

Personal pride

Martha Medina

Company: Innovative Brands, LLC, Phoenix

Title: Research & Development Manager

Years with company: 1 1/2

Job description: Develops new products under the Pert Plus (shampoo) and Sure (deodorant) brands. Works with marketing department to make sure products are what the consumers want. Other responsibilities include managing regulatory, quality control and quality assurance; and management and implementation of technical and technology transfers.

Resume highlight: Ph.D. in Biochemistry from University of San Diego; launched seven new products under the Pert Plus and Sure brand names in less than a year; currently working on an MBA from the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM) in Mexico.

Most important skills in your field: Assertiveness, confidence, creativity and flexibility.

Best career advice you have received: “You can’t be afraid to speak up. Sometimes, once you’ve done it, you might think you made a mistake, but when you speak up, people listen. Big things, great mentors have come into my life when I’ve spoken up. I learned more from those experiences than from just ‘cruising’ through the job or through life.”

Life lessons learned on the job: “Not every very day will be the best day, or even a good day. But things don’t happen on their own, you have to make them happen. If you are at a job you don’t like, or if things in life are not what you want them to be, just raise your head up high, respect yourself and push

through it. Things *will* get better. Take risks and *know* yourself, know you *can* do it.”

What does it take to launch a new product (from drawing board to the shelf)? “To get a new product ‘on the shelf,’ it takes a lot of hard work from many departments. First, concept work has to take place to ensure that ideas generate jive with consumers, that there will be interest to buy and interest to use the new product. Then, development of the product formula begins with new ingredients that might make a good story to consumers and very importantly to the trade - to the stores that will accept the product. Fragrances are also developed at this time to match those product concepts, and once formulas are finalized, testing has to prove that the product is safe for consumers to use, and that it performs according to the claims made on the label. Concurrent with this work, a package/bottle/container is selected, labels are developed and a story is built so that sales can then sell it.”

Proudest career accomplishment: “The day I went to the grocery store and showed for the first time the products I developed to those who got me through the stressful times. There is no better feeling than to share those successes with my family and friends, the people you draw strength and support from.”



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Business role model: “My aunt ... She was named a Top 10 entrepreneur in Mexico two years ago, owns a biotechnology company among other things and has been truly successful in being recognized for what she does and is capable of doing. I hope to one day achieve what she has been able to through hard work, determination, strength and character.”

Closing quote: “A lot of people notice when you succeed, but they don’t see what it takes to get there.” ■

 I have always been scientifically curious ... As funny as it sounds, it was fascinating to me what it was about the biochemistry of hair that made it curly, wavy or straight. 

– Martha Medina