

## Emad El Sayed, Ph.D.

Manager PR&D at CARBOGEN AMCIS

### EDUCATION

- PostDoc in asymmetric synthesis at ETH Zurich (1999-2001)
- Ph.D. in catalytic asymmetric synthesis at Université de Genève (1994-1999)
- M.Sc. in Chemistry at University of Massachusetts and Alexandria University (1989-1994)
- B.Sc. in Chemistry at Alexandria University (1985-1989)

### CAREER

- Manager PR&D at Carbogen Amcis (2015-present)
- Senior Chemist at Carbogen Amcis (2007-2015)
- Project Chemist at Carbogen Amcis (2001-2006)



## Interview for CHEMTOGETHER 2018 (annual career fair at ETH Zurich)

### •• What are your responsibilities as Manager Process Research & Development at CARBOGEN AMCIS?

I act as an information exchange platform and support my group of chemists and lab technicians. Some of my other responsibilities include the inspection of resource availabilities, recruitment interviews for new group members, training of group members and preparing and planning of customers' requests for proposals. I also represent the company at events.

### •• You graduated with a degree in Chemistry. Does CARBOGEN AMCIS also employ graduates of other fields of study (Chemical Engineering, Interdisciplinary Sciences)?

Yes, CARBOGEN AMCIS also employs Chemical Engineers, Biologists as well as Toxicologists in addition to the majority of the Chemistry degree holders.

### •• How does a typical work day in industry differ from one at university?

Work in the industry differs to great extent from the one at university, although the two fields are very much connected and interdependent from each other. There are two main aspects to industry life. Firstly, the human interaction is important. One interacts with colleagues (from the same or different departments), suppliers, external technicians, customers (big to small organizations), consultants and authorities. Each category has its expectations, targets and fields of interest and focus.

Secondly, the focus of activities is different. Universities tend to focus on the pure methodological and scientific approach. In industry the scientific approach is in the center of interest beside other aspects such as practicability, both atom and financial economies, robustness and reproducibility of processes, pragmatic solutions, reduction of manufacturing time and cost of goods, etc.

•• **What made you choose CARBOGEN AMCIS as an employer? Can you describe how the application process worked for you?**

As still a middle young chemist just ending his Postdoc studies at ETH Zürich I was much focused on an academic career. I explored the option of an industrial career. It was during my different interviews in the industry that I quickly realized that there was another universe still related to and interacting with the academic world. The industry was totally unknown to me at that time. It was my eagerness to explore new fields that made me move more towards this industry. Back in 2001, (before the merger) Carbogen Laboratories was a young dynamic organization focused on innovation and it was full of talented chemists which offered extraordinary innovation potential. Accordingly, I had this unique opportunity to grow with, shape and contribute extensively together with my colleagues to what CARBOGEN AMCIS is known for today. As far as the application process is concerned: it was a very long time ago. The application process was as dynamic as CARBOGEN AMCIS is: direct contact, invitation to interview, oral presentation of my Ph.D. / Postdoc. work in English. Open discussions and description of the role of a Project Chemist, which was the position that I applied for at that time. In short a friendly, open and focused atmosphere.

•• **Which abilities and qualities does CARBOGEN AMCIS expect of Chemistry graduates with a Ph.D./M.Sc. degree?**

Obviously we expect a deep and solid Chemistry knowledge background. Very good mastering of the English and German language is a big advantage. We encourage a systematic way of working but also at the same time with an innovative approach.

•• **Which soft skills should students try to acquire in the course of their studies to succeed in a pharmaceutical company like CARBOGEN AMCIS?**

Some of the most important ones are communication and presentation skills, a strong ability to thoroughly listen rather than hearing, patience and the ability to remain focused. It's also helpful to have a pragmatic, solution-oriented way of thinking, be flexible and open to learn in new fields.

Secondly, the focus of activities is different. Universities tend to focus on the pure methodological and scientific approach. In industry the scientific approach is in the center of interest beside other aspects such as practicability, both atom and financial economies, robustness and reproducibility of processes, pragmatic solutions, reduction of manufacturing time and cost of goods, etc.

•• **Since joining CARBOGEN AMCIS 17 years ago as a Project Chemist, you have held several different positions within the company. Could you describe some of the career opportunities that exist within the company?**

Career opportunities can slightly differ according to the department (within CARBOGEN AMCIS) in question. Generally, we offer the following opportunities:

- Hands-on responsibilities (e.g. Project Chemist position)
- Project Management activities (e.g. organization of technical activities between different sites)
- Key Account Managers (e.g. primary contact person for a certain given customer collecting their questions and uncertainties and guiding them through the organization to find the best fit for fulfilling their expectations and needs)
- Sales and Marketing (e.g. representing CARBOGEN AMCIS inside and outside Switzerland - promoting our organizational capabilities, strengths and diversities to our future customers)

Additional opportunities include QC&A (Quality Control and Analytical Development), QA (Quality Assurance), QS (Quality Systems) and Evaluation of Customers request.



•• **Before joining CARBOGEN AMCIS you spent two years as a postdoc at ETH. Did this help you in the recruitment process or could you have entered the same career path right after your Ph.D.?**

My postdoc at ETH helped me to stand on an even more solid ground with my scientific as well as instrumental knowledge gained at CARBOGEN AMCIS. I could have joined CARBOGEN AMCIS directly after the Ph.D. but the postdoc was for my case at least an advantage.

•• **You studied at universities in Egypt, the USA and Switzerland. Is it important for you as an employer that an applicant has international experience?**

In question 6 we spoke about communication skills. Communication skills are very important (as also described in the answer to question 3) because in industry communication flows through different people with a very broad range of experience, education, intellectual as well as cultural aspects. In addition one would deal with persons with different languages. Although having an international experience has its advantage, it is not a must.

•• **Which suggestions do you have for a recent ETH graduate applying for jobs or internships?**

Remain interested in broadening your field of knowledge. Listen (don't hear) and be patient in giving an answer or a comment. Think out of the box. Understand and apply your field of education. Like the stars in heaven, remember that what you see or think you understand is not necessarily what actually is. Be pragmatic and like water flowing downhill follow the path that costs you the least energy. Remain true and authentic to yourself – remember that at a certain moment in life you have to look in the mirror. Always play with open cards this will build bridges between you and your surroundings. No person on earth knows everything. Have the courage to also say: "I don't know". Facing a problem is not the real problem. Your main problem is how to deal with the problem. This is what makes you different from anybody else.



---

For more information about CARBOGEN AMCIS and career opportunities, visit [www.carbogen-amcis.com](http://www.carbogen-amcis.com)

BRINGING  
YOUR  
SCIENCE  
TO LIFE