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PhDs face a tough job market as biotechs get lean and mean

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Looking for hard evidence of just how hard it can be to land a science job in R&D today? You only needed to turn out for UC San Francisco's biotech career fair, where only five developers bothered to send representatives.

Industry insiders told the online news site *Mission Loc@l* that the meager turnout--the fair drew 20 or more biotech companies in the good old days--is the result of research failures, M&A activity and a long-running recession. Travis Blaschek-Miller, the spokesman for BayBio, says that the industry is still adding 2,000 jobs a year to its 130,000 total in Northern California. In better economic times, though, that figure hits 6,000.

"We have no concrete data on this question. It's everyone's impression, however, that jobs are harder to come by," wrote Mark Schlissel, the Dean of Biological Sciences at UC Berkeley. As a result, hometown fave Genentech can now recruit PhDs for positions that were once filled by students with newly minted Master's degrees.

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