

It's very motivating to meet patients

Skrevet av: Martina Cato



Annfrid Berget Haukeland always knew she had a lot of drive, but a decade ago she had no idea that there was a brilliant saleswoman hiding inside. She had worked as a nurse for 15 years when she joined Yamanouchi as a product specialist about a year before Astellas was formed.

"Sometimes I think could sell sand in the desert, but of course I

have to believe in the product. And Astellas has a really good portfolio that almost sells itself," she says with a smile when we meet over coffee at Copenhagen Airport.

Even if Annfrid surprised herself back then, she now regularly beats her budget. What's the trick?

"You have to be 100% present when you meet the customer. If you're open and listen before you talk you can become a really professional speaking partner. You need solid knowledge, but also be humble and willing to admit when you don't know something. And you gain your customers' trust by always keeping your promises."

Annfrid is convinced that the days when a sales rep could just repeat the same pitch over and over again are over:

"A successful sales rep must be able to build relationships and be good at networking and collaboration. It's great that we have campaign slides, but we need to use them with judgement to start a dialogue with the customer."

She thinks the good cooperation in the national teams as well as between the countries and the

Copenhagen headquarters is a key success factor. Another reason is the innovative approach to getting access to customers despite increasingly restrictive rules. Having the patient's best interest in mind helps, too.

"Some of my best experiences have been when I've made hospital study visits and been allowed to join the specialist on his or her patient consultations. It's very motivating to meet patients and see what they go through."

Over the past 10 years, Annfrid feels she has learned a lot.

"We have a lot of individual responsibility and I thrive with that. It has challenged me to dare go outside my comfort zone. Obviously I've learned a lot about my therapy areas, but I have also developed general sales skills, rhetorics and presentation techniques."

"On top of her professional achievements, Annfrid is a keen distance runner who has crossed the finishing line at a number of marathons. Still, completing a master's degree in Philosophy is perhaps one of her most satisfying accomplishments. Beside her regular job, she now has her own business as a philosophical practitioner specialising in Socratic dialogue."

Annfrid's energetic and sunny disposition is contagious, and I, too, have a smile on my face

