



Summary of BBS Next Generation Seminar:

“Future of the Next Generation Statisticians and Quantitative Scientists”

The BBS Next Generation committee was formed in 2022 to organize in-person meetings specifically dedicated to support the next generation in the pharmaceutical industry with a focus on soft skills, career development and networking. In June 2023, we held our second meeting in Basel and we

focused on getting feedback from our attendees on topics that are important to them via roundtable discussions. We created a space where we can express our ideas, unite our voices, and create opportunities.

Continuous development and emerging new information/technologies

- The real question is “**How to deal with change?**” as Innovation is inevitable. We will have to embrace the challenges and opportunities.
- New technology can be used to help with the current tasks and create more automatization. It might help us to **focus on things that matter most.**
- AI can be a powerful tool and it forces us to concentrate on **what makes us unique**: Communication with others, influencing, critical and curious mindset, understanding new technologies with their opportunities and limitations as well as using them with an ethical mindset.

Data Science, Statistics & evolution of roles

- The former titles, i.e., Statistician, Programmer, Data Manager can be perceived as too narrow but offer a clearer expectation and areas of expertise.
- **Are we Data Scientists? Yes and No.**
- Data Scientist is the new “fancy” title yet is broad and seems unclear. Curriculums of Data Science degrees in academia are very diverse. Lack of clear and common definition/areas of expertise is creating confusion.
- Finding the type of “Data Science” work that one is passionate about is both easier and more difficult in this wide field.
- **Alignment** between pharma and academia is important to provide the right skill set needed in the pharmaceutical work environment.

Community involvement

- **Giving back** to the community and patients is a priority!
- The value of our work can only be maximized if we use it in **meaningful collaborations.**
- Important to invest in **efficient decision making** and **cross functional collaborations.**
- **Curiosity and purpose** are important and should be valued.
- Want to be seen as **strategic partners.**
- Working alone and in silos leads to **loss of knowledge** and opportunities!

Support from senior leaders & companies

Different roles provide support for different topics:

- **Mentor**: Onboarding, more experienced colleagues to support with job-related challenges
- **Leader**: Inspiration and guidance
- **Manager**: Formal role, supporting career development, work assignment, managing workload (including prioritization, removing obstacles), administrative purpose

Needs

- Create a **safe environment** to build confidence
- **Transparency** is important to understand the organisation of the company and identify career development opportunities
- **Timely two-sided feedback.** We are a team!
- Senior team members who are taking on **guidance roles** should also invest in essential skills such as active listening and conflict management
- Mutual **respect of boundaries**

Career growth and advancement

- Lack of advanced academic degrees like PhDs should not be a **barrier** in getting into the industry and higher positions.
- **Training on the job** is as important as any academic degree.
- Technical skills and willingness to be a **lifelong learner** are a prerequisite for a successful start in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Visibility, self-marketing, networking, communication skills and courage are needed to **advance** our careers.
- Companies should provide a **safe environment** to discuss and **learn from mistakes.**

BBS Next Generation Committee Members:

Lars Andersen, Joana Marques Barros, Muriel Buri, Youyou Hu, Antonella Mazzei, Kristina Weber, Lukas Andreas Widmer

BBS Sponsors:

Hans Ulrich Burger and Olympia Papachristofi

