



Research

The Journey of an Organic Chemist: What Organic Chemistry trains you for— From Drug Discovery to Food (Safety)

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Abstract

Organic chemistry plays a central but often under-recognized role in addressing complex industrial challenges that extend well beyond molecule synthesis. In this seminar, I will describe how training in organic chemistry can be leveraged across multiple industrial domains, based on my career spanning academia, biotech, and industrial research within a multinational food company.

The talk presents a personal career journey illustrating the diversity of opportunities available to organic chemists. Starting from doctoral and postdoctoral research in organic chemistry, I moved into medicinal chemistry within a biotech startup before joining Nestlé Research, where organic chemistry became a central tool for addressing challenges in ingredient innovation and food safety.

Through selected case studies, I will show how the same fundamental chemical concepts — reactivity, molecular structure, metabolism — can be applied in very different contexts, from drug discovery to food safety. The seminar will also address the evolution from hands-on scientist to project manager and group leader, highlighting the importance of soft skills such as communication, interdisciplinarity, and leadership.