

Themed Section: Analytical Receptor Pharmacology in Drug Discovery

Reviewer comments on *Reflections on drug research* by Sir James Black

This is a great story and lesson for the younger 'medicinal' pharmacologists and chemists who in the current environment are asked to change programmes every 2 or 3 years because of apparent lack of success or simply managerial decisions driven by the constant need for change. However, curiosity, out of the box thinking, integrated team-work, knowledge of the medical need, and perseverance are the keys to find and develop the compounds that will make it to and in the clinic.

It is clear that with the new targets that have appeared out of the cloning and genomic revolution and the subsequent genome wide searches to link genes and diseases, the chemical starting point may be less evident than the emasculated hormone; especially when it comes to kinases, deacetylases or other enzymes which exist in the hundreds and share very similar mechanisms of action and active

sites. Nevertheless, once the starting point has been found whether by HTS or rational design, the questions remain the same. Speed is important, but quality is even more important, and what J. Black is telling here, should be taught in any current and future medicinal chemistry and pharmacology course.

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This article is part of a themed section on Analytical Receptor Pharmacology in Drug Discovery. To view the other articles in this section visit <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/bph.2010.161.issue-6>
To view the article by Sir James Black visit <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-5381.2010.01019.x>