

“Protecting products and inventions...”

Bio-economy Career Profile

Position: Patent Agent

Name: Charles Goyer

Company: Goudreau Gage Dubuc

Salary Range: \$120,000 and up per year



What I do:

As a patent agent, I connect biotechnology investors and patent offices around the world. My role includes meeting with an inventor to determine the value of an invention while conducting searches to see if it is patentable. If it is, I work to prepare a patent application while determining the patent rules for as wide a geographic area as possible. Upon receipt of the patent application, I complete my own research and return with questions and clarifications. It is at this point where I use my negotiation skills to move the patent forward.

On a day-to-day basis, I give my clients opinions on whether a product is infringing on another product and look at the intellectual property portfolio of that product. Clients rely on me to ensure that due diligence is completed for the invention.

What education and skills do candidates need for this position?

In the early 1990s, Canada didn't have many patent agents who held Ph.D.s. However, now the majority of people in this field hold a Ph.D. The growing area of specialization is genetics, and someone who has a Ph.D. in this area will have tremendous opportunities in the future.

To work in this field, you need to understand the technology that you want to protect. Therefore, a background in the sciences is an asset, so you can see where the invention fits into the larger scheme of things. You also need to be creative and adaptable because technology is always changing.

You also require great perseverance and active listening skills, as clients and their products can be very different with varying needs. If you have a critical mind and like to read and write, this job could certainly be for you.

What are the best parts of your job?

The best thing about my job is that the work is intellectually stimulating. I also have a general freedom in the work that I do, and a sense of being my own boss.

Many people find the work I do interesting because it's always changing, and there's a wide range of products and inventions that I have successfully represented in my career. Intellectual property is a fascinating field and opportunities will only continue to grow in the future.