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LEADERSHIP THOUGHTS

Diversity Champion: Jaime Goehner, Commercial Manager at ADM

INSIDER

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Jaime Goehner, Commercial Manager at ADM

To help drive diversity and inclusion in the global commodity industry, HC Insider will be speaking to diverse individuals in the commodities sector to explore their career journey and learn how they are fostering an inclusive workforce. Meet our first Diversity Champion: Jaime Goehner, Commercial Manager at ADM.

When looking at the top-tier leaders at the world's biggest commodity traders, Bloomberg reported that less than 5 percent are women. In a \$2 trillion business that supplies the global economy with raw materials, the gender inequality is overwhelmingly apparent. Some of the biggest trading houses have no women at all in senior executive roles. When it comes to ethnic diversity, the industry is lagging massively behind other sectors.

As part of a new HC Insider series, we will be interviewing diverse individuals in the commodities sector to convey their personal and professional journey to highlight the importance of an inclusive workforce. Meet our first Diversity Champion, Jaime Goehner, Commercial Leader at ADM.

HC Insider: Tell us about your education and career leading up to ADM.

JG: My undergraduate degree was in Communications and my graduate degree was in International Business. I grew up in North Dakota in a farming community, so I think I naturally moved into commodities because I have a passion for food, understanding how our food is produced, and why it is produced in that way. I also have a passion for understanding macro-trends and I like to know how consumer demands are changing. It has always been a passion of mine. I don't anticipate moving out of this field, although I could see myself moving into the innovation and/or technology side. But I intend to stay in food and agriculture for as long as I can.

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“I’m passionate about paying it forward by coaching and mentoring talent. I get involved in committees and mentor employees in other areas of our company.”

HC Insider: What does your role as Commercial Manager involve at ADM?

JG: As a Commercial Manager at ADM I have the opportunity to lead a dynamic business in our Ag and Oilseed division. My role involves team management as I coach and develop our merchandising staff. My role also covers the risk management strategy and day-to-day trading activities of commodities such as Flax and Canola. Our team selects the portfolio of products that we process at our facility in Red Wing, Minnesota. At the end of the day, I am responsible for delivering a profitable P&L, setting our commercial strategy, and planning the capital investment outlook for the Red Wing Asset.

HC Insider: What were some of the challenges you faced during your career and how did you overcome them?

JG: When I think about the challenges that I have faced in my career, I think about them at an industry, professional, and personal level. At an industry level, I have dealt with the adversity of leading through different commodity cycles and volatility cycles. When I came into the industry in 2008/2009, I worked directly with dairy farmers that were going out of business. Seeing that volatility impact their business and livelihood was difficult. I had to resolve issues with customers going through challenging times and it taught me a lot about myself and leading with empathy through difficult periods.

At a professional level, I’ve demonstrated resilience just by being a woman in a commodity trading or commercial management role and having to garner the same respect for my decisions, knowledge, and competence as my peers. Not everyone has the same open mindedness or passion for diversity and inclusion in our industry but delivering results and building trust

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On a personal level, the biggest challenge has been becoming a mother and balancing motherhood with the increasing responsibilities in the workplace. Having children has meant that I have a schedule that might look different than my peers. It affected my mental health. At times it felt difficult to explain even when I was delivering the same or better results. Staying true to myself and my family has ultimately allowed me to be the best version of myself as a leader in the commodity trading field.

“I am indebted to my mentors, role models, phenomenal managers, and peers that I’ve had along the way. In terms of role models, I’ve had people that have motivated me, inspired me, and helped me to set higher career goals when I was starting out in the agriculture industry.”

HC Insider: Do you remember the constructive feedback you received after a job interview?

JG: If I didn’t have my best day, there is a chance I didn’t provide examples of my work with enough detail. So, it would be a case of having to look back and see how I could reframe my answers to get my point across in a concise way for that interview panel. Also, you often hear that a woman looks at a job description and if she doesn’t meet every single criterion, it might prevent her from applying for the job. Whereas a man might meet 50 percent of the criteria and not see it as an issue. I’ve always thought about this when I look at opportunities and remind myself that I don’t need to have everything. The feedback I have been given is that it’s okay to be uncomfortable and apply for roles that require me to stretch myself. The important thing is how you address your gaps to the interview panel and ensure you have a plan of how you would tackle those gaps in the first 90 days in a new role.

HC Insider: What have been some of your career highlight?

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HC Insider: During your career, what has been critical to your success?

JG: I am indebted to my mentors, role models, phenomenal managers, and peers that I've had along the way. In terms of role models, I've had people that have motivated me, inspired me, and helped me to set higher career goals when I was starting out in the agriculture industry. Having people that I can look up to has been critical to my success. My mentor is Heather Beaubien, Director of Sustainability at Chick-fil-A Corporation in Atlanta, GA. We have built this relationship over four years. Also, I have worked very hard for every opportunity that I have been given and I have worked with integrity. While I put a lot of pressure on myself, I've created an environment where I can be a good employee, a good leader as well as a good wife/mother/community member. There are just times when you have to give more energy to one thing and find a way to get that balance again.

HC Insider: What are some of the things you have learned from your mentor?

JG: Your mentor must be a good fit for you. If you have someone that shares similar passions or interests, then that also helps the relationship because of the personal connection you share. I think it helps having someone that is outside of your current scope of business responsibility or your business area, so you can see things from a different perspective. My mentor, Heather, has helped me implement changes on my team by talking over the difficulties I'm facing and working through the facts objectively. When team dynamics are being challenged, it is helpful to get insights from a mentor that has you and your teams' best interests in mind. Having an objective perspective from the outside helps bring about a better outcome. Honestly, some of the best things I've learned have been through listening to how Heather handles specific situations with her team. Over time I've applied similar ideas, trainings, or principles with my own team. It's an amazing dynamic.

HC Insider: What are you passionate about and how has that fuelled your success?

JG: I'm passionate about paying it forward by coaching and mentoring talent. I get involved in committees and mentor employees in other areas of our company. I get involved in industry events and organizations as well. It's important for me to see people grow in their careers and pave the way for the next generation in food and ag and commodities trading. I am a champion for diversity and inclusion. I expect a diverse candidate pool for each role that I post, even in

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different leaders inside and outside of our organization to create opportunities for education and outreach. It's important to me that our communities are progressing, my company is innovating, and investing in ways to do business differently. I've also worked over the past 12 months to develop a direct-to-consumer brand that is launching in March 2023 at Natural Products Expo West. Our brand mission is being people centred, planet conscious, and purpose driven. It's fulfilling to be part of this meaningful work at ADM. I want to continue to contribute to the evolution happening across our industry.

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HC Insider: How have you helped to develop talent?

JG: One thing I have done is seek to understand people as individuals. I learn about what motivates them and give them meaningful work assignments. I also strive for a safe environment and by that, I mean psychologically safe. An environment that allows open and honest discussions. I set aside time to listen and talk through what they are experiencing in their roles. I give timely feedback because people need to hear feedback to continue to improve and grow. Finally, it's important for me to develop talent at an individual level and at a team level by continuing to stretch and challenge them. The approach I took in my first managerial role looks a lot different to the approach I take today. I've learned and evolved, and I think that is good to admit.

HC Insider: How has the agriculture and food industry evolved throughout your career?

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HC Insider: What are the benefits of achieving gender equality in commodity trading?

JG: When I think about our engineering, manufacturing, and all of the other operational roles that affect our ability to trade commodities we have a big gap to address. In order to achieve gender parity, we need better work environments for these roles so that they work for different people. When we have diverse teams with diversity of thought and experience, we create better ideas and ultimately are better decision-makers. Ruth Bader Ginsburg once said: “Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception”. The decisions made in the commodity trading world will be better when we reach gender parity. We're not there yet. I am committed to being vocal within our industry to set specific goals and timelines around achieving parity. Thank you to HC Group for giving me this opportunity and platform to share my story.

Jaime's three top tips for career success:

- 1.** When you have an opportunity, make the most of it. Work hard and work with integrity.
- 2.** Learn as much as you can. I believe you learn more in tough times and through adversity, so remember that and stay positive.
- 3.** Get involved and be open to change. The more openminded you are, the better off you will be. Don't pass up an opportunity to get involved. When you find yourself seeking a change to a new company, a new job, or an entirely new career path there are a lot of opportunities and insights that can come through your network.