

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

As a businessperson who has worked globally, what have you learned about leadership from working in different countries and industries?

I've learned it's important to acknowledge and adapt to different cultures, environments and ways of working without losing your authentic self. It's an art. I had one role with a prior company in a country where I had lived for many years. At this time, instead of having global responsibility, I was the general manager for the country. While I was very familiar with the country and the company and thought I understood the culture, I underestimated how different subcultures can be. The lesson is, never underestimate the cultural aspect, even within the same company and country. Getting it right helps you better understand people and organizational needs and allows you to lead with higher impact.

Also, working in Portugal, Switzerland, Belgium and now Canada in global, regional and country roles has given me the opportunity to enrich my learning curve. It's important to be a collector of diverse experiences because at one point, the dots will all connect and create a broader perspective. Diverse experiences give you mental and social agility, problem-solving insights and confidence based not only on what you've done but also on who you are and who you want to be.

How is Takeda creating a diverse and inclusive organization and cultivating future leaders?

First, I'm passionate about uncovering people's potential. When people understand their potential, it's a superpower. It's important for leaders to empower others so they own their career path and are able to follow their dreams and passions, which results in their fulfillment. It's up to each person to define what they want their next step and ambition to be. Our role as leaders is to guide people along that journey and support them to uncover



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*General Manager
Takeda Canada*

their potential as they discover where they feel they're at their best.

Second, at Takeda, we're creating diversity in leadership—not just gender diversity, but diversity of experience, culture, backgrounds, age and time spent in different countries or industries. It's harder to measure these types of diversity, but they lead to a diversity of thought that enriches teams and organizations. Through these different perspectives, we create a better vision for the future. It's up to leaders to role model how to embrace diversity of thought and to create a safe space, a mindset and incentives that encourage people to be their authentic selves in all facets of their life, including work.

Takeda is seen as a leader in rare disease medicines. How can employers ensure they have appropriate benefits plan designs in place to best support employees in the event of a rare disease?

Rare diseases are not as rare as the name suggests. Three million people in Canada (one in 12) have a rare disease. These conditions are mostly genetic and disproportionately affect children—50% of all rare diseases begin in childhood and 30% of children with a rare disease won't live to see their fifth birthday. Managing rare diseases

has an impact not only on patients but also on caregivers. Takeda is taking a holistic approach to rare diseases and patient care. We're working both within our industry and with patient groups, health-care professionals, policymakers, regulators and payors to reduce the time to diagnose rare diseases, address the gaps in treatment and access to treatments, as well as infrastructure to collect real-world evidence. It's a shared responsibility—all stakeholders must work together toward better care for patients and caregivers impacted by rare diseases.

Employers have an important role to play, too. I would suggest they have flexibility in their benefits plan and broad coverage for rare disease medications in the event their employees or dependants develop a rare disease where treatment could allow them to work or even save their lives. Plans that provide broad coverage can improve access for patients and productivity for employees. Employers can also offer scheduling flexibility to make the environment more inclusive and equitable for caregivers of patients with rare diseases.

