biological science, but math, chemistry and statistics in particular.

You need very good people skills in the field, because you're not just interacting with your group. These processes are usually developed by multiple parts of the company that have to all work together. So, interpersonal communication is very high on our list of requirements. You also have to be logical – it's not a very subjective business.



What are the best parts of your job?

The best thing about my job is that it's always different. You get to look at a variety of things and not just work on the science behind the processes. You get exposure to innovative and sometimes unexpected solutions devised by the talented people with whom you work, and that can be very exciting.

When I tell people about my job, they usually find the genetics most interesting. That whole area is on the cutting edge of biological science these days, everything from working on treatments for viral and bacterial diseases to making recombinant, therapeutic human proteins in bacteria and animal cells. People hear about this in the news and they equate it to what I do. So, there's a connection in their minds that they find interesting.