



François Dabeux, PhD

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

R&D Leadership | Industrial Innovation | Digital Transformation | AI trainer

Ph.D. Organic Chemist with over 15 years of experience in the international chemical industry. I specialize in interim management mandates focused on strategic R&D performance improvement, digital transformation, and operational excellence. Combining high-level scientific rigor with a human-centered, business-oriented leadership style, I bridge the gap between complex laboratory research and commercial profitability. My expertise lies in aligning technical roadmaps with corporate strategy, securing intellectual property, and modernizing research governance.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Interim Management & Site Leadership: Critical management gap filling, site transitions, and urgent operational/HSE turnarounds.
- Industrial Transformation & R&D Scale-Up: Accelerating Lab-to-Fab transitions, process optimization, and complex workflow modernization.
- Operational Excellence: Strategic audits, bottleneck elimination, and productivity-driven performance execution.
- Strategic & Regulatory Governance: Cross-functional leadership, IP/REACH compliance, and CAPEX optimization.

KEY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Value Creation: Developed 4 alternative industrial solvents/formulations (expected €30M CM at maturity) and AO process catalysis improvements (€8M/year).
- Operational Impact: Achieved 25% reduction in industrial effluents and 6% productivity gains in continuous processes.
- Digital Leadership: Served as Business Owner for a global enterprise LIMS platform (1,400+ users across 11 international sites).
- Global Leadership: Managed large-scale international organizations (up to 1,800 members on 11 international sites) with a focus on safety, mentorship, and cultural cohesion.

KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

- Scientific Rigor & Shop-Floor Pragmatism: Ph.D. expertise combined with frontline execution.
- Sustainable ROI: Proven track record in circular economy implementation (waste-to-value).
- Change Management: User-centered approach to digital adoption and cross-functional alignment.

Professional Experience

NMC sa

2025 – 2026

Group Director Research & Development

- Conducted strategic audit and modernization of global R&D operations.
- Identified gaps in IP protection and regulatory compliance, establishing a proactive R&D model based on circular economy principles.

Syensqo S.A

Operational Excellence Project and Digital Transformation Leader

2023 – 2025

- **Program Management & Digital Transformation:** Developed and managed a global R&I network of 1800 members, significantly enhancing cross-functional collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- **Digital Product Ownership:** Served as Business Owner for the LiMS digital application, supporting 1,400 users across 11 research centers with three main modules (Analytical, Chemical, Equipment), improving data management and accessibility.
- **Policy Development:** Co-Authored policies for global R&I and Authored the LiMS application and its 3 additional modules. Implemented quarterly reviews of all accounts to ensure data quality and compliance.
- **Strategic Initiatives:** Supervised ELN initiatives, achieving a 30% adoption rate and 20% reduction in variable costs through strategic alignment and effective change management.
- **Innovation Security:** Spearheaded the implementation of an Innovation Security System, ensuring secure data management and enabling seamless AI integration for future advancements.

Solvay S.A

Innovation Excellence Leader | R&I Corporate

2023

- **Training & Development:** Delivered a comprehensive 6-module "Managing Innovation Project" training program to Solvay researchers (18 hours, 15 researchers per session), enhancing project management capabilities across the organization.
- **Process Improvement:** Developed and implemented a robust research project capitalization process with key stakeholders (11 GBUs, >700 projects, >800 Meuros), improving financial tracking and strategic decision-making.
- **Policy Development:** Authored a new policy for the capitalization process, adapting it from the financial capitalization policy IAS 38, demonstrating strong analytical and policy-making skills.

Research & Innovation Manager | GBU Peroxides

2019 – 2023

- **Team Leadership & Growth:** Successfully expanded and led the R&I team from 9 to 14 members, fostering a culture of innovation, creative thinking, and significantly enhancing capability and productivity for hydrogen peroxide chemistry processes and applications.
- **Portfolio Growth:** Spearheaded the development of the GBU portfolio, achieving a **30% growth** through strategic R&D initiatives and market alignment.

- **Industrial Implementation** (Individual Contributor & Manager): Led and contributed to the industrial implementation of critical processes, including:
 - Metal salts purification and valorization, resulting in **+€1M/year** in value and **25% reduction in effluents**, demonstrating commitment to circularity.
 - Continuous processes, leading to **+6% productivity** and **+€2M/year** in value, with a **20% reduction in effluents**.
- **Product Development**: Designed and developed 4 alternative solvents (Commercial Maturity @ **€30M**) and catalysis improvements (**€8M/year**) for the AO process.
- **New Value Generation**: Initiated projects in hydrogen peroxide stabilization and battery recycling, enabling new value generation up to **€22M/year** at maturity.
- **Formulation Development**: Created a new wound healing formulation (Commercial Maturity @ **€8M/year**).
- **Strategic Planning**: Built yearly strategic roadmaps in close collaboration with the Process Manager and R&I director, aligning R&D efforts with business objectives.
- **External Collaboration**: Liaised effectively with universities and research institutes, fostering external partnerships for cutting-edge research.
- **HSE Leadership**: Participated in quarterly HQ site Management Committee meetings, contributing to critical HSE decisions and ensuring compliance.

Researcher and Project Manager | GBU Peroxides

2014 – 2019

- **Project Management**: Developed and managed innovation projects on hydrogen peroxide's AO process from conception to successful industrialization, demonstrating strong project lifecycle management.
- **Team Leadership**: Led a team of 4-6 FTEs, fostering innovation and creative thinking within the research group.
- **International Collaboration**: Collaborated effectively with German, Chinese, and French universities for exploratory research in catalysis and organic synthesis fields.
- **Process Improvement**: Contributed to innovation process improvement by working closely with engineering teams on product specifications and prototypes, ensuring seamless transition from lab to industry.

Researcher | Organic electronics

2011 – 2014

- **Material Development**: Designed, synthesized, developed, and managed 35 new semi-conductor materials for OLED and OFET applications, working in tight collaboration with product evaluation teams and 3 external associate universities.
- **Supervision**: Supervised 6 trainees and 5 operators responsible for semiconductor synthesis, ensuring adherence to protocols and quality standards.

Université Libre de Bruxelles

Teaching Assistant & Associate | Organic Chemistry Dept

2004 – 2008

- **Curriculum Development**: Designed, prepared, and taught weekly laboratory exercises for 100 students (250 hours/year), enhancing practical skills in organic chemistry.
- **Mentorship & Training**: Instructed 6 laboratory technicians in sample preparation and equipment maintenance; trained and supervised 4 new teaching assistants, demonstrating strong mentorship and leadership.
- **Research Supervision**: Directed research projects for undergraduate students, fostering their scientific inquiry and research skills.
- **Lecturing**: Taught courses in organic & general chemistry, and spectroscopic identification of organic compounds (50 hours/year for BA1 to MA2 classes).

Education

- **Post-doctoral position in plasma chemistry** (2009-2010, Université Libre de Bruxelles): Surface modification by PECVD techniques at atmospheric pressure.
- **Post-doctoral position in photochemistry** (2008-2009, Université Libre de Bruxelles) : Synthesis of organometallic complexes and oligonucleotides for Carcinom treatment.
- **PhD in organic chemistry** (2002-2008, Université Libre de Bruxelles)
Thesis: Synthesis of ATP analogs, potential agonists of P2Y11 receptors.
- **Master in organic chemistry** (1998-2002, Université Libre de Bruxelles)
(Summa cum laude)
- **Nursing studies** (1996-1998, ISEI)
(1 year completed, summa cum laude)

Trainings

- **Certified Prince2 Foundation v7 (2026, QRP Int., People Cert)**
- **Certified AI trainer** (2026, Micro1)
- **Management Development Series** (2016, MDS training, 11 days, People Management)
- **International Management Seminar: IMS** (2016, Solvay, 5 days)
- **Leaderstep: Développer son leadership** (2014, 7 days, Dimension Consultance)
- **"Fundamental Project Management for Project Managers"** (2012, PMGs, Brussels, 3 days)

Languages

- **French:** Native
- **English:** Full professional proficiency
- **Dutch:** Limited working proficiency

Hobbies

- **Music:** Passionate guitarist with 30 years of experience, including 10 years in a rock band. Enjoys singing and exploring various musical genres.
- **Cooking:** Explores diverse culinary techniques and cuisines.
- **Gardening:** Designs and cultivates gardens, blending creativity with nature.
- **Dance:** Engaged in Argentine tango and salsa, appreciating rhythm and partnership.
- **Sports:** Enthusiastic about VTT (mountain biking), skiing, spinning, and running, maintaining an active lifestyle.
- **Teaching:** Enjoys teaching Inorganic and Organic Chemistry at the university level.
- **Medicine & Physiology:** Passionate about continuous learning in medicine and physiology.
- **Personal Development:** Committed to continuous self-improvement and finding new ways to grow.