November 18, 2020

Welcome to WoW, the Woman of the Week podcast series. This episode was made possible by a generous sponsorship from Bioforum. For more information, visit bioforumgroup.com.

In this episode, Taren Grom, editor-in-chief of PharmaVOICE meets with Tanya du Plessis, VP of Data Strategies and Solutions at Bioforum the Data Masters.

Taren: Tanya, welcome to the WoW program.

Tanya: Great. Thank you very much for having me. I'm really excited to be here today.

Taren: And we're excited to have you, and thank you for joining us from South Africa. We're going to get into that in a little bit because I find that whole thing fascinating, the area in which you're working. You've been working in data management capacity for about 15 years; what are some of the biggest trends you have seen and what are you looking forward to in the coming years?

Tanya: So I've been around the block a few times, 15 years is quite a while. So it's been a very interesting few years. If I look back to where I started, to where we are now, it's really totally a different world. Really, in the beginning, we had such a heavy paper-orientated industry from the data management perspective but even from other perspectives as well. So it was all about the paper and I think some parts today are still unfortunately paper heavy, but it was very much about that. So there was a big move and we're still moving, moving away from focusing on the way we collect data and rethinking it to be more effective. So way back when, and this is in the very early days of my career, having things very paperweight and then watching things in my early days as a project manager, also many years ago, but nonetheless moving over to EDC. Now, most recently and probably thanks to the pandemic, a real big focus and a push to making a lot more electronic. So that's been one of the biggest trends I think that I've noticed.

But alongside with that, realizing that we can use technologies such as EDC platforms, like I said more recently going into e-source and things like that, along with that comes analytics because you have your data right in front of you and also your metadata right in front of you so how many queries are you raising, how far is our clinical team with reviews and things like that. All of a sudden, more of this started opening as we started becoming more electronic and our focus towards our data collection. So kind of in parallel but maybe just a snitch behind that was, and still is, our drive to find real effectivity in our work through standardizations and being able to see more and do more with our data and this has really been consistent. I think we've had that throughout…I

almost want to say I've never been to a conference or anywhere where that hasn't been something that's been spoken about very heavily. So those are the two biggest trends I think that I've seen throughout my career in the industry so far.

Taren: I'm with you in terms of that, looking back to the days of paper and looking at all those slides where people had the cartons and cartons of paper and the noise in the back warehouses. And now it's taken some time for the industry to trust the cloud as it were to make sure that the data were secure. And again, I go back with you to the back to the EDC days and thinking about all those different systems and the technology and every site had a different system, every CRO had a different system, every sponsor had a different system. So to your point about standardization, this is really a move in the right direction.

Tanya: Absolutely. And it's one of those things, I think, like you said, it scared everybody at first. So they were kind of like 'hang on' and I remember having these conversations with our customers back then. They were like 'But you know my data's out there now, like it's not close to home, it's not something in my hand, it's out there' and it took a lot…I think we're generally a bit of a distrusting environment and I think perhaps because we were so well-regulated and it makes a big difference. So now, you can start seeing what you can do with things, it's kind of like 'Hang on, technology is actually something that I can use here,' and now that we're trusting it more and more I think the doors are wide open to be quite honest with regards to what we can do and how we can manage our trials going forward. It's really exciting times ahead.

Taren: I agree with you and I think back to that analogy where people would trust their personal financial data in the cloud, but they wouldn't trust their clinical data in the cloud. It's so interesting. And another point I want to touch upon that you brought to the fore is about the analytics piece of it, because data is just data until you can actionate it. So we are looking into the movement of data scientists and that's becoming such a hot topic right now; and how do you use that data?

Tanya: Exactly. And again it's about that all of a sudden people have realized that I can do more with this, right? So there's another driver in this and that is the whole risk-based…I want to say risk-based mindset and it's not just about risk-based clinical or risk-based data management or quality management, but it's the actual mindsets about managing your risks on the study and focusing your attention where it should be a focus and that has driven the need even more for our analytics and technology because you need to see what's going on. And if you're going to take risk-based approaches like our regulatory authorities are encouraging us to do, you need to have all of that aligned. So you have a high-level understanding of where you are and that you can then dive into that high-level understanding into the thick in the details and the data if you need to, so it's becoming more and more core.

In the past, I would say people were using analytics. It was kind of like nice to have. So if you had analytics, let's say for example 10 years ago, dare I say eight years ago, it was kind of 'Well this is a nice thing to have' and you're definitely ahead on the trend and we're really hitting an area now where it's kind of like 'I don't understand how you're functioning without this' almost, like 'Let me show you how much better your life could be if you just used a bit more of this.' So it's really been pushed to the center of our clinical trials, not just on data management side but truly at the center of the clinical trial.

Taren: Excellent. And all of that needs to be built in way before the trial starts. So when you start to think about your data management strategy, when is it that you start to think about that when you're talking with a sponsor or a client? Is it in those initial conversations?

Tanya: Yes. Absolutely, Taren. So I think that's also maybe one of the changes we've seen. For many years, data management was kind of a bit of an afterthought on the clinical trial, not the afterthought completely but let's say not the highest priority. So trials would be designed, protocols would be written up, the decision would be made already, for example we're going to go with this EDC platform and speak to the statistician around the data specifically, but not necessarily the data strategy in terms of how are we collecting this data, what are we going to do with it afterwards, is there a metadata we want to look at, what analytics are we going to look at continuously. So with these things becoming more and more, I want to say forefront and requirements, it's kind of pushing data management really more to the front of the queue in terms of the people you need to talk to while planning your trial.

So we really encourage our customers to say 'invite us to the table' and we understand there are plenty of clinical elements we're not taking, I want to say, any thunder away from that. It's hugely complex as it is, but you need to think about what you're going to do with it. Our teams are only as good as the tools that they can use often. So if we can bring you solutions that are going to make your life a lot easier, I almost want to challenge and say 'Why wouldn't you want to use that?' But very much to your point, we need to be at the table in the beginning for those conversations. So people need to think about what they want to see and the honest-to-goodness onset and sometimes with that is they don't know. You don't know what you want to see, you're not quite certain what you need to monitor.

There might be some high-level ideas and of course all driven a lot by our primary and secondary endpoints that we're going to be watching like a hawk, but there may be additional factors that one doesn't think of. So, for example, if you're conducting an e-source trial, we've always got this little window in the back like, 'Hey, if you needed to use a paper form someday, it's okay if you transcribe it and we mark those forms in our electronic databases.' It's been transcribed so that we know that the source is not truly on the database it's actually on a piece of paper somewhere. But if someone's not checking how often the site is transcribing data, you might end up with a site that's just using your

e-source platform that's supposed to make their lives easier as a transcriber and in effect actually an EDC platform.

So that's an example of like a logistical factor that you kind of need to think about from the beginning when you start planning. And that's why we say 'invite us to the table' in the beginning, let's talk to you about this. And especially for us, we're a data-focused CRO so we always say and quite proudly we are the experts, we don't want you to worry about this and have sleepless nights; that's what we're here for. We're taking that burden on for you so let us do that thinking; let us bring that experience to the table and help you plan those analytics, reviews, visualizations, and risks you need to monitor, then watch you try and figure through or wade through that immense amount of information on your own.

Taren: Tanya, so you're the one who has the sleepless nights then, no kidding. It makes total sense to be invited to the table early on because if the objective is to get a drug to market, then it's based on all of that clinical trial information that is all data-based, so it just makes perfect sense to have you all there in the beginning.

Tanya: Absolutely.

Taren: I'm glad to hear that that is becoming more and more frequent because it is so important. I would think that it also would help on reducing so much of the efficiencies in a clinical trial and improve the efficiencies to make trials run faster and less expensive and safer.

Tanya: Absolutely. And that's what we're all working towards, right? Our industry is very expensive, we all know that. If you speak to any company, they will tell you, come on, like the costs are crazy. And I think specifically for us we really work a lot with the smaller guys so the small to midsized pharmas and that's a real thing for them, having a budget is a budget. There's no, I want to say, side pockets or a little bit of a pot you can dip into if you need to. They tried to build the buffers in but it's a different approach, and the cost factor is something that is quite heavy on a lot of pharma companies.

So the more we can do to release that burden and the more we can do to support them in terms of building those standards and effectivities in from the beginning so that they don't have surprise things like change orders where they have to pay for hidden costs all of a sudden, the better for everyone at the end of the day. So that driving efficiency is really the engine behind all of this.

Taren: And it's interesting you talked about the smaller to midsized companies and we're seeing so many more drugs come out of the pipeline to approval from the smaller to midsized companies and not so much from the big biopharma companies which certainly have their place in the industry by all means. So let's talk about what some of

4

those differences are in addition to the smaller budgets of those smaller companies. What are you seeing in since you work with so many of those types of companies?

Tanya: Absolutely. So first of all, I think we all like the underdog and the small guy, right, so I think we all get excited when we see things like that. We all kind of get excited and root for them. And I think you're a hundred percent right in saying there's a bit of a mind shift change there. So I think for many years, the smaller companies and some of the midsize pharmas even, it's almost like the business MO was to get the IP noticed, get it to a point where someone else will see it and then we can sell it off to a bigger pharma. And although that's perfectly healthy and it's fine, you're kind of handing it off to someone whose pocket's a bit deeper that can perhaps take it further. It's been really exciting to see a lot of these smaller companies really get excited and push their own drug and get it to submission. So it's really great.

I think the biggest difference when you work with a smaller company is the fact that things that in the past, for example, that you use with bigger companies like fixed processes and hard lines in terms of this is how things are going to run and make it very hard for those companies. Like I said, their budgets are not so big and they don't always have the expertise in-house. Many of our customers say to us this 'We have no data management experience. We have somebody who can take responsibility here and we'll help you sign things. They have a high level understanding, but we can't get into the details at all.' And that's really where these companies need help. I almost want to say when I say 'help here' I'm not talking about the standard service agreement where we have a contract we're serviced, we're going to offer this service that's in this bracket that they're given. These companies need someone to partner with them. They need companies such as Bioforum that can really be flexible, that can hear what their needs are, and can think of novel approaches to try and help them with (A) the budget, of course, so trying to find different ways of achieving something without having to go through stringent costs.

And then additionally as well, I almost want to say how to compliment the team with their lack of in-house support often and not overwhelm them. So there's a difference between overwhelming somebody and throwing a lot of information at them and making them feel really small and almost want to say insecure almost about what they don't know and really partnering. So that partnership is really key for these companies. So we always say to our customers 'Look, we're in it for the long run with you so tell us straight up what do you need from the beginning.'

We were speaking about the analytics and the strategy; small companies think that they can't have that and it's so untrue. Like I said, if we're invited to the table from the beginning, we can share all these exciting things. It doesn't have to cost as much as what they think and then say to them 'What is your long run here? How far do you want to go?' and that's really great. So then we speak to them and we say 'Right, what is next after this? How far do you want to go? Are we going submission package?' even though

5

we're not quite there yet and see and see what they want, and then we partner with them and we plan the hallway.

So there's a significant difference just in the way that the approach to the clinical trial needs to be done. With a big pharma, of course it's a little bit different, processes are there, the engine runs, you can really pick up a fast pace.   But I think that's the key to any good successful organization – being able to adapt to your customer and being able to adjust to their needs.

Taren: Excellent. That's a lot to unpack in there, but the resounding theme I'm hearing is that you're looking at the individual needs of each sponsor and it's not a cookie cutter approach, you're really bringing a consultative kind of thinking to each one of the projects. Is that a fair assessment?

Tanya: That's a perfect assessment, absolutely that, because each company's needs are indeed different.

Taren: Excellent. Let's switch tacks a little bit here, if you don't mind. In your current role, I know you are charged with overseeing a number of different teams and their activities and deliverables and you're operating from South Africa where Bioforum's headquarters are in Israel so on a global basis too. So what are some of your keys to leadership and success? How are you managing this global operation?

Tanya: I laughed a little bit because I think it's never been as visible as it was, I almost want to say in any phase as what it is this year being under pandemic situation. So I think I've been very blessed in my career, I've always had the global aspect. So I've always worked for companies that operate globally and Bioforum is no different – we're very much a global company. So, yes, I'm based in South Africa, we have colleagues in Israel, we have colleagues in Australia and the US, and actually in Europe too. So we are very much global and I think with that global culture comes an understanding that we have different cultures that we're working with and we have different ways of approaching the same thing, but we need to produce the same product at the end of the day.

So regardless where a project manager sits, for example, we as Bioforum need to make sure that the delivery is of the highest quality and that really starts with our people. So in terms of managing the teams, it's actually been really great. And like I said, this year, because everybody kind of got forced home and we've all been in lockdown in strange circumstances where our work and our personal life kind of really crashed into each other, and it wasn't just one or two people, it was everybody. So I think it highlighted on a global level the fact that we have tools out there that are very much available and we have, I almost want to say, learned to use them a little bit differently. So now we video call a lot more, we use Teams, and we like to look at each other. So in the past, we might've been a bit shy, 'don't use the camera, I'll see you next week' if I'm visiting the

6

US for example, and within our organization actually we've really adopted that very well and it's been really great; it brings a personal touch to it.

So on the global level, again, like I said, operating as a global company made it a bit easier. And being in the leadership side, I've always said leadership is not just about you. I think that's the biggest mistake that one can make in a leadership position is assuming that you are the reason for the success alone because there's no way you would be where you were without your team that's strongly backing you. And that was a little bit tough, to give people that recognition because face-to-face is much easier. You can see someone, you can say thank you, and people can genuinely feel that sincerity.

So we got a few creative ideas within our company to socialize a little bit more online; one-on-ones with the senior management with the individuals, and I'm not speaking about, for example, me calling one of my directors or senior directors but actually speaking to project managers and asking them how it's going. So we've had a tough time this year I think as many have had in terms of trying to balance work and life, but in terms of working remotely and growing our company because we have definitely almost doubled in size this year which has been great has been actually smoother than we thought, yes.

Taren: So you're managing all of this and you're growing at the same time as you're working from home and you're hiring I would assume people that you haven't actually physically met if you're growing so quickly, so that's a whole different aspect to it and I'm hearing that quite a bit. It takes a little bit of a shift in terms of your leadership style, your management style, and your HR style to be quite honest because it's a whole different ball game. I think the pandemic has been a great level on many fronts, right? You're not the only company that's had to figure out how to work remotely, all companies have. And I also think it's allowed people as you said to interact on a more intimate basis. I know from our experience we're seeing people in their bedrooms, in their laundry rooms, with their kids, with their cats, with their dogs, whatever it might be, but it's brought humanity to our world in a different way I think.

Tanya: Absolutely. I couldn't agree more. And we actually try to encourage that a bit because we lost a lot. We lost a lot when people went home, we lost their interaction, we lost the social chats in the kitchen, we lost the quick impromptu lunch dates and it was hard for a lot of people especially the extroverts out there, so we try to replace that. So within the Bioforum team, because much to your point and as a company that grew a lot, the last thing you want is your new employees to feel very isolated because if you put yourselves in their shoes for a minute they're now starting with a new company, they might know one or two people from their previous history, but they don't really get an energy from the office, they can't see anyone, they don't know how things work, they're trying to figure some of the tech things out. So it can be quite a daunting place and that's the last place we want our new employees to feel. We want them to feel welcome, we

want them to feel that they're really joining a family and that they're a part of the team, and that is something that we really try to push a lot.

So, for example, we have what we call workless meetings and we try to do it once a week, at least every second week on a global level. For example, just two weeks ago, we had 'bring your pet to the call' so everybody joined the call with their pets and we all got to see each other's cats and dogs and it kind of brought in a different level. So we try to embrace that a bit and it brought that human factor back which I think we all miss.

Taren: Absolutely. And I also think too that we're seeing a shift in leadership style towards more empathy. An empathetic kind of approach to leading especially in these days and that's a significant shift in my view from what we might've seen five or six years ago where empathy might've been considered one of those softer skills, but now it's really becoming one of the keys in the toolbox.

Tanya: Absolutely, Taren. I couldn't agree more. And I think the biggest reason for that is the people who kind of have a very authoritative leadership style have no one to be authoritative over now. They can yell virtually and they can give instructions, but it's not quite the same as being in a room. So I actually feel a bit, I almost want to say, I have a lot of empathy for them because they probably hit the ground quite hard realizing I'm not getting that, that I need from my team anymore. And exactly what you say, the leaders that are more empathetic and have more of a touch with humans were more successful because that's what the team needs in uncertain times.

So I think I was very lucky in that I find myself as much more of an affiliative type of person. I very much get my energy from my team as well and perhaps years of experience have taught me that your leadership is only as good as the team underneath as I mentioned earlier. So if your team is unhappy and they don't have what they need, then you're not going to get the results from them what you need in order to deliver to your customers at the end of the day. So it's important to focus on keeping those people happy and making sure that they're there and that they are heard and noticed. So from my perspective, when I look at my team, it's important that people are placed in the right roles; that they are enjoying their job; that they have all the tools that they need for that job, we're not just giving them tasks and leaving them high and dry.

Lastly, I think the one thing that sometimes gets a little bit overlooked is that people actually want to have a voice. They want to be able to voice concerns; they want to be able to share their thoughts, and it's not negative. Sometimes management escape to open that door because they're worried about having to deal with all this negative feedback that you're going to get, but I almost want to challenge companies out there to open that door. The feedback that we get having real true open door policies and trying to connect very much with our people is that people sometimes just want to say 'thank you' or they just want to share a good idea and we've really taken some of those good ideas that have come right off of the floor people that are touching and working data

every day and driven with them on a business level. And without having that one-on-one, we would never have gotten that really great idea because that person felt a bit too shy or didn't actually understand how great that idea was and they didn't have the opportunity to share it before then. So I would challenge any company to really change their mindset. If they're still a little bit in that old school authoritative role there, they're almost missing out a bit I would say.

Taren: I would agree with you, I would say too. Speaking of those ideas that come from the floor, from those folks who are involved at the grassroots level of the organization, tell me about some of the interesting or different projects that you've worked on that have inspired you?

Tanya: So I think at the heart of me, I always joke a little bit, but I say I really am a data management nerd. I really enjoy the data and the interesting side of things. But having said that as well, I really enjoy a challenge. So in my career, I think I've been lucky enough to be in teams that were handling forefronts of innovation. And it's going to sound really strange perhaps under circumstances, but I actually really enjoy the pandemic-related trials, not just COVID here as well, I was lucky enough to be involved in Ebola trials in my past as well which we also know wasn't quite a global pandemic but definitely an African pandemic and for Northern Africa it was very crippling much like we're feeling now.

So having that exposure, those were great. It really forced me and the people around me, I learned so much from the people around me in those times to really, I want to say, move out of the norms. We had to think about things totally different back then with the Ebola trials and we have a little bit more, I want to say, to our advantage now in COVID-19 where we have things like e-source, using eCOA where we're collecting data differently, no longer paper to be tapped into EDC but we can use tablets and enter directly into databases. Back with the Ebola days, that was very new. It was almost unheard of, it was something that some companies were kind of thinking about trying but not quite there just yet. We found ourselves in this situation and I think now more than ever, it makes sense to everybody when I say it, but nobody wants to go into the red zone.

So when you're thinking about collecting data and you're thinking about how we need to bring clinical trials, we need to bring medicine to these people; we need to find a solution, a vaccine, to these horrific diseases and pandemics. It's really touching for everybody, but how do we do that when nobody wants to go out there? So we have a few people that are there, they are our health workers, they are the heroes of the day. They're in our hospitals, they're working there, so how do we get our, I want to say, technology to them to help us collect this data so that we in turn can generate the data that we need and get vaccines and things like this out to the people.

So it really pushed that boundaries on all sides on timelines and the way we collect data. And we saw the same thing now with COVID. We were building databases at crazy

speeds. Normal turnaround times for some of our bigger database is anywhere between 8 and 12 weeks as an industry as a whole, and I think there was almost a standard turnaround time of two weeks or less for database results for COVID.

So we broke boundaries, we pushed walls over, and we built new channels and it was really amazing. Maybe I'm just a sucker for the crisis management, I don't know. Maybe it's a flaw more than an advantage, but I really enjoy those types of trials and I think I've been privileged to be able to take part in two big ones, being the Ebola and the COVID outbreak now.

Taren: Well thank you for doing all that you're doing. And you're right, I mean I think these kinds of crises force you to think differently and it's not just we have to think beyond the status quo when you're pushed to do so, so this is of those pushes. So kudos to you and your teams for doing such great work. You touched upon something about the Ebola crisis and that's not that long ago. So think about the leaps and bounds that have been made in terms of the data collection as you said going into the red zones. And now we are in a place because this is not the last pandemic that we're going to face, there's going to be another one coming down the pike, so we need to take those learnings and figure out how to improve on the improvements even so that we can be even further ahead the next time.

Tanya: Absolutely. So, first of all, thank you. We enjoy being part of it and I always try and tell my teams to remember it's easy for people sometimes to forget that we played a role in it, so I try and motivate my team and remind them that the medicine going to the market went through your hands at some point so you should be proud of what you do. So thanks very much for that. And yes, we need to move forward. It's really exciting and that's why I say it's changing the way we think and pushing the boundaries there. Like I said, a two-week build is something that was unheard of; it's not something that you would have done at all and yet it happened, here we are.

And it's sparked a new wave of thoughts as well. So if you're speaking to the tech companies now and there are many vendors out there that are trying to drive more, I want to say, cost-saving and effective solutions out there, it's not just on our end, it's inspired them as well. So it's really great and I think at the very least what we learned out of this specific pandemic is that we're maybe a little bit more nimble than what we think. So customers in the past that were thinking they can't even think about something like moving their platform to a e-source concept where there's no more paper, kind of found themselves in a pickle here where if you had a very paper-based process and you were reliant on certain people at certain locations to get your data, well your engine stopped now and it caught everybody off guard and I think that high risk kind of came to the front now. So I think at the very least, and those companies many of them did a really good job.

We spoke to some of our customers that were like 'What do we do now?' We need to continue this trial A in many cases because the IP, the investigational product, is actually working. We don't want to take this away from our patients. So how do we continue our trial, still collect our data, and keep the regulatory authorities happy but rethink the entire way we're collecting this data; and they did well. They did very well. It's a colossal problem and they did well. So I think a lot of companies realize they're a bit more nimble than what they thought they were.

I have to just give a shout-out to the small and midsized companies there again, that's when one really sees how innovative these companies are. They can turn things around quickly; they can make decisions quickly; and they're really great and nimble. So perhaps in these circumstances, maybe it was a tad bit easier for them I almost want to say. Not that it was not difficult in any way at all, it's just that this really great characteristic that they have of being nimble, quick decisions, flexibility, really drives innovation within those companies as well. So it was something quite phenomenal to kind of watch from this side.

Taren: That's awesome. Tanya, do you think this momentum can be carried forward? Do you think that there's a danger of sliding back to the old ways or is the toothpaste out of the tube and it can't be put back in?

Tanya: I definitely think the toothpaste is out of the tube. Once you make the decision to change the way that you're going to approach your trial, it is a big decision and you put a lot of effort and energy into that. So it's changing processes, it's changing thought patterns, it's changing the way you're going to do something. And I almost want to equate it to this: We were all going banking, right? All of us, if you needed to put money into the bank, you went to the bank with your envelope, you filled out the slip, you stood in the queue at the tailor, and we all did it; it was very normal. If you needed cash, you went to the ATM, you stood in the queue and that's how you did it, and you had to go to the ATM every week because you needed to buy groceries and so forth. And that was fine for us; that's how we lived. If I had to ask anybody else now, I'm going take away your app, I'm going to take away your smartphone, and I need you to please go to the bank, bank your salary, make sure you've got cash – who would put their hand up and volunteer for that, right? I think very few… maybe a few.

But once you're there and you're using that technology, you have the app, you're transferring money between your accounts, you're swiping your card…I, myself, very rarely have cash with me. Why would I – I can swipe my card wherever I am, I transfer money, my salary comes in electronically, our debit orders go off, so I cannot actually fathom going back to using the bank and I think that's where we are in clinical trials. All circles, regardless of whether it's at the site or on the pharma side or even on the CRO side, once you've tasted that technology, I think it's going to be, even on a personal level of choice, not to want to go back to the old way.

Taren: I think that's a perfect analogy. Well done. You're such an inspiring person, I'm totally inspired by your view of where data management is going, where clinical trials are going. But I'm curious, who do you look to for inspiration? Who inspires you?

Tanya: What a great question. So at the risk of sounding a little bit cliché, I really do find my inspiration when I look at our team and on a global level. And as you mentioned earlier, especially this year, seeing the personal side of people. You see people sitting in their homes, they have their children around them. We all had to homeschool at some point which I think was a global challenge never mind one on a level, and it was every mother out there whether you were sitting in my seat, whether you were one of our data scientists, or whether you were in our programming team – we all have the same challenge and we're all yelling at the 7-year-old the same way to get the handwriting. So it was very inspiring to me.

And I think even now we have hardworking people, they're dedicated, they're there, and they put their hands up all the time. So when things get tough sometimes and we have lots of deadlines and things are crazier, I always am astounded at our team to see how they just click and go in together. So the people really motivate me. And I think perhaps a part of who I am, I'm a bit of a people person, so I get my energy from them as well. But some days are heavy, I think everybody has those, and my family is my rock, so a wonderful husband and two boys, and at the center of that is my faith. So I think that circle really keeps me going.

Taren: That's wonderful. Thank you. And what a nice shout-out to your teams. And finally, because this is our WoW podcast program, please tell me about an accomplishment or a WoW moment that shaped your career.

Tanya: So going back to those, I almost want to say the Ebola data, that was a pivotal change for me there. It's been an interesting drive, I want to say, of my career for me so far. But if I look back and I'm most proud, I think it's of those moments where I was part of teams or leading an initiative that broke molds. So it's really important to push those boundaries and I feel like especially when challenged with those kind of scenarios on those trials specifically, we really had to push through many challenges and we had to change not just our thinking, but we were almost tasked with changing the entire setup of the clinical trial thinking.

Luckily, we had huge amounts of people that were there to help us out with that, but I was very privileged to be a part of those teams and really learning how to, I want say, understand the full team dynamic. The center of the sentence is not 'I'; there are many words that go with it and in order to make it make sense there's letters and pronunciations and different types of words, and the same goes in our teams. So that I think was a very pivotal moment for me.

I almost want to say as a woman, if I think about where we are as an industry, it's wonderful. I think we're very privileged to be in this really great industry; and me specifically where I have been, if I look back to when I started to where we are now, how wonderful and how blessed I have been in my career and especially being in the Bioforum team which I don't know how many people know but we're actually very heavy on the estrogen. We have a very high percentage of ladies especially in our senior management roles within our company and a shout-out to our CEO, Amir Malka, who's really I want to say an inspiration to all of us. But I think having that, seeing how things work, and working for a company that's really so dynamic, and like I said I'm not shy to put the ladies in the driver's seats, has been really inspirational for me and really helped me get to where I can and be the best I can be in my career.

Taren: Wonderful. Tanya, I can't tell you what a delight it's been to speak with you and thank you so much. I learned quite a bit today, so for that, I thank you as well. I wish you continued great success and thanks for being part of the WoW podcast program.

Tanya: Thank you, Taren. It was lovely to be here. I've thoroughly enjoyed it.

Thank you for listening to this episode of WoW – the Woman of the Week podcast. And thanks to Bioforum for making this episode possible. For more information, visit bioforumgroup.com. And don't forget to check out our other episodes of WoW at pharmavoice.com/wow.