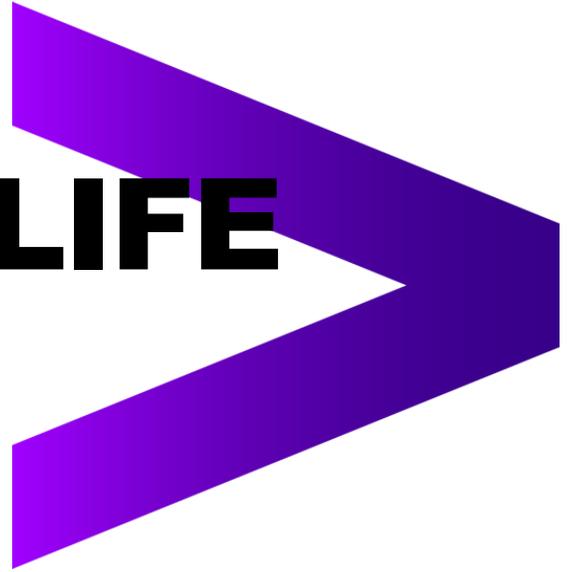


Accenture Life Sciences
Patient Inspired. Outcomes Driven.

**LEADING IN LIFE
SCIENCES**
ONE GENOME AT A TIME



Joanne Hackett
Chief Commercial Officer
Genomics England

I'm Joanne Hackett. I'm the Chief Commercial Officer at Genomics England and I'm delighted to be here.

What inspired you to be a scientist?

I think I was inherently quite a curious child growing up. Anything to do with biology and life science and even though I probably didn't realize that, you know, frogs and their eggs and various things like that were aspects of biology, I was quite curious to see how things like that would develop. And I actually have Celiac disease, so I was quite curious as a child as to why I couldn't eat cake, for example, and other children potentially could and have a slightly different experience. So, I was quite interested to understand, I think, the underlying aspects of these sorts of things to do with life science and biology.

As a woman, what career barriers have you experienced?

I think the biggest barrier for me, it wasn't that people didn't tell me I wasn't good enough and I didn't have enough ambition or talent, it was just the opportunities weren't probably presented in the exact same way that they would have been or I had seen with other colleagues. And I think for me, it was that relentless pursuit of wanting to actually do better and to do more that gave me the confidence, I think, to take a step further. And I also had a very good support network as well of individuals who kept pushing me and telling me to keep doing more and not losing the fight and to keep on really pursuing my dream.

Has there been a leader who made an impact on your career?

My supervisor, who was this high powered, very driven woman, who had her own company and was very successful. She had been asking me to do various pieces of work for her which, of course, I said yes, that's what you do in North America. When I was in the university system and I think it's not that much different now, you don't necessarily have a contract, so you kind of work almost day-to-day effectively. And so, clearly, when your supervisor says to do something, you say yes. So, there I was fevering away, helping make various materials for her. And after a few months, she asked me to come into her office, sat me down and I was pretty sure I was going to be fired. Didn't really know why, but I was pretty sure I was going to be fired. And she said, I've got a couple questions for you. Yes, sure. And she said, one of the things that I've noticed is that you've been saying yes, and you've been making all these materials for me. I said, yes, of course, you've asked me to do it. And she said, well, quite simply, we've got a problem. How much longer are you planning on saying yes and allowing me to take advantage of you? To which I replied, as long as you want me to effectively. That you're my boss. And she said, no, it stops today. It's two things: you obviously are very good at this and you can either make the decision to be rewarded for what you do or you can make the decision to leave because I'm not letting you be walked over any longer.

So effectively, she's the one who sat me down and gave me the confidence and the ability and the money, the \$65 to set up my company. So, it wasn't a matter of me sitting there being really excited about a commercial opportunity, it was someone giving me the opportunity and presenting it for me. I was quite keen, I think, to understand what the commercial world looked like, but it wouldn't have been something I would have ventured out and done on my own.

Are career women expected to behave differently than their male counterparts?

I think women feel that they have to do that extra little bit to be able to show that they are doing the same as their male colleagues because if you're not doing enough, for example, then are you maybe being lazy, taking time off to be with your children, what is it? Whereas, if you're a bit more open about it and showing what you're doing, it seems to be there's a bit more traction behind that, which is a bit unfair.

And I think the other thing that kind of perpetuates this is the fact that there ends up being a particular way of evaluating women, say if you are in a meeting and you're appearing to be very aggressive, that is not a very good thing. Whereas, the male colleagues who are challenging something, well done you, way to go. And I'll never forget at one of my appraisals, after my appraisal was over, all was said and done, things were all very good and my boss said to me at the end of it, just wanted to let you know that your colleagues, all male in the senior executive team, I wanted to let you know that your colleagues think that you're a bit ambitious. To which I replied, isn't that why you hired me? To which he replied, yes, yes, of course, of course, I just wanted to let you know that.

So, I've never, ever heard a man in a commercial role be criticized for being ambitious. But that was my words of wisdom at the end of my appraisal was that my colleagues perceived me as being ambitious.

How do you balance your personal and professional responsibilities?

Yeah, I think everybody makes sacrifices in their career and in their personal life, depending on what their motivation is and what makes them happy. I've always wanted to be in roles where I have been doing something that is very beneficial and to me, that's the ultimate reward is when I can feel very useful and I give something back. So sometimes these are opportunities that may not necessarily be around the corner, therefore, one has to move.

I currently live in the UK. I'm obviously from Canada, so I've made a sacrifice, if you will, by moving geographically to find an opportunity. And I think with respect to the way people balance their personal and professional lives, it depends again on what motivates you. Sometimes I get accused of potentially not being able to shut off enough, but for me personally, it takes two seconds to check an email and feel satisfied that things are taking over. I'd rather catch those things early. And for me, that's actually not a problem.

If you were to take my phone away and not let me touch it for two weeks, that would be a problem. So people respond to things differently. And I think for me, I'm a Yogi, I'm a yoga teacher in my spare time. I make time for yoga every single day. That's kind of my mental release, if you will, and having that one hour of decompression is probably the same as what it takes some people two weeks to need for a holiday.

And also, I think sometimes if you don't enjoy your job as much as others, it's also very difficult to really wind down and to actually need more holiday. And I've been quite blessed in the fact that I really enjoyed what I've been doing and, therefore, it's almost a pain sometimes to be away from work. And as silly as it sounds, my team have heard me say this and they've received emails to prove this. And the fact that I sometimes get so excited it's difficult to sleep. I don't want to miss the opportunity to do something great.

What does being the Chief Commercial Officer for Genomics England mean to you?

Genomics England is one of these truly lovely places to work and I say that because I've been there now for about two years. There was no Chief Commercial Officer two years ago at Genomics England. Genomics England is a company was setup about 5-1/2 years ago and the whole point of setting up

the company was to see whether or not there was going to be any sort of reason why the government in the UK would look at doing whole genome sequencing as routine clinical care.

So, the 100,000 Genomes Project, which many of you may have heard of before was the one thing that Genomics England was asked to deliver when it was first established. So, I'm very pleased to say that in December, we actually reached the 100,000th genome, which is very exciting. So, the project has been a huge success.

For me, again, going back to the word commercial and what that really means to me is access. How can we let individuals such as scientists, researchers, industry users access this vast database to be able to make better improvements with respect to medications, clinical trials and just be a lot smarter when it comes to the overall design, some experiments? And with respect to the academics who are doing this research, can they find novel genes or mutations that actually make diagnosis.

So, my job as Chief Commercial Officer is to make this data as accessible as possible, respecting the privacy of the individuals who have donated this data and making sure we are as transparent with our ethics as possible. And in the field that I'm in, it's one of these ones where every minute is potentially touching someone's life. And to me, that's extremely important and rewarding.

So, whilst one might have to make sacrifice and that can be a variety of different things, I personally believe the reward for me has been worth it.

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