



Dr. Sven Dethlefs

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Career Perspectives with a PhD in Natural & Life Sciences

Doctorate:

Biochemistry, Freie Universität Berlin & Pasteur Institute Paris, 1997

Current Position:

Manager at Biotech company PureTech Health, Boston

After completing his PhD at the FU Berlin in 1997, Sven joined McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm. He served clients in medical devices, health insurance and pharma on questions of strategy, growth and organizational effectiveness. In 2008, he became the managing director of Teva Pharmaceuticals in Germany. Teva is the global leader in Generics and a leading CNS/immunology company. Throughout his 16 years at Teva, he held leadership positions in marketing, sales, operations, R&D strategy and business development. Most recently, he was the CEO of Teva North America. In 2024, Sven joined a Boston based Biotech company, PureTech Health. He lives in Philadelphia, USA.

How did you find out about your current job?

I was introduced to the company through an investment bank in New York City.

What role do skills gained in your PhD studies play in your current job?

The biggest benefit of a STEM degree is hypothesis-based working. Running a business with 25.000 employees is actually not that different from trying to find out what is going on in a single cell.

What was the biggest challenge in starting a new job after your PhD studies?

Research and development communication is often bottoms-up leading with facts and granular data, business communication is top-down, and it took me some time to change my communication style.

What are you currently working on?

I am currently working on the clinical development strategy of an investigative new drug for the treatment of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.