Ten-minute chat

Having achieved his clinical goals, Aiz Baig did an MBA. He is currently senior product marketing manager with Eickemeyer Veterinary Equipment, helping vets and nurses improve clinical outcomes.

When did you decide you wanted to be a vet?
I decided I wanted to be a vet from an early age; for me that meant 10 years old. I directed my education towards biological sciences and animal husbandry to achieve the requirements to gain admission into veterinary school. After being accepted by the University of Liverpool, my next goal was to become a small animal orthopaedic surgeon.

How did you get to where you are today?
My veterinary career began with volunteering at a neutering clinic in Cyprus with the International Fund for Animal Welfare. I gained valuable experience with tissue handling and working in a fast-paced environment. Over the next few years I worked in small animal practice, continuing to gain experience in orthopaedic and soft tissue surgery. I also went to New Zealand to learn small animal surgery techniques.

A few years after returning to the UK, I found myself as a junior clinical scholar at the University of Glasgow Veterinary School. This involved working alongside well-known veterinary specialists, which helped enhance my knowledge and the clinical skills learned in practice. It was intellectually stimulating and continued to drive my surgical interest. A key insight that I learned during my internship was that many of the surgical residents had worked for the PDSA because of the charity’s high surgical caseload. I did the same and worked for the PDSA for a number of years. However, during this time, I had a change of heart and decided to focus on a career in management.

The timing of my decision coincided with the financial crisis of 2008/09 when companies were reluctant to hire individuals from a clinical background. Several of my friends and family members recommended completing a Master of Business Administration so that I would be a more attractive candidate when the economy recovered. After some research, I decided that Henley Business School’s MBA programme as a full-time student would be ideal for me. The intensive course covered a variety of management topics including finance, marketing, operations, human resources, strategy, leadership and entrepreneurship. This helped my successful transition into the corporate sector.

My best career move after being awarded my MBA has been working with Eickemeyer Veterinary Equipment as its senior product marketing manager.

What does your job involve?
The main duties of my role involve market research, marketing strategy, technical support, product development, new product launches, coordinating resources, organising CPD courses, product lifecycle management and participating in European trade shows.

What do you like most about your job?
The most rewarding part of my job is developing new products that help vets improve animal welfare. This reflects why I wanted to work in the veterinary sector in the first place – compassion for animals. The most important part of my job is making vets aware of how these products can make their clinical jobs easier, more enjoyable and improve clinical outcomes.

Is there anything you don’t like?
One of the greatest challenges working in an organisation that is spread across several countries and time zones is communication. Not only is there an issue with time, but there can also be language barriers. However, most corporate organisations that work in more than one country face similar issues and use various forms of communication to help reduce miscommunication.

What advice would you give someone considering a similar career?
Familiarity with business management and people management skills are essential and an additional language is useful.

What was your proudest moment?
My life has been made up of two distinct career paths; a clinical career and a marketing career. Clinically, my proudest moment was identifying and surgically correcting a persistent right aortic arch in a six-week-old puppy. In my non-clinical career, it has to be the global launch of Eickemeyer’s orthopaedic implants onto the veterinary market in 2014.

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