

**Roundtable Session 2 – Table 10 -
Building an Inclusive Knowledge-Sharing Environment**

Facilitator: Tim Blanc, *Eli Lilly & Co.*

Scribe: Bindiya Juneja, *Regeneron*

Abstract:

As the pharmaceutical industry rapidly evolves, fostering an inclusive knowledge-sharing environment is crucial for innovation and progress. This roundtable discussion will explore the intersection of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives with Knowledge Sharing in pharmaceutical organizations. We will explore how inclusivity can enhance collaborative efforts and drive better scientific research and development outcomes. Participants will share their experiences, challenges, and best practices in creating environments that encourage open dialogue and equal participation. The discussion will also touch upon the role of leadership in promoting inclusivity and the impact of these efforts on knowledge dissemination and professional growth.

This roundtable aspires to provide actionable insights and strategies for building more inclusive and effective knowledge-sharing environments. This will enable teams to accelerate timelines and accelerate team members' personal development and job satisfaction.

Discussion Questions:

What does “Knowledge-Sharing” mean to you?

- Knowledge-sharing means transferring the knowledge to other members in a team and other groups through lesson learnt sessions.
- People should be open to sharing and feel comfortable sharing their views in these meetings.
- Some labs are not method development labs, so they rely on information provided to them from other groups. This information should be clear and shared well in time to keep pipelines moving forward.
- Sometimes these labs that are not responsible for method development figure out that the methods transferred to them are not robust enough, so they have to bring this up with method development team.
- Speak about the method consistencies as early as possible and not wait for it to be in GMP space to take the necessary steps.
- The development work should be documented well and clear and detailed development reports should be generated.

- Sometimes people are not comfortable sharing their views not because they have malicious intent, but because of the fear of saying the wrong thing in front of their managers. So, it's important for leaders and managers to build that space of psychological safety for their teams.
- As you climb the ladder, it gets lonelier. So, it's important to build a relationship with the direct reports so that they feel comfortable to talk to the manager when they need any kind of help instead of figuring things out by themselves.
- There are instances when people share their views and other people in the team are not open to other people's suggestions and ideas.
- If the people are open to sharing the knowledge and their views with other team members, then they create an inclusive environment and make good contacts and friends. These contacts can turn out to be great allies who go an extra mile to help others in the time of need.
- Some companies have buddy systems for making the new members feel welcome. There is a lot to navigate when a new person joins a team, so it's important to provide that support in the beginning.

□ **DEI Programs in Your Company**

- Does your company have a formal DEI program? How vibrant is it? Are you personally involved? What aspects do you like or dislike?
 - Most of the companies have DEI program that is open to all fulltime employees.
 - This program involves topics and trainings like unconscious bias, mental health initiative, psychological safety, work-life balance, etc.
 - Some people feel like the companies do that to just check some boxes and not trying to make a real change.
 - There was a suggestion that contractors and temporary employees should be included in DEI efforts. Sometimes they feel left out, and that should not be the case because even the temporary employees and contractors are a very important part of the company and company culture. Some companies are already making this change and including them in the DEI program.
 - There are several Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) that employees can join to discuss about their challenges and learn from other people. These resource groups are designed to make employees feel like they belong.
 - There are so many celebrations such as Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year, etc. for employees to participate and learn more about other cultures.

- Do you feel you work in a diverse environment?
 - Some people feel like the group is not diverse enough. There is a lot of emphasis on these initiatives but that is only to check some boxes. One of the focuses should be to hire more people of color at top positions.
 - Recruit more diverse people and try to keep the diverse people happy so they stay in the company for longer duration.
 - If the management is not receptive to diversity in their teams, that should be handled well, and people should bring it up with HR.
- How do you compare the diversity in Pharma vs other industries?

□ **Inclusivity in Your Group/Team/Department**

- What does “Inclusivity” mean to you?
 - Consider opinions of everyone in the team irrespective of their positions.
 - Include the new people in decision making and ask for their opinions in the meetings. This might work for some people but for others, it means putting them on spot that might be uncomfortable.
 - Consider hiring neurodiverse people because they bring different perspectives to the teams.
 - Share your experiences with you direct reports to make them comfortable when they make a mistake. They should be able to learn from their mistakes and not feel uncomfortable to accept that in front of their managers.
- Do you find your group/team/department at work inclusive? What works well, and what could be improved? How do you try to lead the way with inclusivity?
 - Make a real change by hiring more people of color and neurodiverse people.
 - The leaders should provide psychological safety to their teams so that the people are more receptive to sharing.
 - Embolden everyone in the team and encourage them to follow the company pillars. If the employees are empowered, then they will be comfortable to intervene when they see people breaking those pillars.
 - It will be nice to see people who look different in the leadership as they bring different perspectives and that will also encourage people of minority to join these teams.

- Sometimes people who look different have to take an initiative to start an ERG and discuss about the issues that affect them and try to make a real change.

□ **Knowledge Sharing Practices**

- At your company, how do you find knowledge sharing? What are your thoughts on freely sharing knowledge?
 - There are meetings to share the knowledge to move the project ahead. But the challenge is that some people absorb all the knowledge but share nothing. It was observed that there was an issue that could have been fixed in a timely manner if the knowledge sharing was efficient.
 - In one of the companies, the department is divided into early-stage development and late-stage development. When the group is done with the development work and collecting IND data, they set up a meeting with the late-stage development team to do the knowledge transfer and talk about the lessons learnt during the process.
 - Having 1:1 meetings with managers is a great way to share information.
 - There are interdepartmental teleconference meetings for knowledge transfer.
 - Team building is a great way to meet outside of work and talk in an informal setup.
 - Choosing right people for the meetings is very important because sometimes things get lost in translation.
 - These days, there are expedited timelines for a lot of programs. So, knowledge transfer becomes challenging. You need to be knowledgeable to go fast. Sometimes, people don't take enough time to plan properly and end up making more mistakes. So, it's very important to patiently plan for data collection and knowledge sharing and avoid the mistakes in the process.

□ **Inclusivity and Knowledge-Sharing at CE Pharm**

- So far, how do you find inclusivity and knowledge sharing at CE Pharm? What have you liked so far with regard to knowledge sharing and Inclusivity? What are your suggestions for making it better?
 - The new members really enjoyed the new member breakfast.
 - People feel like the CE community is like a family and they felt welcome.
 - Overall, everyone enjoyed the CE Pharm experience.

- Unconscious bias should be considered as a separate topic for roundtable discussion next year.