

Transforming Returned Technologies into Opportunities

Receiving back a technology that was already licensed-out is not one of the best things that can happen to a tech-transfer licensing officer. A returned technology immediately carries the status of rejection, regardless of whether or not it was tested for efficacy or toxicity. The industry people hurry to tag it as a failure, usually without making the effort to dive into the details of the history of its licensed days. Many times they are correct. The previous licensee may have conducted the most reasonable experiment in the relevant model and failed. In such case, considering also the patent time lost, the tech-transfer office has little or no option than to close down the technology. However, on many occasions, the picture is not so clear. As often happens during pre-clinical and clinical trials, the way that a company chooses to investigate a compound is open to debate.

When we identify a returned compound for which we can picture a different scenario of investigation, we re-review its possible applications, its market needs and its patent status. In some cases, we may decide to close a technology even if we feel that it has therapeutic potential because of the slim chances of re-licensing it.

In other cases, we decide differently. In the attached presentation, for instance, we describe three technologies that although were returned to us, in our opinion still have huge potential to reach the market as viable products. We hope that we will find an industrial partner who will recognize these opportunities of re-programming and will guide them forward to success.