

A portrait of Paul Lirette, a man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred office setting with windows and a flag.

GlaxoSmithKline

Taking Initiative

Talking with Paul Lirette, Vice-President,
Sales and Marketing, GlaxoSmithKline

Please review your career path to date, leading up to your appointment as Vice-President, Sales and Marketing at GSK.

I have been working in the pharmaceutical industry since 1985, when I graduated from the *Université du Québec à Montréal* with a Bachelor's degree in Business Management. I also earned an MBA from the *Université de Sherbrooke* in 1998.

I joined GlaxoSmithKline as Regional Sales Manager in 1987. I quickly learned that this is a company passionate about three things—its employees, its customers, and the constant search for innovative products and solutions for patients and health-care partners. These passions reflected my values too. Following a couple of early promotions, I was appointed director of GSK's *Bureau d'affaires du Québec* in 1996, in addition to heading the company's

Paul Lirette, GSK Vice-President, Sales and Marketing.

HIV/AIDS division. In 1999, I was promoted to National General Manager, Customer Relations. I took on the position of Vice-President, Sales, for Canada in 2001 and became head of both Sales and Marketing in late 2003.

What goals have you set for GSK in the areas of sales and marketing?

My first goal is to build marketing excellence within GSK, and that means attracting, training, and retaining the best marketers we can find.

Second, I always challenge my team to do a better job of understanding our clients' current needs and anticipating their future needs. We are battling for market share in what I would call a hyper-competitive market. We must be ready to win with marketing strategies that are innovative and that can be executed effectively.

In terms of sales, our goal is to be the best in the industry, as seen by our customers. Our sales force is rated among the top in the industry, so I think we are well on our way to achieving that. We are market leaders in all of our core therapeutic areas and our sales force has become very good at delivering value to customers and performing well against aggressive targets. To maintain an effective sales force, though, we must continuously challenge the traditional ways of providing value in the marketplace. For example, we realized that, like most companies, we were offering continuing health education programs that were long on information, but short on real learning and results. We changed our approach to case-based and accredited programs, which have been very well received by our customers. We take great pride in the fact that our continuing health education programs are ranked number one in the industry, based on the quality of speakers and practicality of the information provided.



Advair® and Avandia® are two of GSK's best-known medicines.

We have also built career paths for our sales force. If someone wants to remain in sales, there are senior roles to aspire to. If they prefer to gain experiences in other areas in the company, such avenues are also open to them.

How would you describe your own management style?

You cannot dissociate business success from people. This means that, as a leader, you must be focused on bringing the right people on board and then creating an environment where people are valued and given the opportunity to grow. My philosophy is that people leave people, not companies, so I work very hard on creating an environment where managers can spend significant time coaching employees.

In my experience, GSK is an environment where people are given the right tools to get the job done and where there are clear objectives that have been set through joint decision-making. I also believe that you can best help people grow by providing constant feedback around agreed-upon metrics.



The GSK marketing leadership team. First row (from left to right): Paul Lirette, Vice-President, Sales and Marketing; Cheryl MacDiarmid, Respiratory; Barry Markowsky, HIV/Oncology/Vaccines and Business Development; Middle: Carol Bureau, Marketing Alliances; Back row (from left to right): Tim Noble, Strategic Marketing Services; Ed Dybka, Diabetes/Infectious Diseases; Mike Cels, Central Nervous System.

Consequently, I tend to have an open style of management, one that involves and challenges people. I believe there is great value in inviting ideas and debate from team members before making the tough decisions. I also believe that, coupled with the right mix of programs and resources, people need constant feedback to help them improve in their work. I am also a strong believer in “shadow leadership”. Poor performance and behaviour in your employees is a reflection on your failing as a manager and on what you are willing to tolerate. I believe a leader must be accountable for helping his or her people improve.

What are GSK’s goals for the next few years, from a commercial viewpoint?

First, we plan to maintain our dominant position in the industry by delivering unmatched value to our customers. We will do this by offering excellent medications and by ensuring that the information we provide physicians is as helpful as possible. Physicians’ lives are becoming busier all the time and we are evaluating the most effective ways of communicating with them. This includes how we call on them and how we offer educational programs.

Second, we want to improve the support we provide to employees and help them maximize the time they spend with customers. We are also seeking innovative ways of training and communicating with our sales force. For example, a recent initiative is e-learning, which lets our people learn at their own pace, without having to leave their territory.

Third, we are going to ensure that each of the exciting new products in our pipeline is given an outstanding launch. That will mean preparing the market well in advance by engaging the support of opinion leaders and specialists. We are currently examining the way we interact with opinion leaders to ensure they feel comfortable giving us open and honest feedback on our products and the way we market and sell them.

What are the current therapeutic focuses of GSK in Canada and what does each focus contribute to the overall business?

In Canada, as well as internationally, we have a dominant position in four therapeutic areas:

- respiratory ailments, such as asthma, allergy, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD);
- central nervous system disorders, including depression, migraine, epilepsy, and Parkinson’s disease;
- infectious diseases, like HIV/AIDS and herpes; and
- gastrointestinal/metabolic disorders, such as diabetes.

We are also a leader in the increasingly important area of vaccines. Twinrix®, our vaccine for hepatitis A and B, is a good example. Having a diverse and balanced product portfolio has been a key element in the

growth and success of GSK. Our portfolio has given us a strong competitive advantage as we move forward and continue to expand our product pipeline.

GSK has achieved considerable progress in the area of public-private sector partnerships. Could you give us an example of what you are doing?

The best example is our PRIISME program, which was established in 1999 by GSK and our health and government partners in Quebec. PRIISME is an acronym for Program to Integrate Information Services and Manage Education. It consists of 25 regional projects dedicated to the effective management of chronic illness and to educating health-care professionals and patients.

To date, PRIISME has trained more than 3,000 health professionals and has helped over 30,000 patients better understand and manage illness. We are proud of the fact that PRIISME was cited by a Quebec government commission as a visionary model of a public-private sector partnership. Based on the program's success, we have now extended it to include treatment of diabetes and are introducing PRIISME in Ontario.

Can you give us an indication of where your research and new product activity is directed, and the timeline for the introduction of new products into the market?

Our strategy is to complement our strengths. GSK has a very large and rapidly maturing pipeline, with a total of 147 projects in clinical development, spanning a variety of therapeutic areas. These include 82 new chemical entities (NCEs), 45 product line extensions, and 20 vaccines. Our goal is to bring more than 20 NCEs to Phase III development over the next three years, which we anticipate will lead to a record number of filings over the next five years.



Philip Leja, Quality Control Analyst, focuses on his work in GSK's manufacturing and development facility. The combination of manufacturing and product development in the same building is unique within the Canadian pharmaceutical industry.

Oncology is one of the therapeutic areas where great progress is being made. We are currently testing a once-daily oral therapy that is effective in the treatment of solid tumours, including lung, bladder, head and neck, and gastric cancers. Another promising product is a vaccine that may prevent cervical cancers.

Respiratory medicine is another area where GSK has a strong heritage. The company is building on the knowledge base underlying Advair®, one of the world's leading asthma treatments, with development of the next-generation therapy designed to treat asthma, COPD, and allergic rhinitis.

Diabetes is another strong area for us and we expect to see exceptional growth in this category in the years to come. GSK's Avandia® is an important therapy for the treatment of Type 2 diabetes and we have some landmark outcome trials that are ongoing in Canada. Among other initiatives, we plan to launch several new fixed-dose combination treatments.

How have the new R_x&D guidelines impacted the way GSK conducts its business in Canada?

We are in full compliance with the changes to the Code, and we will continue to reflect this commitment in our policies. I view this as a very important issue that affects the pride we take in our industry. We are all proud to work in the pharma industry and we want our families and business partners to take pride in this industry too. We want them to know how our industry insists on proper guidelines for marketing products and on ensuring that physicians will prescribe the right medication to their patients. I'm sure that everyone in our industry would agree with me on that.

What are the major issues that currently impact GSK and the pharma industry, with regards to communicating with customers and promoting products? What issues do you foresee in the future?

We see an opportunity in improving communications with customers. As I said before, there are a growing number of physicians who no longer see salespeople or who spend only limited time with them. We have to find more effective ways of communicating the patient benefits of our medications to better support the efforts of our sales force.

On a broader level, our industry needs to be positioned as a full partner in the health-care system's challenges and solutions. Accomplishing this will have a very positive effect on the perception of the industry and on improved access to customers. **CPM**

Alzheimer Disease

Dispelling the myths



There are many myths surrounding Alzheimer Disease — about the cause, the prevention and the people who have it.

Get the facts.

Visit our Web site at www.alzheimer.ca or contact your local Alzheimer Society

Help for Today. Hope for Tomorrow

Alzheimer Society

Myth 6 Alzheimer Disease is preventable.

Reality: Because there is no known cause for Alzheimer Disease, there is no conclusive evidence that Alzheimer Disease can be prevented. There is, however, a growing amount of evidence that lifestyle choices that keep mind and body fit may help reduce the risk. These choices include physical exercise, a healthy diet including fresh fruits, vegetables and fish, as well as keeping your brain active.