

"I don't have to punch a clock..."

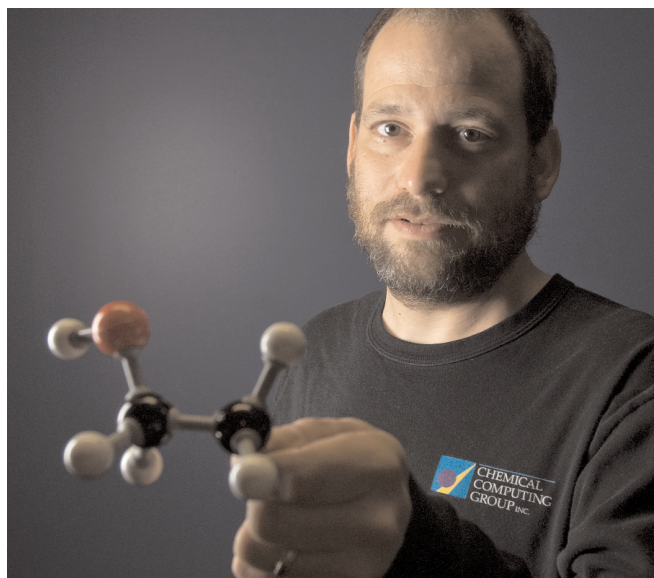
Bio-economy Career Profile

Position: Principal Scientist

Name: Chris Williams

Company: Chemical Computing Group

Salary Range: \$80,000 to \$100,000 per year



What I do:

I use computers to help design drugs. The work varies; sometimes I'm in the office writing programs and other times I'm on the road showing clients how to use our software. I travel up to 90 days a year, mostly within Canada.

What education and skills do candidates need for this position?

Candidates require a degree in chemistry, preferably a PhD, some computer skills, and a background in math or physics.

Most people in the field get their degree in computation or chemistry, or they're hardcore computer programmers with a math and physics background. In terms of special skills, you interact with a lot of clients, so "the ability to work with people" is the most important.

My advice to people interested in a job in the field is to keep your knowledge base as broad and general as possible. If you over-specialize and don't see the big picture, you'll find yourself with limited options.

What are the best parts of your job?

I have freedom over my own time, and my boss doesn't check up on me. There are ways that I am accountable to him and things that I have to accomplish on my own, but I don't have to punch a clock.

When I tell people about what I do, they're interested in the fact that I design drugs. It's interesting to people, because it's relevant to their lives. On occasion, friends have questions about medication, and sometimes I can give them relevant information.