

Worksheet: IP Searching

This worksheet is meant to help you complete a patent search in the area around your idea. As discussed in the video course materials, an initial patent search is useful in order to define the extent of prior art in the field of your invention and to help you understand the patentable aspects of your solution.

Make sure to look at the example materials in this section of the CD for real-world examples of initial patent searches.

- 1. Search the USPTO full-text patent database using a broad range of keywords in your technology area as well as your clinical area. Make a note of any patents that describe aspects of your invention.**
- 2. Perform a similar search of PCT (world) patent applications at the intellectual property digital library.**
- 3. From the list of similar patents that you have compiled, select the two or three most relevant. Read these documents thoroughly. Do the claims in these patents effectively block you from practicing (selling) your invention? Is your invention anticipated in the patent text, but not specified in the claims? Who is the assignee of these patents? Could you potentially license these patents from the patentholders?**
- 4. Once you understand the most relevant prior art, form a patenting strategy for your own innovation. Document as thoroughly as possible all of the aspects of your invention that you believe are not covered in the prior art, and have your documentation signed and dated by someone else.**