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Perspectives on Industrial Innovation from Agilent, HP, and Bell Labs

JAMES HOLLENHORST, Agilent Technologies

Innovation is the life blood of technology companies. I will give perspectives gleaned from a career in research and development at Bell Labs, HP Labs, and Agilent Labs, from the point of view of an individual contributor and a manager. Physicists bring a unique set of skills to the corporate environment, including a desire to understand the fundamentals, a solid foundation in physical principles, expertise in applied mathematics, and most importantly, an attitude: namely, that hard problems can be solved by breaking them into manageable pieces. In my experience, hiring managers in industry seldom explicitly search for physicists, but they want people with those skills.