



Interview with... Richard McEvoy July 2009

Beth Cauldwell, Managing Partner

Beth Cauldwell talks to Richard McEvoy, VP Indirect Channel and Cash and Carry for EMEA in JohnsonDiversey about his life, career and his thoughts on supply chain as a route to the MD role.

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JohnsonDiversey is one of the world's largest cleaning companies with annual sales of \$3.2 billion selling across 160 countries. Its brands include many well known names such as Mr Muscle, Persil and Dove and its customer base includes food service, healthcare, industrial, retailers, food and beverage and hotels.

Following a recent restructuring Richard has recently moved into his current role, leading a £500million business across EMEA. Prior to this as MD for the UK and Ireland, he led double digit sales and profit growth over an intense 18 month period.

Profile summary

Education	Leeds University
Professional qualifications	Masters in Chemical Engineering 1st class with Distinction
Recent Career	<p>2000 – To date JohnsonDiversey (owned by SC Johnson and Unilever)</p> <p>VP Indirect Channel & Cash & Carry, EMEA</p> <p>Managing Director, UK & Ireland</p> <p>Chief Procurement Officer, based USA</p> <p>VP Supply Chain Operations, EMEA</p> <p>VP Planning, Logistics & Customer Service</p> <p>Supply Chain Director, UK and Northern Europe</p> <p>1989 – 2000 Unilever/ICI</p> <p>Management Trainee and five promotions over 11 years to European Manufacturing Director</p>

Beth Cauldwell: From your early career in manufacturing, how did you come to move into supply chain?

Richard McEvoy: Having spent the first part of my career optimizing manufacturing it was clear that optimizing the whole supply chain, including logistics was the big prize for the business. The benefits to service, cost and inventory of doing this just drop out big time.

BC: What factors have been key to your career progression?

RM: I have moved jobs every couple of years throughout most of my career; at times being asked to take on a new challenge even before I had realised I was ready for it! Earlier in my career I benefited from mentoring and am now in position where I am mentoring others and helping them progress their careers. Working with people who have very high expectations of success has also been a major factor.

BC: What has been key to your success in each successive role?

RM: For me, having a great team is crucial. I build teams carefully, ensuring I bring together people with complementary skills and personalities. Diversity enables conflict, which is essential in arriving at the best decisions. I believe there are a few critical things that make a difference in realising the full potential of a business. Focussing on these with relentless followup, in my view accelerates results.

BC: How did the move to Managing Director from Chief Procurement Officer come about?

RM: Again, opportunity driven as I could see huge opportunities in the UK, the business had not grown this decade, and a move to an MD role was a logical step. Supply chain provides excellent preparation for an MD role. You already work with people across the whole organisation and have a good understanding of how it connects and all fits together. Procurement experience was handy too with the Sales force as I had lots of experience with good and bad ones and was used to putting deals and business cases together.

Over the last ten years there have been quite a few examples of Supply Chain Directors becoming MD's and it's now being recognised as a route to the CEO role.

BC: How do you balance work and family life?

RM: Home and work are both integral and its key to achieve a balance. I do this through having a clear view of my different roles, that is, at work as coach and change agent and at home as a husband, father etc. I must say having 4 children also helps focus the mind!

BC: Do you have any regrets in how your career has evolved?

RM: With hindsight I should perhaps have moved in to a business role earlier, rather than being tied to functional excellence. But I was enjoying making savings and having a big impact on the p and l as Chief Procurement Officer and as VP Supply Chain Operations.

BC: Would you advise your children to follow your career path?

RM: In deciding on a career path, children need to "find their passion" so I will be helping my children to find their passion as I've found mine.

For more information on this interview, or if you would like to feature, please contact the partners via:

ingoodcompany@snowdontate.com

www.snowdontate.com