



## Dr. David McLaren

Written by Nicholas Morehouse, Ph.D. Trainee



David McLaren completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Manitoba where he obtained his Bachelor of Science in chemistry with an honours project in analytical chemistry. He then started his graduate work at the University of British Columbia again focusing on research in analytical chemistry. During David's Ph.D. he was required to work very independently which helped to provide him with very valuable skills. He was also able to join a collaborative project that was focused on developing a simple and reliable method for identifying certain inborn errors of metabolism. This provided David with a great experience working under a strict timeline on research with an important purpose. By the end of his Ph.D. David knew he wanted to enter industry rather than remaining in academia.

David had the forethought to search for positions in industry while writing his thesis, however, simply applying for many different positions yielded little success. His first opportunity was obtained by utilizing his network of connections. This led to his first position working at Xenon Pharmaceuticals as an analytical chemist. After four years David moved to another biotech company, unfortunately that company was soon bought out. Fortunately, using his network of contacts, David was able to find a job working at Merck where he has stayed for the past ten years. During this time, he held many positions, moving from analytical chemistry to in vivo pharmacology to drug metabolism to in vitro pharmacology and now holds a director position in New Jersey where he acts as hiring manager.

David strongly recommends using our network of contacts to help find opportunities in industry. Your main network will likely come from you PI, but you should always be looking for



collaborative opportunities. He also recommends looking for co-op opportunities if they are available as they can help to see if industry is right for you. His position as a hiring manager also provides some insight into the interview process. He highlights the importance of demonstrating your ability to think critically as well as the importance of researching the company before the interview and asking questions during the interview.