

Dr. Beth Buchanan

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M.Sc. Trainee



When entering university, Beth Buchanan wasn't entirely sure what she wanted to do. She enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree at Dalhousie University, later graduating with a BSc Hons. in Chemistry. Subsequently, Beth continued to a Master of Science degree at the same institution, under the supervision of Dr. Alison Thompson. Organic synthesis was her preferred branch of chemistry at the time. Upon the completion of her MSc, she kept her options open and was awarded a grant to pursue a PhD. Dr. Thompson was very helpful in providing suggestions and advice, and particularly in helping make connections with other academics. This led Beth to a PhD program in Natural Products at the University of Prince Edward Island, which was heavy in analytical techniques. As part of her program, she made a business proposal and worked with a company in industry, Delivera Corp. Before submitting her thesis, Beth was offered a job. She started working six weeks before defending her thesis and worked for Delivera over the next 4.5 years. As a result, she became familiar with quantification, validation of methods, complex matrices, and many other tools and challenges of analytical chemistry. After those 4.5 years, she felt it was time to move on. Using her professional network, she was able to secure the Lead Analytical Chemist job at Dosecann, where she is currently employed. Her job currently consists of understanding the many regulations and Good Manufacturing Processes surrounding production, packaging, and analysis of Cannabis products, and how they relate to the lab. Furthermore, as the company is still in its start-up stage, she is in charge of



organizing a brand-new lab. “I probably look like I am running around with my head chopped off!” she said with a laugh. She revealed that she had recently ordered all the new analytical equipment, which was no small task. Additionally, her role consists of comparing industrial suppliers and instrumentation, and although she is physically in the Quality Control lab, she is doing Analytical Chemistry and developing appropriate instrumental methods for analysis of their future products, including methods for analysis of CBD and THC levels, potential degradation products, as well as methods for detection of terpenes, residual solvent, moisture content, pesticides, toxins by mold and microbes, and much more. In the future, she will need to develop methods for sample analysis, validate them and compile a document to be reviewed by Quality Assurance personnel. As if that wasn’t enough work for one person, she is also assisting in hiring new staff.

When prompted about most important characteristics for new hires, she said “Personality is important!! You need to be enthusiastic and willing! The first picks are people who are willing to learn, will always be there early or on time, will do what is asked, are super positive, capable, on the ball, reliable and trainable. You need to be teachable, even if you have a PhD! Work as a team, be a team player, and be nice. Stress gets to everyone, but if you work with people keeping their cool, it is easier. Work hard!”

In terms of what advice, she would pass on to someone looking to enter this field, she said “Talk with people, don’t be afraid to network! Attitude matters, having the people-talking skills is important. Attitude is going to get you places.” Dr. Buchanan admits she feels that her path chose her, and she is perfectly okay with that. When asked if she would change anything, her answer was “No. I am lucky with where I am and am sure happy with it!”