

DR. SANJIT SINGH LAMBA

For Building A Bridge Between People and Technology

With an ability to quickly grasp and analyze complex issues and a progressive vision for the organization, Sanjit Singh Lamba, Ph.D., is driving transformation at Eisai India's integrated global manufacturing and research complex.

Dr. Lamba is managing director of Eisai Pharmaceuticals India, where he guides, influences, and supports team members to ensure that innovative drugs are brought to market to improve patients' quality of life.

Colleagues describe him as pragmatic, inspiring, and knowledgeable and note his ability to connect with everyone in the organization and to motivate and energize them to deliver their best work.

He encourages those he works with to be innovative and gives others the confidence and motivation to achieve more. He knows how to lead people instead of pushing them.

With more than 30 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, Dr. Lamba has made a huge contribution to diseases such as filariasis and multiple sclerosis and he has helped to implement successful patient-support programs for oncology drugs in India. He has been instrumental in enabling access to medicines such as Halaven, Fycompa, and Lenvima.

In 2015, he became the managing director of two merged entities of Eisai and expanded his responsibilities to include commercial operations, business development, medical affairs, and legal. In addition to overseeing R&D operations, Dr. Lamba plays a key strategic role and more importantly, executes on many global projects across India, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.

Dr. Lamba is an astute business leader with cross-functional experience in diverse functions. He began his career in manufacturing at MSD in Mumbai, just as the Indian pharmaceutical industry was on the verge of going global. Throughout his career, he held various operational and leadership positions.

Before joining Eisai, he worked as director-global pharma manufacturing of Ranbaxy and as VP, operations, for Lupin with overall responsibility for innovation, implementation, commissioning, and production of new sterile and non-sterile APIs and dosage forms. He was instrumental in helping Lupin receive approval from the U.S. FDA and the UK's MHRA for sterile cephalosprins.

With a patient-first mindset, Dr. Lamba continues to seek opportunities to further advance a quality culture across the industry through various forums and associations.

PV: How do you believe your leadership style inspires others to reach their potential?

LAMBA: I'm a firm believer that each person in an organization brings a unique perspective, experience, skill set, talent, and abilities. I learned over the years how to foster each person's skills to ensure that they become stars. I try to provide an enabling environment for my team to experiment and take risks, and the resources they need to thrive.

People are inspired when they feel they are part of something important and worthwhile and when they see leaders who are passionate about their mission. By being fair, open, and genuine I seek to set an example for my teams. I encourage delegation and empowerment so that teams can make decisions. And providing words of appreciation for good work means a lot to people. I believe in walking the talk and following the principles of Kaizen and Gemba, a Japanese concept of continuous improvement, whether on the shop floor in manufacturing or in the field.

PV: Who have you drawn inspiration from during your career?

LAMBA: Early in my career I worked with leaders who shared their philosophies, which helped me to look beyond the obvious. These are individuals who not only keep themselves updated but also share best practices with their team members. I've also been inspired by members of the associations who have contributed to the industry, which was one reason that I became a member of a few global organizations. I've been able to learn and share these practices with my team members and senior executives at Eisai.

PV: What innovations and transformations in the industry stand out for you and how are you fostering a culture of innovation at Eisai India?

LAMBA: I try to provide an environment in which people feel inspired to contribute, and by providing people with enabling technologies, both hardware and software so that they can keep pace with innovation. Over the past few years, I've been looking at how things can be improved in manufacturing. I've worked with associations, the regulators, and the industry in general to bring solutions to areas that needed updating.

ADAPTABLE. COURAGEOUS.



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Create a culture to do things differently.

Sanjit Singh Lamba, Ph.D.

TITLE: Managing Director

COMPANY: Eisai Pharmaceuticals India

EDUCATION: MBA, Kellogg's School of Management; PhD, Gitam University; PGDMS, University of Mumbai; MPharm, Pharmaceutical Technology, Panjab University

FAMILY: Parents; wife; twin daughters Riya and Ruhi

HOBBIES: Singing, traveling, watching movies, photography

AWARDS/HONORS: Operational Excellence Award, UBM; Corporate Social Responsibility, India Pharma; Quality Excellence Award; Excellence in Operation Excellence; Excellence Award fo EHS

ASSOCIATIONS: Parenteral Drug Association India chapter, ISPE; Indian Pharmaceutical Association; Organization of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI)

SOCIAL MEDIA: 

Integral to delivering excellence is making people realize that their contribution is not only for the organization, but also to society at large. I

believe we need to create a mindset and culture to do things differently.

PV: What are some of the barriers that are impeding progress in bringing safe medicines to patients in need?

LAMBA: One thing I'm passionate about is bringing cultural change to deliver a higher quality, yet affordable product to patients. This means looking at solutions that bring long-term benefits and not just a quick fix to the industry. There is a belief that delivering a state-of-the-art solution must be expensive, but I believe that's a myth. Innovation doesn't always come with heavy investment; the priority is changing the mindset. Technology and infrastructure are easy to change but making sure the mindset and culture are aligned to deliver excellence are the greatest barriers.

PV: How do you see collaboration impacting what you're doing at Eisai?

LAMBA: The life-sciences industry is experiencing unparalleled change from breakthrough technologies, such as connected health, personalized medicine, AI, robotics, the Internet of Things, and augmented reality. Because of the diverse nature of these changes it's important to bring different stakeholders together to collaborate.

At Eisai, we have four major knowledge creation centers: in Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and India. Each center has different areas of expertise and some regions, such as the UK and United States, are using technologies like IoT to a greater extent. So, our people across the different regions collaborate with each other to bring solutions to each center.

For example, we were working to alleviate the suffering of patients with lymphatic filariasis, commonly known as elephantiasis. Although the product was not a new one, stakeholders across the organization worked closely together as though it was a new launch to help bring the product to about 50 countries. We developed and manufactured the product in India, completed filings in the UK and the United States, and conducted most of the clinical work through our colleagues in Japan. We are working collaboratively in different regions to make sure that we deliver high-quality products at an affordable price to patients across the world.

PV: What does the future of the life sciences look like to you?

LAMBA: I think it will vary from area to area. From the patient perspective, I think a time will come when a patient will be able to talk to a doctor online and receive a prescription. Most of the face-to-face discussions and diagnosis will slowly disappear.

One of the reasons why healthcare costs have



Over the years, Dr. Lamba has learned how to develop each person's skills to ensure that they become stars.

spiraled out of control in the past few decades is that we have been focused on the symptoms rather than the prevention. Embedded technologies and remote monitoring capabilities will move healthcare away from being reactive toward being proactive. The future belongs to gene therapy, to personalized medicine, and proactive areas of health prevention. This has massive implications for reducing the overall cost of healthcare or at least slowing down the pace of the increase of these diseases.

Similarly, AI, IoT, and other technologies are going to have a bigger impact on how we discover medicine, how we understand the mechanism of action of drugs, and even how we develop continuous manufacturing to deliver high-quality products at affordable prices. Some parts of the world have started to look at the continuous manufacturing of products to bring down the cost.

From the discovery point of view, I think AI and augmented reality will have a big impact and will result in devices that will help with proactive health and prevention.

PV: Switching gears a bit, why is mentorship important to you and how do you go about developing the next generation of leaders?

LAMBA: I have been and continue to be a mentor for a few leaders in our organization. I believe the greatest contribution leaders can make is to

provide a next-generation talent pool for the organization and the industry in general. Our people and teams are our greatest assets and I work to bring the right high-quality talent to my teams. I have been able to attract great talent due to my personal connections, but my larger responsibility has been to take care of these gems so they remain lustrous and shiny. I move people from a good-enough mindset to a mindset of generating excellence. I involve them in my own work and give them activities to tackle so they can see how a CEO works in an organization. I monitor those I lead regularly, whether it is in their business management meetings or how they deliver a project, how they present themselves, how they communicate, how they interact with customers in the field, and how they meet patients. I give them constructive feedback and suggestions.

PV: Is there a piece of advice you wish you had when you started your career or advice you would give to others?

LAMBA: One of the things a mentor told me early on was to remain a learner throughout my career. That propelled me to update myself with knowledge in areas beyond my box and to never become complacent about my achievements. The more you learn, the more curious you are, the more effective you will be professionally and personally.

It's also important to spend time with people on the ground, whether it's the salesforce or the shop floor in manufacturing. Decisions shouldn't always be made in the boardrooms but should be taken at the site of action.

A third key learning is to be a great listener, to be approachable and flexible, and to realize that solutions might be close at hand, but we need to be reachable to know about them.

Trust is another key asset and one way to ensure this is to always keep your word, to build others at every opportunity, and stand up for what's right. Check your ego and make sure everyone is treated equally.

PV: Finally, what would you like your legacy in the industry to be?

LAMBA: I've tried to act as a bridge between people and technology over the years. I would like to be known as someone who brought new concepts and technologies to change the industry for the better. I hope people will think of me as a person of courage and discipline, and as someone who has an innovative mindset who made a difference in this world and who made a difference in inspiring others to remain engaged to improve people's quality of life. **PV**

TRANSFORMATION IS:

MOVING FROM ONE LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE TO ANOTHER