

SciTECH IDEAS IN ACTION

Career Success in Life Sciences

Doug Drabble, Director of BioNetwork and Life Science Initiatives

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Doug Drabble opened the presentation with an excerpt from a letter Juvenile Court Judge Phillip B. Gillian's wrote to the South Bend Journal in 1959. The judge outlined several key points, including that a young person is owed nothing. From that foundation, Drabble shared his work history resulting in his leadership role with NCCCS. "Career success," as Drabble outlined, "results from: skill development, understanding, application, time, personal target, drive and flexibility." Drabble described how his varied work history – from auto mechanic, brewery operator, and lumberjack through project manager and entrepreneur – were all experiences that built the "clay" of his career.

Drabble described how the need for an analytical training center and mobile training unit stemmed from the BioNetwork program concept from a decade ago. He identified needs for permanent space for the analytical center and subsequently a mobile training unit that could provide skill training across the state. While the personnel of BioNetwork have increased 60% and those trained has grown eight-fold in ten years, the budget for delivering training and services has decreased 41%.

There are countless career options in life science that BioNetwork is connected to through its seven centers– food, clinical, pharmaceutical, environmental, polymers, etc. The path for career success is also equally diverse – operational or regulatory path, logistics, maintenance and IT. Drabble suggested taking a fresh approach to employment. "Don't let your salary dictate your career choice. You may make less money, but your first jobs can provide you with training and skills that you can't get later in your career," explained Drabble. "Take advantage of training and cross-training opportunities and know when it's time to leave and move to the next level."

