

National Pharmaceutical Congress Spring Webinar:
New Career Skills for Pharma's Post-Covid Era



Executive Summary

APRIL 6, 2022
11:00 AM ET

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of registrants to the 2022 NPC Spring Webinar.

It provides a summary of meeting highlights.





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- Remove barriers leveraging digital capabilities of EMRs (Electronic Medical Records)
- Automate and save physicians' time while supporting your brand



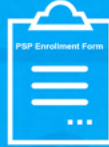
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[†] Potential advantage versus new competitors



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It's been two years since we all decided to close the office for two weeks (maybe three). Heading into the third pandemic year, it's clear that the world of work has changed permanently. So what will that look like for Pharma?

At the 2022 NPC Spring Webinar on April 6th, panelists will tackle the question in three parts: new ways of working—balancing remote and in-person offices; the impact on career mobility—hiring and training; and the new skill sets we need to navigate today's workplace.

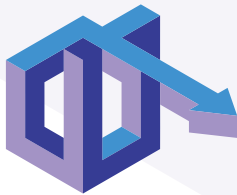
Speakers at this session will be **Jim Shea**, General Manager of the Council for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education (CCPE); **Peter Brenders**, General Manager, Canada at BeiGene; **Leandra Wells**, VP Respiratory at GSK; and **Danny Goldman**, Head of Strategy & Portfolio Operations at Sanofi Canada.

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Adapting to the new hybrid or remote workplace

How is Pharma is tackling the return to the office? What are the prevailing options for remote work?

"We are embarking on a completely different way of working now," said Wells. "Whether it's remote or whether it's in-office, we want to give people the flexibility. GSK is saying, we want to meet you where you work your best."

Wells described her company's new workspace arrangement, which will be managed via an app. "Our offices are structured so that you need to book your station ahead of time," she said. "For the most part, most of us will be working in a hybrid environment where it will be remote, or if you prefer to go in-office, you go in-office."

"It'll be interesting because it's a completely different way for most of us to work," Wells said, "but allowing us that flexibility is really energizing."

Brenders said his company is using a similar flexible hybrid model. "Maybe for BeiGene it was easier for us in some sense. We didn't have all the big dinosaurs of process that were in place."

Goldman described Sanofi's more structured "two-three hybrid work schedule, [where] you have to be in the office roughly two days a week."

"When you start coming into the office it's near-impossible to keep up the same level of productivity," Goldman said. "The challenge is to plan your days strategically and not come to the office if you're just going to be sitting in Zoom meetings all day long."

"As we get more familiar with coming back to the office, people are getting better at knowing which days to come in versus which days to stay home," Goldman said.

"This is the interesting part where we're going to have to coordinate our schedules," Wells added. "Even if I choose to work from home one day, the people I might be meeting with may be on the road."

"When you think about workflow, I think about it more in terms of output and what are we accomplishing," Brenders said. "That's perhaps been a refresher for a lot of us, that you actually don't need to be in the office. At the end of the day, we're just trying to find the best way for people to engage."

Shea said that in many cases staff is fully remote with no plans to return in person. "My staff, basically a lot of clerical work, they've dispersed away from a centralized head office. One person is now working from Florida, another person has moved to where his kids are," he said.

"Now they're able to live closer to their family by moving away from a head office situation and having a better



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quality of life, quite frankly. And has quality of work gone down? Absolutely not,” he said. “They’re saying it’s amazing what I can get done from home.”

Building a Pharma career in a changed world

How has the pandemic changed how we approach hiring, training, and networking for careers in Pharma

“It’s an exciting time right now if you’re looking for a new job, and if you’re hiring, there’s a lot of interesting talent you may not have come across before,” said Goldman. “I think a lot of people are looking for change.”

Speaking at the 2022 NPC Spring Webinar, panelists examined how hiring, training, and networking have adapted over the last two years.

“It’s been interesting trying to recruit remotely,” said Brenders. “It’s been different building out, launching a company, launching a brand when you’re doing all your interviews over Zoom and only starting to see people sporadically, if at all. But I think engagement is the bigger question for us.”

“We all miss the in-person engagement,” Brenders said. “We’re trying to figure out how to do it well.”

Shea agreed that engagement is crucial. “Let’s put it this way, it comes down to just

leveraging technology now,” he said. “If you hadn’t been doing the right things as a manager prior to Covid, it’s pretty unlikely that you’re succeeding now.”

“At least in my business, face-to-face is still the most impactful,” said Wells. “It’s so important to check in with all of our people, all of our leaders and team members if we’re not seeing them in person.” She emphasized the risk of employee burnout from overscheduling and overwork when team members are working remotely.

Panelists also discussed the opportunities that remote work offers for career mobility. “In terms of employee retention and hiring and recruitment, we’re seeing that there’s a much bigger talent pool out there [now] that is very high quality,” Wells said.

Goldman added that he’d recently hired for a role and “had close to a hundred people apply, whereas last time it was maybe fifteen external people.”

“The applicants for the jobs we’ve been hiring for have been high quality and many,” Brenders agreed. “Maybe it’s because everyone can work virtually now. You don’t have to move to Boston or San Francisco or Toronto or Montreal. You can take on a global job or a more senior role living wherever as long as you have high-speed Internet.”

Wells noted, however, that networking has to be much more intentional now.

“The key limitation to working remotely is you really have to put in effort when you want to highlight your strong talent

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or you want to help facilitate introductions to other leaders and potential hiring managers,” she said. “There’s no more water cooler in this environment.”

Skill sets Pharma needs for the “new normal”

A look at necessary post-pandemic skill sets for success in Pharma, according to 2022 Spring Webinar panelists

“Everybody talks about the new ways of managing and nurturing people,” said Jim Shea, “but it all comes down to engagement with people.”

Shea insisted that basic skills, even if mediated through technology, are the most crucial. “We’ve always had the introduction of new technology, but if you haven’t been able to engage with people, if you never had the understanding of how to train and coach, then you’re not doing any better now,” he said. “It’s about going back to basic principles and actually doing it.”

“Over the last five years,” Shea said, “we’ve seen lot of people maintaining their business skills, the hard skills that you have to know.” He explained that it’s easy to test people on business knowledge such as how to do an expense report or the content of an article.

Conversely, Shea says it’s much more difficult to teach and test soft skills like communication, and going virtual has made it even harder to practice these

skills. “An interesting thing that came back to me from a number of physicians was that representatives who are really, really good in person, some of them are failing miserably, virtually.”

Wells said she’d encountered the same issue, and had found that the most important skill was “the adaptability and agility to be able to flex effectively from in-person into a virtual meeting.”

“We have to consider putting to bed the idea of a [separate] in-person sales force and virtual sales force,” Wells said, “because I think every person has to have the ability and the skill set to do both effectively.”

Goldman, agreed that “the biggest skill to have now is adaptability to change and change management in the last two years.”

“To get more specific,” Goldman said, “Covid required us to fast track our digital adoption as an industry.” He said what that meant practically was “having to do a lot of upskill training within the organization on how to use [digital] platforms efficiently and how to tailor your approach in a virtual environment.”

Brenders agreed that the biggest success factor has been “how we engaged with our customers. What was our facility with the technology? And could we actually work it?”

“The key [for Pharma leaders] is what do we use to keep up to date,” Brenders said. “How are we learning to navigate not just with the tools, but thinking about it for our teams and engaging them as we evolve?”



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Meet the Faculty



LEANDRA WELLS

Respiratory Business Unit Head at GSK, responsible for the performance, strategic direction and growth of the business unit in Canada; sits on several boards at Mount Sinai Hospital



PETER BRENDERS

General Manager of BeiGene Canada, leading the Canadian affiliate operations; 2016 inductee to the Canadian Healthcare Marketing Hall of Fame and founding host of the NPC Podcast leading 40 episodes across five seasons



JIM SHEA

General Manager of the Council for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education (CCPE) and an experienced Pharma executive with broad background in sales, marketing, training & development, strategic planning, and business process improvement



DANNY GOLDMAN

Head of Strategy and Portfolio Operations, Canada at Sanofi, a clinical data storyteller with deep expertise in marketing; a dedicated cancer mentor and advocate



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Prepared for delegates to the virtual National Pharmaceutical Congress Spring Webinar.

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