

# Pharmacy career essay

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Finding a career within the pharmacy profession holds appeal for many reasons: a strong job market, high pay, work equality, divergent career opportunities and favorable working conditions in a profession that consistently ranks at the top in Gallup's annual poll of most trusted professions. Careers all across the ever-evolving health care industry have seen consistent growth in demand over the last several years, with no projections for slowing down. Pharmacists can look forward to higher than average employment opportunities. The U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), projects a 25% growth in demand through 2020.

This increase is attributed to an ageing population, advances in medicine, increased number of people with insurance coverage and the expanding role of pharmacists in patient care. Additionally, pharmacy students have the envious distinction of a nearly 100% job placement in their career field within a year of graduation. Another appealing aspect of the profession is pharmacists enjoy a relatively high median salary. In the most recent statistics published by the BLS, the median wage is nearly \$115, 000 per year. Earning potential is projected to continue to rise due to the predicted high growth in jobs, without a corresponding increase in the number of graduates entering the profession.

When it comes to work equality, careers in pharmacy continue to top the charts. With women making up nearly two-thirds of the pharmacy profession, the pay gap between men and women has nearly been eliminated. In a 2012 article published in Forbes, pharmacy was listed as the number one best-paying job for women. The pharmacy profession opens the door for numerous career opportunities across widely diverse employment settings.

In a pharmacist career guide published by Pfizer, there are no less than 28 unique practice areas described. They range from careers in academia to veterinary medicine.

Even within this extensive list of unique practice areas, one can easily discover subcategories and opportunities that will make finding the right career-fit for most people. Generally, pharmacists will find favorable working conditions, in climate-controlled, well-lit facilities such as retail drug stores, hospitals, clinics and nursing homes. Due to the high demand and nature of the work, they are likely to be able to find the setting that suits their desires.

They may choose to work in rural, metropolitan or urban settings.

Pharmacists can find job opportunities in every US state and territory as well as many international opportunities in countries such as Bahrain, the United Arab Emirate and Saudi Arabia. How a pharmacy career appeals to me is a little difficult to explain.

I began my journey into my career as a pharmacist wholly unprepared and unaware exactly what the profession entailed. I was a young Soldier who had no intention of working as a pharmacist until after I had retired from the military. I picked the degree simply because I thought it would be something that would essentially guarantee me a good retirement job. I had never talked to a pharmacist or PHARMACY CAREER 3 anyone else about what a pharmacist did. In fact, I was well into my first year of school before I discovered it was a 5-year degree program and I came close to switching majors because of that. While in pharmacy school, I began working as a pharmacy intern at the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

The outpatient pharmacy dispensed about 2500 prescriptions a day. This did not give me a positive outlook on a career as a pharmacist. As I completed my clinical rotations and approached graduation, I had sincere reservations about my ability to be satisfied as a pharmacist and began to consider alternatives. However, as the sole provider for my family, which included three small children, my options were limited and I was determined to make the best of it. For the first several years as a pharmacist, I worked at many different jobs that gave me a variety experiences. I worked at ong-term care facilities, retail, clinic and hospital pharmacies, big and small.

After a few years, I found myself as an Army pharmacist in charge of a large pharmacy supply warehouse, managing a 6. 2 million dollar annual drug budget. I next moved into what proved to be the area of pharmacy I finally genuinely enjoyed, promoted to the Chief of Inpatient Pharmacy. I was responsible for managing all aspects of pharmaceutical care and services for the acute care hospital. As a leader and manger of a busy, acute care pharmacy, I had found my career niche within the profession. However, once again, personal desires for my family took precedence over my professional contentment and I left the Army. Because of where I wanted to live, I had to accept a position as a staff pharmacist at a small hospital.

I was miserable and quickly set out to find something more satisfying. I took a job in pharmaceutical sales, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I also took a job with a temporary staffing agency that allowed me to maintain my clinical skills by working as a pharmacist in retail, long-term care and hospital settings whenever I wanted. Three short years later I was unexpectedly

offered my dream job as the Director of Pharmacy at a brand-new surgical specialty hospital. I was convinced I had landed my retirement job.

However, overtime I became bored and began to look for something else to keep me interested in coming to work every day. As fate would have it, I was offered three different jobs within days of one another. I selected the one least like anything I had done before, as a Nuclear Pharmacy Manager. It has been a nice career change, but not something that I consider a long-term career. I look forward to finding my next challenge and hope to use my MBA to launch me into that phase. I have discovered that a pharmacy career in the traditional sense does not hold much appeal to me. What does interest me is managing and leading an organization. I have had my greatest level of satisfaction in leadership positions in and outside of pharmacy.

My definition of success and satisfaction is to find a career as a leader, not a pharmacist.