

Visions for the future Life Science sector in Medicon Valley

Ring! Ring! My computer calls eagerly at me. I press the answering button and Anna appears on the screen.

- Hi Sara! It is me, Anna.

I say hello to her. It has been almost a year since she finished her exam work here at the hospital.

- I have some great news, she says with a huge smile. I just got a job at Medplantation!

I tell her how happy I am for her, but I don't mention that I've never heard about the company before. She must see my unawareness; these video phones can't be as good at hiding emotions as the old ones because she instantly says:

- It's one of all the new companies here in the Medicon Valley area. They work with research on medicines against heart diseases, especially for diabetics. It's really interesting and the personalized medicine concept has opened up so many new possibilities!

I nod to her in agreement; personalized medicine really has made a difference. I congratulate her again, we say goodbye and Anna's face disappears from my screen. I start thinking of about the development the last years. The world has really changed, especially the Oresund area. It has grown immensely, and concepts such as technology transfer and personalized medicine has made the possibilities greater than ever for research and new ideas. I smile for myself; I just got an idea for my speech tonight at the 20th jubilee for the Medicon Valley Alliance.

There are many things that have changed the last years, especially since I began at Lund's university. When I began my education in genetics the new idea of technology transfer had only just begun. The new notion meant that students from all the universities in the Medicon Valley area were given greater possibilities to study and work at the many companies. For me it meant that I was given the possibility to get an internship at the new MedIdeon hospital in the Ideon Science Park. There I could follow how the new discovery of personalized medicine was found. The scientists were able to map the whole DNA code for one person and with that find out what medicines that suited for just him or her. The discovery was enormous and revolutionized the work with research and drugs. After my graduation the close cooperation Between Lund's University and Ideon gave me a job at the hospital, and now I am researching in how you can prevent high blood pressure in older men by analyzing DNA. Nowadays it's me who take in interns, like Anna, which benefits the students a lot because they get an insight in what research work is like. Ideon also have a strong cooperation with high schools in the area. Every now and then we have students coming to visit us to see what we do and learn about the possibilities for the future. My thoughts are disrupted by my computer once again. I answer and now it's my father who appears on the screen.

- Hello dear, he says. Just wanted to call and tell you how wonderful I'm feeling. You know I got these new medicines for my blood pressure last week. Since they mapped my DNA they give the ideal pills for me. They don't give me any side-effects at all!

We both agree that personalized medicine is the best thing that has happened in a long time and dad says:

- Who knew that you would end up working with such a good job, especially for me!

Time is going fast when you work with something fun, and it's already time for lunch. With two of my colleagues I go out for a bite to eat. We can't really decide which one of the 12 restaurants we

should choose, but we end up with Molly's Diner who serves the best burgers known. To get there we have to walk through the most parts of Ideon. We walk by the big Ideon Tower that houses the headquarters of Ideon Science Park with many conference rooms and meeting areas. Right next to it is the newly opened Ideon Star Hotel that had been requested for many years from all the international visitors to the all the companies. Nowadays there are 300 companies in Ideon with 5000 staff members. Several of them have made successful discoveries and gotten significant recognition world-wide. The Medicon Valley area is more than ever known for its expertise and prosperous research and a new world-centre is being built. My colleague Ping Chu from china starts talking about how he has friends back home that wants to come over for a year just like him. He says that now that they have built the housing area close to Ideon for temporary workers, it's much easier to live here. I ask him if he prefers it to the hotel room he stayed in before. He just smiles to me as an answer. We arrive at the diner and order a Hamburger each.

- Mmm, these are the best, I say delighted. The meat is perfect and the bread is so crisp and good.
- Have you heard about the new bread they are selling in the United States? Peter says.

Both Ping and I shake our heads.

- Well, it's this company in Copenhagen that has come up with a sort of bread that can last for six months without getting old and dry. The Americans are crazy about it, now they only have to buy bread twice a year!
- How do they make it last? I ask,
- I think they add some kind of enzyme to the dough. They been doing it for a long time, but it hasn't lasted this long or been out at the market until now.

I taste my crisp and fresh bread again and think silently that I am happy we still have a bakery in town.

After lunch I excuse myself and because I have to go to the mall and buy some clothes for tonight. I start walking toward the new Medshop Mall that opened last year in the vicinity of Ideon. On my way there I pass by the Ideon childcare centre, which now has 5 units, and one especially for the children of temporary workers. Nowadays Ideon really has everything you need; housing, childcare, school and not to forget, the hospital. To my surprise I see that the CEO of Ideon Science Park is coming my way. Mr. Peter Madsen has been a good friend of mine for a long time. Just like me he benefitted from technology transfer when he was able to start working at Ideon right away after his graduation from Copenhagen University. I ask him if everything is ready for our American guests tomorrow. They are coming to discuss a joint project to start greater gene mapping of Americans and Asians. So far has it mostly been made on Nordic people. Mr. Madsen assures me that they have ordered taxis, made hotel reservations and booked the conference room with the big video screen. With the screen we can speak to our partners from Japan as well. I come to think of how invaluable Ideon Science Park is. They are the ones who make sure that things go smoothly for the companies so that they can focus on their main tasks, instead of booking hotel rooms. Their loans to newly started companies and abilities to find financiers are still a driving source to the development of the area.

As I get into the mall I see that I have got a chocolate stain on my trousers. It really irritates me so I go into one of the stores and asks for some stain remover.

- I know just what you need! Says the female assistant. This just got in, "Stainpoofer". Just spray it on the stain and it will be gone within ten seconds.

I take the blue and purple bottle and spray it on. To my surprise I see that she is right. Instantly the stain starts fading and after ten seconds it is completely gone!

- Isn't it lovely? Bubbles the woman. I don't know how they do it, but I guess it's another one of these indescribable discoveries. Oh well, who cares really? I am just happy I can eat chocolate without worrying about my clothes!

I am interested and after examining the contents declaration I discover that it's, once again, our beloved friends enzymes that do the trick. I buy the bottle, look down at the clean spot where the stain just was and think of how good research can be.

Now that the stain is out of my mind I can concentrate on clothes. I go into the one of the female wear stores and ask for something elegant to wear at a celebration. The sales assistant goes after some clothes and when she comes back she hands me a bright red dress that looks gorgeous.

- It's the new collection, she says. I just love the colour, and don't worry about it fading. This is the newest technology, straight from Malmö. Some company started adding cellulose to their fabrics and found that it prevented colours to fade. It's just brilliant, and since cellulose is organic material it's environmental friendly too!

I try the dress and it suits me perfectly. Happily I go back to the hospital knowing that I am at least going to look good tonight.

After a nice afternoon I need to start thinking of getting into Copenhagen. I decide that it is best to go by train from the new station by Ideon. The fast train only takes thirty minutes into Copenhagen city and is the smoothest way to get there. As I sit on the train I start thinking of my day and how many improvements from the last ten years I have seen just today. Much has changed and developed in the Medicon Valley area, and every day there are new ideas that are allowed to grow and progress. I am confident that the growth will continue and that the area will strengthen its position as a world leading Biocluster. As I step out of the train I know that there is a lot to be said about the past this evening, but even more can be said about the future.

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