

Career Sheet: Senior Manager Innovation



ANJA FELDMANN (SENIOR MANAGER INNOVATION, BASF)

I have a communication background: I started my career as a professional journalist with a degree in journalism studies from Dortmund University and Slavonic languages (Ruhr-Universität Bochum). I spent one year in Japan, studied and worked in Russia extensively and was a lecturer for the German Academic Exchange Service at Tongji University in Shanghai for six years. After joining BASF in 2008, I built up a new field - Research and Innovation communication - and was responsible for science conferences, contests and exhibitions. I covered stakeholder management for sustainable palm in the cosmetics industry for several years. As chairwomen of the Women in Business Network at BASF, I take a great interest in the CSR and sustainability aspects of innovation.



OVERVIEW OF THE JOB

Innovation management is a hybrid job – we work with innovators, scientists and developers to bring new ideas into the world. As BASF has more than 11,000 people working in the area of research and development, we facilitate the exchange between various units, manage innovation related communities. My current focus is on mentoring for startup companies and open innovation projects.



WHAT INSPIRED YOU

As a lecturer for the DAAD German Academic Exchange Service in Shanghai I have worked with German companies to start joint research projects and collaborate. The interaction between science and industry has since been my greatest interest – how can we achieve more by working together?



TYPICAL WORKING DAY

My usual working day has at least two web-conferences – even more since Corona, but this has started well before. We have early team calls for Europe and Asia Pacific, followed by afternoon calls with North America. I organize teams and projects; document the exchange; develop communication and event concepts and organize encounters and conferences. Information sharing is a big part of my work, so I am active on internal and external social media channels.



STUDY & CAREER PATH

Journalism was and is my dream job – there are multiple ways to enter this profession. As I had a strong focus on Russian culture, I chose this combination.



KEY SKILLS

You have to grow a tremendous network in my job – knowing people and being connected is absolute key. And this demands a lot of time. You have to be open and super friendly; and you need to be able to structure topics very fast. In a way, being a journalist has helped me to become a facilitator/moderator/event-manager.



CAREER PROSPECT

Relationship management: All industries and associations; preferably large organizations and big teams.



CHALLENGES

Patience and resilience. A colleague once told me after a (successful) launch: BASF is a tanker. You just moved this tanker by one degree. Awesome! Not to give up, invest time, have a long-term view on what you can achieve.



YOUR ADVICE TO STUDENTS

Don't go for fashion. Don't chose the easy path. Don't look for good grades. Have a look at the society. What is needed now, in ten years, in 50? Learn to do your own scenario planning to choose wisely.



YOUR ADVICE TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Similar here: Don't go for fashion. Don't chose the easy path. Don't look for good grades. Encourage your child/student to look for an intellectual challenge and intellectual diversity – create more options early on. Open your view and broaden your scope – look into the beauty of craft, of engineering, of mathematics. It is so hard to make a choice for a professional career – help them to become interested. And then help them to grow step by step.



LEARN MORE

<https://innovationroundtable.com/>

COORDINATOR

PREMIUM PARTNERS

GENERAL PARTNERS