

Dr. Ebrahim Soleimani

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I was given the opportunity to interview Dr. Ebrahim (Ebi) Soleimani, who is currently a research development synthetic chemist at ZeroIN, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada. Ebi used to be a postdoc in the Jakeman group and I had the opportunity to work with him. In this interesting interview, we talked about his education back home in Iran, his graduate school and his work opportunities in Canada along with the differences and changes he went through during his career path so far.

Ebi started his chemistry path back in Iran in 1998. He accomplished his BSc. in chemistry at Razi University in Kermanshah, Iran. Then, he decided that organic/ synthetic chemistry is his passion and he proceeded towards his master's degree and later on towards his PhD at the Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran. The rumour says that the chemical compounds he synthesized throughout his PhD were so pure, that he didn't have use even one column as a separation and purification method. During his PhD, Ebi published close to 30 articles and continued publishing while being a faculty member at the Razi University in Kermanshah, Iran and while working in Canada in the Jakeman lab. During his time as a faculty member, Ebi travelled to the US as a visiting scholar in order to broaden his knowledge. He was a visiting scholar with professor Lawrence Williams at the department of chemistry at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey in summer 2014 and a visiting scholar with professor Tomislav Rovis at the department of chemistry in Colorado State University. Later on, Ebi and his family decided to move to Canada. The adaptation was not easy but Ebi started working as a postdoc in the Jakeman lab until the summer of 2022 when he started his job in ZeroIN.



Here are some of the questions I asked Ebi during our interview.

Q. What is your current position in ZeroIn? How did you find this role?

A. I am a research and developer synthetic chemist in the company ZeroIn and I found this position from the website www.Indeed.ca when I was looking for a job after I received my permanent residency in Canada last summer.

Q. Could you shortly describe about ZeroIn? What is the purpose of this company?

A. ZeroIn is company working on a new generation of natural sweeteners with minimum blood sugar effect. We are trying to synthesize the best and healthiest way for natural sweeteners. It is a start-up company that is still developing.

Q. How do you feel about your workplace and the environment?

A. The workplace and environment are great and friendly, since it is a start-up company, we work hard to get results in a short time. It is demanding but also rewarding when things are working.

Q. Do you work as a team or do you work individually?

A. We work here as a team because the project needs to team with different backgrounds. We have chemists, biochemists and such.

Q. What is it like being in an industrial workplace compared to an academic workplace?

A. Honestly working in industrial is a little bit hard, but in industry it is more real and we prepare a product for market which could be really cool to be part of.

Q. Was it difficult to change from academia to industry?

A. It is very different. Sometimes chemistry that we worked on in academia is different from what we use right now in the industry. Because in industrial cost of the product is very important. So we have to use different strategies to reduce cost but in academia, this is not more important.



Q. Do you have any advice to give to young chemists who want to proceed in the same career as you?

A. One piece of advice is that the young chemists should do at least one project related to industrial in order to be more familiar with an industrial process and be able to see the difference and decide if they want to be part of industrial work or academic work.