

CAREERS AND RECRUITMENT

A third quarter improvement for biotech hiring

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A combination of increased sales and cost-cutting measures led to a better time for life science companies in the third quarter of 2009. Amgen, despite decreased sales of its anemia drugs, increased its third-quarter profit by 24% through lower costs in its research and sales units. Likewise, Pfizer's profit jumped 26% on cost cutting, Celgene reported a 58% profit increase based on sales of its cancer drugs, Merck & Co. posted a bigger profit due to slightly higher sales and a huge gain from selling a business, and Abbott Laboratories' profit was up 36%.

On the venture capital front, investment in the third quarter kept pace with the previous quarter but was still down 25% from a year

ago. Biotech topped the information technology and cleantech sectors, receiving a total of \$905.1 million across 104 transactions.

All this suggests that the dire straits affecting small-cap biotechs in the second quarter may soon show signs of abating. For the life science industry as a whole, we saw a continuation of the slight hiring increase at the 25 largest biotechs (Table 1) compared with the previous quarter (*Nat. Biotechnol.* 27, 672–673, 2009), according to three representative job databases. Amgen and Genzyme continue to post the highest number of job openings, followed by Biogen Idec and Celgene.

In addition, there were big jumps in the number of full-time employees at the largest biotech companies over the previous year, including Monsanto (+2,900 FTEs), Genzyme (+1,000), Celgene (+756), Gilead (+462), Actelion (+462), Qiagen (+379) and Biocon (+229). The largest drop in employees belonged to PerkinElmer and Amgen, which recorded 800 and 700 fewer full-time employees, respectively, over the previous year. The ten largest pharma companies also continue to hire new employees (Table 2).

Notable job reductions over the last three months among biotechs and pharma companies are shown in Table 3. In addition, on June 24 Monsanto announced plans to cut 900 jobs, amounting to 4% of its workforce, a part of a company restructuring that will create a new division for its struggling Roundup business.

Nature Biotechnology will continue to follow hiring and firing trends in the coming year.

Table 1 Who's hiring? Advertised openings at the 25 largest biotech companies

Company ^a	Number of employees	Number of advertised openings ^b		
		Monster	Biospace	Naturejobs
Monsanto	21,700	3	1	81
Amgen	16,800	112	98	0
Genentech	11,186	24	60	99
Genzyme	11,000	69	0	241
Life Technologies	9,700	31	37	66
PerkinElmer	7,900	29	0	0
Bio-Rad Laboratories	6,600	12	16	8
Biomerieux	6,140	17	0	0
Millipore	5,900	13	15	0
IDEXX Laboratories	4,700	17	3	3
Biogen Idec	4,700	45	49	1
Gilead Sciences	3,441	0	16	1
WuXi PharmaTech	3,172	0	0	0
Qiagen	3,041	0	0	0
Cephalon	2,780	0	0	0
Biocon	2,772	0	0	0
Celgene	2,441	21	5	0
Biotest	2,108	4	2	0
Actelion	2,054	0	0	0
Amylin Pharmaceuticals	1,800	35	7	0
Elan	1,687	16	16	0
Illumina	1,536	40	0	0
Albany Molecular Research	1,357	0	0	0
Vertex Pharmaceuticals	1,322	15	42	0
CK Life Sciences	1,315	0	0	0

^aAs defined in *Nature Biotechnology's* survey of public companies (27, 710–721; 2009). ^bAs searched on Monster.com, Biospace.com and Naturejobs.com, October 13, 2009. Jobs may overlap.

Table 2 Advertised job openings at the ten largest pharma companies

Company ^a	Number of employees	Number of advertised openings ^b		
		Monster	Biospace	Naturejobs
Johnson & Johnson	119,200	193	0	1
Bayer	106,200	4	2	1
GlaxoSmithKline	103,483	7	0	6
Sanofi-Aventis	99,495	26	0	0
Novartis	98,200	243	46	60
Pfizer	86,600	28	14	10
Roche	78,604	23	22	1
Abbott Laboratories	68,697	56	0	0
AstraZeneca	67,400	39	13	1
Merck & Co.	59,800	0	8	0

^aData obtained from *MedAdNews*. ^bAs searched on Monster.com, Biospace.com and Naturejobs.com, October 13, 2009. Jobs may overlap.

Table 3 Recently announced job reductions in the biotech sector

Company	Layoffs by number	Layoffs by percentage of workforce	Details
Eli Lilly	5,500	14%	Reductions are part of a restructuring into five global business units intended to lower company's cost structure by \$1 billion by the end of 2011.
Exiqon	25	15%	Capacity reduced after completing development of its full line of microRNA research products.
MiddleBrook Pharmaceuticals	85	25%	Company expects the reductions to save \$15 million annually.
Boehringer Ingelheim	800–850	27%	Plans to reduce its US sales force, citing changes in the industry and patients' needs.
LifeCycle Pharma	20–25	24–28%	Cuts come from clinical development in the United States and from administration and production in Denmark.
Gilead Sciences	66	2%	Head count reduced as a result of previously announced decision to close facilities in Boulder and Westminster, Colorado.
Santhera Pharmaceutical Holdings	26	32%	Restructuring and reducing head count to focus on preclinical and clinical development and commercialization. The cuts come mostly from drug discovery, which company will no longer conduct in-house.

Source: BioCentury.

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