

THE RIGHT STUFF: FINDING EXECUTIVES FIT FOR THE BIG CHALLENGES OF SMALL PHARMA

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– Chris Cashman
Chairman and CEO



Clinical stage drug development is not for the faint of heart. Human drug trials are complicated. The risks are high. And decisions must be made with the best information available.

The largest drug companies have hundreds of scientists and business managers, two-deep in every discipline, who can share the load and the decision-making.

Chairman and CEO of Marinus Pharmaceuticals, Chris Cashman, on the other hand, leads a lean and highly-focused team of just 15 professionals who must navigate the clinical, legal, and financial challenges of bringing new life-saving drugs to market.

Cashman is responsible for the design and execution of a lean business model that puts a high premium on people. It’s not enough that Cashman’s team be the best at what they do. They must also be able to handle the uncertainty of clinical stage drug development where questions are many and answers aren’t always clear.

“We’re building our team around our strategy which begins with patients at

Marinus Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a clinical stage biopharmaceutical company, is small but mighty with 14 employees and a pipeline with potential. In a company where every person truly counts, Marinus trusts The Chase Group to attract executives who are comfortable with ambiguity and have the ambition to make a big impact.

the center and is dedicated to bringing new, innovative drug therapies to market,” says Cashman. “We need people on our team who have the imagination, drive, and wide range of experiences to deliver on that strategy.”

To find and attract these rare individuals, Cashman works with The Chase Group.

“The Chase Group was referred to me by one of our board members and it’s been a great fit,” says Cashman. “Their process, their connections, and their results have been impressive. They’ve made a significant difference in our small team.”

A Vision for Improving Patients’ Lives

Cashman has a long and distinguished career in the pharmaceutical industry that spans three decades and includes senior executive assignments at Pfizer and SmithKline Beecham. Before signing on in 2011 first as a board member, and then as CEO with Marinus, Cashman was CEO of Protez Pharmaceuticals which was acquired by Novartis.

Founded in 2003, Marinus is currently in late stage trials with ganaxolone, its flagship product for epilepsy seizure control and postpartum depression.

In the last year alone, he has worked with The Chase Group on two key executive searches. One focused on recruiting a new head of regulatory affairs. The other involved finding a new chief medical officer. Both were a quicker and easier process than expected.

"I've been through many of these types of searches over the years, and I can tell you that both of our most recent recruiting projects were great experiences," says Cashman. "Karen and her team at The Chase Group clicked into gear, learned what we needed and liked, and then brought us only the best candidates. And they were all excellent which gave us many good options."

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Cashman says that while the pharmaceutical industry is huge, the business model at Marinus is much different – and more difficult to recruit for – than traditional big pharma companies.

"The Chase Group understands our vision and how to explain and position it with talented executives," says Cashman. "Dr. Masuoka, our chief medical officer, is a great example. She's been an incredible addition with her energy, drive, and neurology background. There aren't many neurologists out there with an appetite for small pharma companies like ours, but The Chase Group convinced her to listen to our story and imagine the possibilities."

The Pains and Gains in Brief

- > Marinus Pharmaceuticals, Inc., is tackling some of the biggest challenges in the biopharmaceutical industry, yet has fewer employees than a single department in a more traditional big pharma organization, which makes it a challenge to find qualified executives willing to make the leap to a smaller company.
- > The Chase Group uses its positioning and storytelling finesse to paint a vision of innovation and opportunity that can be shared with its vast network of experienced pharmaceutical executives.
- > Chairman and CEO of Marinus, Chris Cashman, has engaged The Chase Group on recent recruiting assignments that have added two top-performing executives to his small but productive team.

Cashman also likes that The Chase Group has a veritable "who's who" list of the top executives in the various biopharmaceutical specialties including neurology, psychiatry, and oncology. Quality individuals with track records to prove it are indicators of knowledge and a commitment to excellence.

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