

Career Insights

from Lucy Randle, STAR Medical



Geoff Barnett has experienced many different roles within Pfizer, including District Sales Manager, Sales Operations Manager and Head of Field Force Effectiveness. Currently the UK's northern Regional Business Director, he spoke to Pf about his career development and offers some advice on maximising development opportunities.

How have you maximised your career development at Pfizer?

I have always worked on the premise that hard work and good results generate promotional opportunities. In addition, I have never been afraid to move "sideways" in order to broaden my expertise, for example my move from DSM to Special Projects Manager. Although this was set up as a secondment at an equivalent grade, it helped me to secure the Sales Operations Manager role that I wanted. I have always made the most of opportunities to develop skill-sets whilst trying to optimise my strengths and address any weaknesses.

Does Pfizer encourage you to gain experience by looking for horizontal career development?

The implementation of the talent management process within Pfizer has enabled me to manage my career effectively and allowed me to understand how I am viewed by my peers and senior colleagues. This transparency gives me the ability to make effective career decisions. Pfizer is also very clear about what it wants from its people and through Leader Behaviours has provided clarity around the expectations of each role and outlined how individuals are expected to behave when undertaking these roles.

Has moving roles helped your career development at Pfizer?

Absolutely. With the wealth of talented individuals in Pfizer it has become very clear in recent years that in order to move on to more senior roles within the business, it is important to have a varied career path, which allows for

a deep understanding of how the business works and how various departments fit together. For those colleagues who have designs on advancement I would advocate the process of movement between functions at an early stage, which builds understanding and puts in place a solid platform for the long-term.

What advice would you give to those starting a career in Sales?

1) Identify role models – adopting their behaviours and combining them with your inherent skills will make you a more rounded candidate for career progression.

2) If you have an opportunity to work on something different, which is outside of your comfort zone and will broaden your expertise – take it. Whilst horizontal moves are not always seen as a "promotion", it is a good step if the role enables you to bridge your developmental gaps more quickly.

3) Be honest with yourself about areas that need development and don't shy away from doing something about them. Conversely, always remember your strengths and play to them.

4) Be clear with your manager about what you want to achieve in your career long term. Generate a relationship that is honest where feedback can be given and received without malice.

5) Promotion always comes to those individuals who merit it – delivering excellent results in whatever you do is critical.

Lucy Randle looks at how to minimise stress when changing jobs

Choosing to change your job is a major decision and can sometimes result in significant upheaval. It is important that you take time to consider and avoid the temptation to rush into something that on the surface seems exciting and new. Whether the move is internal with your current employer or external with a new company altogether, you should take time to consider if it is a step in the right direction towards your longer-term career goals.

1. Max out!

Have you taken up all the development opportunities on offer in your current role and consistently met with objectives and targets? To put it simply, have you taken the job to the max? If not you need to consider seriously (a) staying and obtaining guidance to fulfil your potential and (b) if it is a good idea to apply for a similar type of job – you don't want to jump out of the frying pan and into the fire. Remember, a potential employer will need evidence of your most recent successes.

2. Bonus!

Make sure you hand your notice in at the right time. Ideally, give yourself the opportunity to close any big sales that you have been working on for a long time. Try to finish the sales cycle so that you will still receive your bonus.

3. Timing!

Similarly, consider what else will be going on in your personal life at the time that you will start the new job. Do you really want your first week to be during the kids' half term or when you're moving house? How will the move affect your family? Are you going to be at your best during this time?

Moving for the sake of a move will almost inevitably end in dissatisfaction, so 'think now and act later' is a key motto where career movements are concerned. The consultants at STAR would be happy to provide independent and confidential career advice.



The STAR team is constantly being exposed to useful and innovative ideas relating to aspects of employment and recruitment. Each month, a member of the team will share a favourite tip with you.

Abigail Wood - Recruitment Consultant for North Wales, North West & Yorkshire

TIP

"Remember to make good eye contact with all interviewers throughout an interview. And don't forget to smile!"



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