



Finding a Pharmaceutical Director Job

Currently, the pharmaceutical industry is experiencing a change that may influence the number of director level positions within an organization. While the amount of pharmaceutical products sold has reached another record as of 2007, several large pharmaceutical companies have announced restructuring that may limit some of the opportunities available for individuals seeking [pharmaceutical jobs](#) in the industry. Candidates for the [pharmaceutical jobs](#) available may benefit from understanding the job requirements for the position, what educational experiences are required, as well as what industry skills are needed.



What are the Skills Required for a Pharmaceutical Director?

[Pharmaceutical director jobs](#) may function in marketing, sales, operations, finance, or manufacturing. Typically, pharmaceutical directors must have experience in the pharmaceutical industry before interviewing for the position. Pharmaceutical directors normally have budgetary and headcount authority for their

department. They are also held accountable for executing the strategy of the company within their respective areas. Pharmaceutical directors usually possess between five to ten years of management experience in the industry, with specific management roles within their department.

The director many times manages between three to six managers who also have teams reporting into them. Span of control varies by company and position. However, the director is responsible for ensuring that all bonuses, merit, and personnel reviews are conducted in a way that meets with company policy. The pharmaceutical director also must be able to create a teamwork environment as well as create collaborative connections between departments to effectively complete projects and assignments. The director also may be responsible for sourcing and hiring vendors to support the functions of the department. Pharmaceutical directors normally report to executive directors or vice presidents within organizations. Because each department is critical to the overall success of the company, screening of pharmaceutical directors usually is very rigorous.

Is there a Difference between Pharmacy Director and Pharmaceutical Director?

It is important to distinguish the difference between a

pharmacy director and a pharmaceutical director. Pharmacy directors usually have the responsibility for running a dispensing pharmacy at a mail order facility, warehouse, hospital, or institutional environment. The pharmacy director has oversight responsibility for dispensing pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

Other duties include managing inventory and cash flows, as well as ensuring rotation of inventory to prevent drugs from expiring. The pharmacy director may also be responsible for hiring and coaching other pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in the organization. They also may have responsibility to ensure that all regulations and safety precautions are followed, including providing educational materials to patients and healthcare providers.

Job Skills to Highlight

Hiring managers seeking pharmaceutical directors are looking for candidates who are able to understand budgeting, strategic planning, as well as have excellent communication skills. Pharmaceutical directors may be required to present to cross-departmental groups as well as at national meetings of the sales and marketing organizations.

Demonstrating strong leadership also is a major skill set desired by the hiring managers for these types of pharmaceutical jobs. Hiring managers may also look for candidates who have held [jobs with pharmaceutical companies](#) other than their own, as well as have pharmacy experience. Pharmacists who have held different [pharmacy jobs](#) may find the transition from the dispensing world to the manufacturing and sales world easier than others.

Applicants who are able to demonstrate an understanding of formulary adoption of products have been highly successful in entering the managed markets marketing side of pharmaceutical companies at the director level.



Pharmaceutical Career Feature

Job Outlook

The pharmaceutical industry is currently experiencing fierce generic competition and pricing pressures caused by the latest global financial slowdown. The United States Food and Drug Administration has also slowed down the approval of new drugs because of safety concerns raised by prior drug withdrawals. While many major pharmaceutical companies are currently restructuring to meet the reduced demand for branded products, some departments as well as some of the biotechnology companies are still posting pharmaceutical jobs for directors.

Finding the Perfect Position

The perfect position as a pharmaceutical director depends on the applicant's education, background and interests. If the applicant has a strong finance background with a CPA, then a pharmaceutical director role in finance may be a logical step. Candidates with marketing experience may also be of interest to sales vice presidents as sales pharmaceutical directors.

Networking with people who hold pharmaceutical director positions to understand the day to day activities, challenges, and opportunities has been a stated success factor for candidates who were eventually hired as directors. Not only is the careful selection of the position important, but also what part of the pharmaceutical industry is critical. Biotechnology companies routinely screen pharmaceutical director candidates who have experience with other biotechnology companies. The industry is relatively small, and most members know each other or each other's reputation. For candidates who like creating a department from the ground up, biotech may be the perfect route. If the level of your risk tolerance is lower, then pursuing a career in a mid-size to large pharmaceutical company may be the better option.

Conclusion

Successful job searching for director-level positions requires patience, experience, and the ability to network. Having a solid base of experience in a particular field in pharmaceuticals is critical to entering pharmaceutical manufacturing companies, especially in this challenging job market.

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