

“People have hope because of the medication we produce...”

Bio-economy Career Profile

Position: Senior Product Manager

Name: Roger Knoll

Company: Genzyme Canada Inc.

Salary Range: Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience

What I do:

I market and promote the product MYOZYME®, which has been developed to treat a very rare disease called Pompe Disease. This product replaces a missing or defective enzyme in people who have Lysosomal Storage Disease.

My major role as the Senior Product Manager is to develop and implement the strategies to raise awareness of Pompe Disease and the availability of MYOZYME®, with physicians, pharmacists, nurses and other health care professionals.

I design sales and educational materials for the sales force, and develop programs to help health care professionals identify patients who may have this extremely rare disease. In addition, I am involved in the creation of annual and long-term plans for MYOZYME®, budgeting, and inventory forecasting.

What education and skills do candidates need for this position?

First, a science background and experience in sales is useful. Second, I would recommend working with a larger pharmaceutical company to get sales and marketing experience and gain a good understanding of the pharmaceutical marketplace. Once you have honed your skills, you can look to apply them with smaller biotechnology companies where you may find your niche.

Many people in this position have either an MBA and/or experience in business, sales, nursing or pharmacy. Because most biotechnology companies are relatively small, they generally do not have the resources to train



people in either the sales or marketing area. It is quite usual for people to come to a small biotechnology company after they have developed their skills in a larger pharmaceutical company.

The skills required as a Senior Product Manager include the ability to strategize and see “the big picture.” You are the lead, and assist the sales force in executing the marketing strategies and tactics. You need to be a multi-tasker and have the ability to deal with many issues at once. A person in this position also needs a keen desire to learn from their experiences.

Above all, you have to really want to work in this position. There is always more work than you can complete, so the ability to manage and prioritize is important. You need to have the interesting combination of an entrepreneurial attitude and be a good team player. Often you are required to work by yourself, but you also work closely with other company departments (regulatory, logistics, government relation) to reach the brand objectives.

What are the best parts of your job?

The best thing about my job is the ability to make a tangible difference in people’s lives. I see people with rare diseases who finally have hope because of the medications that Genzyme produces.