EUROPEAN FEDERATION FOR MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY AND CHEMICAL BIOLOGY

Home | About us ▾ | Members ▾ | Events ▾ | Activities ▾ | Awards & Prizes ▾ | EFMC-YSN ▾ | Jobs ▾

I am a Medicinal Chemist/Chemical Biologist

The EFMC's communication team has been established to help **promoting Medicinal Chemistry and Chemical Biology** in Europe and around the globe, with the aim to create **a shared network**, and **inspire young future scientists**.

On our endeavor to make both disciplines better known, we have launched the project **"I am a Medicinal Chemist/Chemical Biologist"**, where we interviewed chemists working in the field. Here below you will find all the interviews.

We hope they will inspire everyone!

You want to share your story with us!? Answer the below questionnaire and contact the Communication Team (communication@efmc.info)

Questionnaire ▶

Riccardo Martini, Discngine, France

Where and when did you obtain your PhD diploma?

I obtained my PhD in "Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences" at the University of Siena, Italy in the group of Professor Maurizio Botta. It was the beginning of 2017.

Where are you currently working and what is your current position?

I am currently working for the French company Discngine, in Paris. Discngine develops and provides state-of-the-art IT solutions, mainly for customers involved in life science R&D.

The title of my position is "Senior Consultant", which, even if it does not seem to tell much, is a pretty good description of what my duties are- helping our customers with, well, a little bit of everything!

What do you like best about your work?

There are multiple aspects I love about my work. For starters, it is never boring! I have the possibility to help our customers in many different areas: from designing a custom solution to handling the administration of an application, to give training on various software, to provide scientific and technical support, to suggest and implement new ways for integration and automation… as I said – a bit of everything.

Another aspect I really like about my job is that it gives me the possibility to interact with many smart and talented people, both co-workers and customers. This often results in producing enriching experiences, allowing me to continuously grow.

Finally, it is really rewarding when I see a customer heavily relying on a piece of work I have done, or helped with. It really shows how much important what we do is.

What kind of tasks does your work involve?

See the previous answer for some examples. More in general, the kind of tasks my work involves are all around the ideation, design, implementation, management, and maintenance of custom IT solutions deployed at customers' sites. All of this without forgetting the "human factors" as engagement and support of the user community.

What kind of skills does your work require?

My work requires a broad range of competencies. Of course, there is the need for a solid scientific and technical base, but that's not all. Particularly important skills are also in presentation, project management and people management. It is important to have the capability to quickly grasp - and keep in mind - the "big picture", so that one can better proceed with all the steps I have mentioned in the previous answer. Mental elasticity is finally crucial; not only is the fundamental to understand the needs, but also what is required to adapt a project when it has already started. In a real-world scenario, we need to be prepared to navigate through an ever-changing landscape of possibilities. Be able to steer in time is the key between success and failure.

What are the features of a successful PhD student or postdoc?

That depends on what one intends with "successful". Success and sense of achievement are strictly personal feelings. Therefore, my answer here is based purely on my personal idea of success – which, in the case of a PhD student or postdoc, is to put themselves in the best conditions to proceed towards what they would like to do with their next steps. Based on such premise, I would say that to be successful they should be able to not think only about science. They should be able to think about their career path, to create opportunities for themselves, to not waste any occasion to interact with other scientists as well as not-scientists. So, translated into feature, I think that I could say: "communicative planner".

How would you describe yourself as a supervisor?

I think that many of the ex-students I supervised while working at the university would agree on these 3 words: "tough but fair". I believe it fits.

Which field of medicinal chemistry do you consider the most promising for the future?

The usage of AI-assisted computational methods to reliably predict 3D protein structures.