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## 2018 June Edition

### Gabriela von der Hoeh, Head of Procurement

Company: Bayer Switzerland

#### 1. How and when did procurement & supply become your passion and career choice?

It all started with a commercial apprenticeship at a former subsidiary of Bayer, called Troponwerke and after that I chose which department to join and I decided for purchasing. I had the notion that purchasing would be interesting because it is a real driver to increase cost competitiveness and to provide innovation to the business. Initially I was involved in buying office and IT services and I immediately fell for procurement. The longer I stayed and the more diverse and global the spend portfolios I handled, the more passionate I became about the role, the responsibility, and the difference procurement made for the company. The collaboration across the teams and the people development inside the function made the work all the more fascinating. Especially for me: I got a chance to work for three years in Spain and to get the lead for a project in Latin America.

#### 2. What is on your agenda today? What takes most of your time currently?

On top of the day-to-day business, several aspects are currently of high priority. Our top priority is to collaborate and to be an integral part of the businesses of Bayer. In order to do so, we need to drive functional excellence and maintain the highest performance for our stakeholders. Another important topic is the new global online purchasing portal which we recently implemented. Right now we are in the progress of filling the relevant data for our Bayer employees in Switzerland.

#### 3. How do you see the CPO role evolving next 3-5 years?

The largest changes will come from a digital transformation. CPO's will have to be fully on top of technology and in turn, this will make us flexible and agile, allowing us to focus more on the markets and proactively engage with stakeholders.

#### 4. Where should Procurement report in the organization in order to enable sustainable performance?

From my experience every organizational setup had its advantages and disadvantages. It is important that Procurement is highly visible at Board level. At Bayer, the Procurement organization is a direct reporting line of the CFO. We have also received a clear mandate of our board of management for our transformation journey at Procurement: To unleash business potential for Bayer by optimally connecting internal demand with external supply, generating innovations, unfolding our full efficiency potential and by delivering value beyond savings. By doing so, we will understand better what Bayer needs, acting as real business partners to our stakeholders.

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## 5. How is talent evolving from your viewpoint?

Nowadays, people understand the value-add of the procurement for the company, which is driving value beyond savings. This also means that more and more talents are approaching us to apply. Even employees from other parts of the company are interested in what we do. We also see an increase of interest from young professionals. In order to explain to them what value procurement delivers, we reach out to universities through various channels and inspire the next generation..



## 6. What would be your one piece of advice to the future procurement leaders?

In addition to some years in Procurement, gain expertise in other areas and functions. Get to know the business to understand what your stakeholders will need becomes more and more important. And engage suppliers from the beginning to get the most value out of their innovation potential.

## 7. What differentiation does Switzerland offer as a place to do business?

Switzerland is strategically located at the center of Europe and offers an international environment to conduct business. At Bayer in Switzerland, we have employees from 60 nationalities in three different sites. You will learn a lot from the diverse, creative and innovative people. This makes Bayer Switzerland an interesting place to work in.

The above CPO interview is part of a series of management-level insights from Swiss-based global procurement leaders. Switzerland is home to some of the most successful multi-national companies and non-government organizations. CIPS Switzerland uniquely engages with them and offers our community best-practice events, workshops and networking opportunities. More info via:  
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