



life- changing careers

Being the new employee

Settling into working life
in Princeton

On the road with a sales rep

Building relationships
with customers

Life-saving medicine

Research that makes
a difference

The life of an expat:

from Brazil to Denmark

TakeAction!

Changing lives in Bangladesh

Find your
perfect job match
at Novo Nordisk

Welcome

For more than seven years, Novo Nordisk has achieved double-digit sales growth – such consistently impressive financial results are unheard of in the pharma industry. The success is attributable to our employees, who are joined together by the aspiration to make a significant difference to patients, the medical profession and society.

At Novo Nordisk we believe in life-changing careers. Here you will not only change your professional life by working with challenging tasks and inspiring colleagues; you will also be part of making a real difference to the world we live in.

Putting people first in everything we do is how we generate sustainable results and why we experience a very high level of commitment among existing employees.

In this magazine some of these employees tell their stories, so that you can read first-hand what it is like to work for Novo Nordisk and the opportunities this brings – such as working in other countries, getting new challenges and making a real, tangible difference.

Enjoy the magazine.


Lars Rebién Sørensen
Chief executive officer



“It’s only a few weeks in and I feel like I’ve been around much longer. I think this has so much to do with the **support** I’ve received,” explains Evelyn Rodriguez, a new employee in Novo Nordisk, in Princeton US.

On a trip to **Bangladesh** Karen Vink asked a boy with diabetes what he wanted to be when he grows up. “He didn’t respond. His father finally said that he doesn’t have an answer because they are living day to day.”



“To be good at this job you have to be **thick-skinned**,” explains Iain Sinclair, a sales representative in Novo Nordisk, UK.



“I actually feel I learn the most just by being here – getting new **challenges** and working with my colleagues,” says Sobia Akram, who joined Novo Nordisk’s graduate programme.



Søren Bjørn is a scientific vice president and has worked at Novo Nordisk for almost 25 years: “I get a huge kick from discussing how we can apply **science** to help people,” he says and explains how he delayed switching from a lab coat to a suit for as many years as he could.



Brazilian Dercília Ventura de Moura works in Denmark: “Since the launch of the International Club last year I’ve met lots of expatriates... it’s a great **opportunity** for me to network and exchange experiences.”

Contents

Page 4
Novo Nordisk at a glance
An expanding global company

Page 6
Diary of a new employee
Enjoying the small pharma buzz!

Page 8
Driving business forward
Passionate about people and products

Page 10
Developing the best
Taking charge of personal development

Page 12
Research and development
An enduring dedication to science

Page 14
Global opportunities
The cultural challenge

Page 16
Changing lives
More help needed

Page 18
Changing diabetes
Changing diabetes with knowledge

Page 19
Novo Nordisk quiz
How well do you know our company?

Page 20
novonordisk.com/careers
Visit our career website to find a job that matches you

An expanding global company

Novo Nordisk is a focused healthcare company and a world leader in diabetes care. The company's headquarters are in Denmark, but with market presence in 179 countries and research, development and production facilities spanning five continents, the company's global reach is growing.

By August 2009, Novo Nordisk was the global market leader in diabetes care with 51% of the total insulin market and 45% of the modern insulin market (both measured by volume). Diabetes care accounts for 73% of Novo Nordisk's sales. The company has experienced significant growth in recent years, with total sales increasing by 11% in the first six months of 2009 (measured in local currencies).

In the biopharmaceuticals business sector, Novo Nordisk has a leading position within the therapeutic areas of haemostasis management, growth hormone therapy and hormone replacement therapy.

Future business success

Innovation in Novo Nordisk's pipeline is the company's source of long-term competitiveness. Recent significant breakthroughs in diabetes care include the development of liraglutide for the treatment of type 2 diabetes. Liraglutide is now being launched in Europe, and regulatory approval has been sought in the US, Japan and many other countries. In addition, Novo Nordisk is the only company with two new generation insulins in late-stage clinical development.

The global incidence of diabetes is increasing, and the growing demand for Novo Nordisk's diabetes products is expected to continue. To expand the company's competitive position, in 2008 Novo Nordisk increased its sales organisation in several key markets and laid the foundation stone for a major expansion of its production site in Tianjin, China. The company anticipates continued worldwide expansion in the future, with regard to both employees and facilities.

A growing workforce

Today, Novo Nordisk has approx 27,900 employees, and approximately 48% of the employees are based in Denmark. Between 2000–2008 the number of employees in Novo Nordisk increased by 119%. This growth is expected to continue in the future so that by 2018 the company will employ around 43,000 people.

Of the total workforce, 17% work in research and development (R&D), 30% in production, 34% in sales and marketing and 19% in administration. Novo Nordisk has production facilities in eight countries, and affiliates or offices in 81 countries (see map for more details).

More than 100 different nationalities work in Novo Nordisk and the company language is English.

A history of more than 80 years

The history of Novo Nordisk spans more than 80 years. It began in the early 1920s when August Krogh, a Nobel Prize-winning professor at the University of Copenhagen, decided he

wanted to start producing a revolutionary new medical preparation called insulin, which had just been discovered by a group of scientists at Toronto University in Canada. Krogh was the first to bring insulin production to Denmark, in order to treat people with diabetes – among those his wife Marie.

Today, Krogh's legacy to make a positive difference in people's lives and help people defeat diabetes remains at the heart of everything Novo Nordisk does.

Guided by values

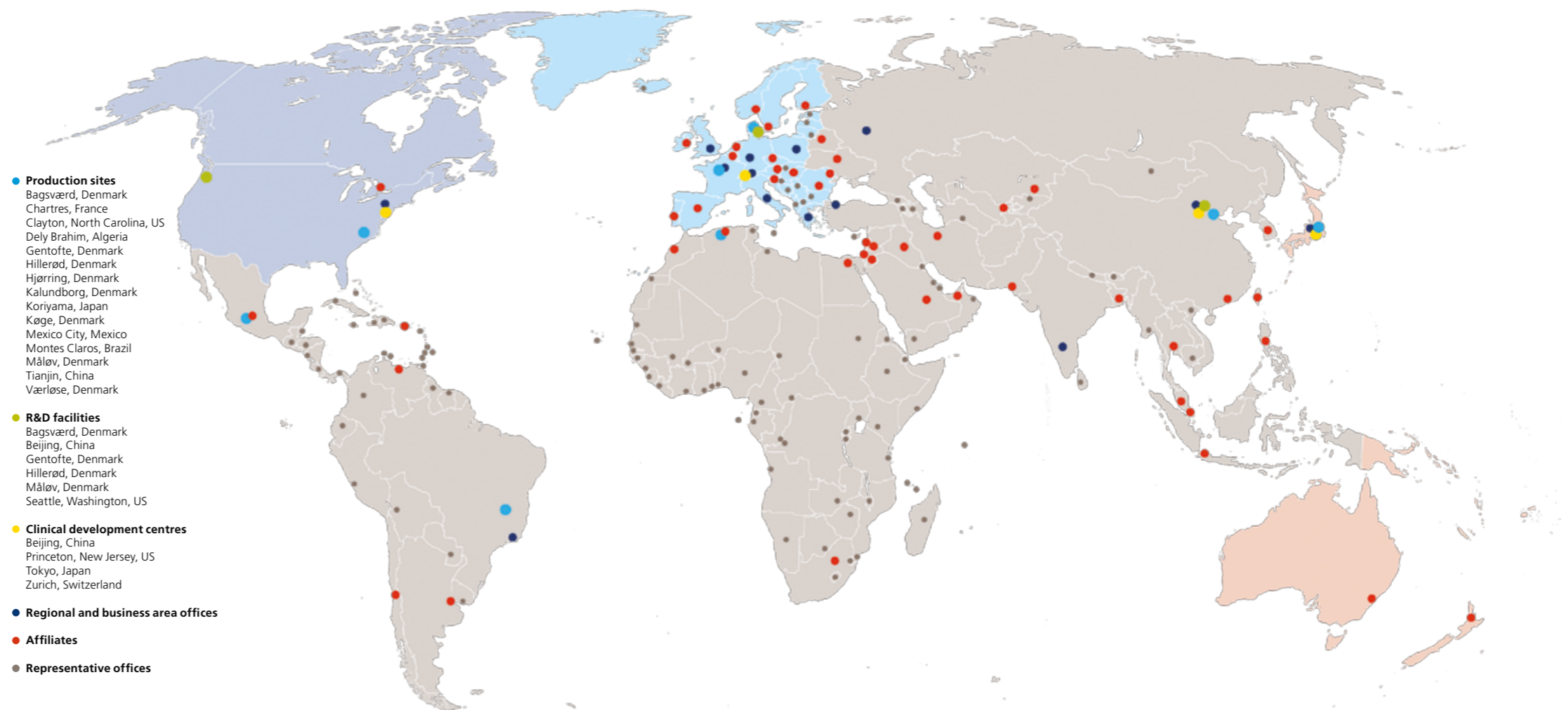
When working in Novo Nordisk, you get the feeling of a special company culture. This culture has developed since the 1920s – it is the company heritage, built on the work of past and present Novo Nordisk employees. The way the company does things is called the Novo Nordisk Way of Management. The Novo Nordisk Way of Management forms the values-based governance framework for the company. It describes how people at Novo Nordisk must work and behave and defines the principles for how the company does business. It consists of three elements: the Vision, the Charter and global company policies.

The Vision paints a picture of what Novo Nordisk wants to achieve as a company – its place in the market and the overall goals in relation to patients, society and employees. The company Vision is to be the world's leading diabetes care company and, ultimately, to defeat diabetes.

How the company behaves is described in the Charter. This contains the company's values, commitments, fundamentals and follow-up methods. The values underpin Novo Nordisk's commitments to the Triple Bottom Line – which enables the company to balance corporate profitability with corporate social and environmental responsibility.

The global company policies set worldwide standards and give operational guidelines in 13 specific areas.

For more information on Novo Nordisk visit: novonordisk.com/about-us



Enjoying the small pharma buzz!

Coming from a career in human resources in a large American pharmaceutical company, Evelyn Rodriguez immediately noticed an exciting buzz in the air when she joined Novo Nordisk in Princeton, US. Through her diary, Evelyn explains what it was like to be a new employee.

25 June 2008. I completed my application online today. After having spent 10 years working in HR in 'big pharma', I decided it was time for a change. However, I didn't want to walk away from the industry, so I decided to look for a company that was smaller in size but yet progressive enough to have all the great attributes I had experienced in the large companies. I first heard about Novo Nordisk from a friend who spoke very highly of her experience working for the company with regard to career opportunities, culture and business growth. After learning more about Novo Nordisk's focus on diabetes, the Triple Bottom Line, special culture and the Novo Nordisk Way of Management, I had a feeling that this could be the place for me. My decision to apply for a position in their HR team was also influenced by the fact that Novo Nordisk in the US has been rated as the Number 1 Company in New Jersey to work for.

16 July 2008: I've been impressed at how quick the interview process is at Novo Nordisk! Shortly after submitting my online application I had a phone interview and today, just two weeks later, I was in Princeton meeting with all of the key members of the HR team including the vice president of HR. I was a bit nervous on my way to the interview, but as soon as I arrived in the building, I got a vibe of excitement with all the energy buzzing about in the lobby and the hallways. I also noticed that there was a new building close to completion, which I learned was needed to house employees due to recent expansions. This was contrary to what I had experienced where most companies were in the midst of downsizing – yet here was Novo Nordisk in a hiring blitz!

11 August 2008. I got the good news today that I was being offered a position with the HR team at Novo Nordisk! I called a few close friends and family to let them know that I was making a change – a change I had been looking forward to for some time. Not to mention, for the first time in over 10 years, I am going to be working closer to home. Hopefully a great start to work/life balance.

2 September 2008. I was nervous this morning, but not apprehensive because only a few days after I'd accepted the job offer my new director and a colleague phoned to welcome me and to say how excited they were to have me join the team. Today I sat in on my first HR sales staff meeting where I met all my colleagues and received a warm welcome. They even ordered breakfast for the meeting – baked treats and fresh fruits.

The rest of the day was spent getting to know my way around and meeting many of the employees I would be interacting with. I was also given a 90-day plan to ensure I was off to a successful start. Key highlights of this plan included meetings with my manager, who also told me who my 'peer on-boarding partner' would be. This is a co-worker who is available during my first days to help me get up to speed more quickly. They answer my questions, go out to lunch with me and help me get acquainted to the new workplace. My first day also included a facility tour, team introduction, set up of my work space, lunch with the HR team and department overview. Phew! Trying to find all the information I needed online regarding my benefits was a little challenging so I reached out to the HR Employee Services Team who pointed me in the right direction.

8–12 September 2008. This week I met with my manager every day. I also took part in the IT on-boarding course where we were taught how to navigate through the Novo Nordisk systems. This is where I learned that all employees are assigned initials and this is how you find people in the telephone directory. That's going to take some getting used to! This week the HR team went out for a group lunch where we learned more about each others' interests and experience. I also decorated my office with a few pictures of my two-year-old nephew to make the place feel more like home.

15–19 September 2008. I met with more employees I'll be working with this week. This is the most collaborative HR team I have worked with in my career – it seems like they work hard but also have fun doing it. I feel that this is an environment where it is safe to speak up and where ideas and opinions are respected and valued. In my past positions, work always felt separate from my personal life. However, with this team I feel like I'm developing friends who I can also spend time with outside work hours. The demands of the job are great but when you feel like you are getting through it with a team that operates like a family it makes it a joy coming in to work every day!

22–26 September 2008. This week I continued to learn about the company's values and Triple Bottom Line approach. I almost feel that I am up to speed with what I am doing and that I am no longer the 'new' employee! It's only a few weeks in and I feel like I've been around much longer. In the past, it's taken me 6–12 months to reach this point. I think this has so much to do with the support I've received. I have been surprised – in a good way – with the company's ability to implement new ideas quickly. Any new idea or change I wanted to implement when I worked in 'big pharma' required numerous levels of approval and it could take months to implement. I also have a feeling that in Novo Nordisk you can make your own opportunities. I believe that I can grow my career in HR at Novo Nordisk to what I want it to be, because there are so many opportunities and you are encouraged to take on assignments that stretch you.

27 May 2009. Today I joined my colleagues in a 20-minute company walk which was organised in honour of National Employee Health & Fitness Day. I am now eight months into my position at Novo Nordisk and feel fully integrated! My goal for this coming year is to gain as much business acumen as I can. The diabetes business continues to grow and the impact our products have on so many Americans is incredible. I am looking forward to a long and successful career at Novo Nordisk. By the way, Novo Nordisk in the US has reached a new milestone, it's been rated number 57 in the top 100 Fortune best companies to work for so we have a lot to celebrate.

NovoHealth

NovoHealth is a worldwide company programme that promotes and supports healthy living for all Novo Nordisk employees. The programme aims to inspire healthy living as a means to prevent type 2 diabetes and other lifestyle-driven diseases. Via NovoHealth employees are offered a wide variety of activities and the company has committed to providing:

- access to and encouraging employees to do physical activity
- a smoke-free work environment and supporting employees who wish to stop smoking
- access to and encouraging personal health checks with individual advice
- healthy food in the workplace, where food is served.



Name: Evelyn Rodriguez

Age: "I'll never tell!"

Length of employment at Novo Nordisk: One year

Job title: Human resource generalist supporting Diabetes Sales

Education: Master's degrees in Human Services Administration and in Human Resource Management



Passionate about people and products

According to Iain Sinclair, being a sales representative is about more than selling. It's about providing information on the best possible patient care and therefore making a difference: to patients, healthcare professionals and the company.

Iain Sinclair joined Novo Nordisk as a sales representative in Scotland nine years ago: "I knew as soon as I graduated from university that I wanted to work in this industry, so I applied for jobs that would move me into this sector." After a job in sales for the food industry, Iain got a 6-month contract as a sales representative for one of Novo Nordisk's competitors. He got to know the Novo Nordisk sales representative at his local hospital – "we were the only two representatives who seemed to be working hard," he laughs – and when the Novo Nordisk representative was promoted she asked Iain to apply for her old position.

Relationship building

"The great thing about working for Novo Nordisk as a sales representative is that the company gives you time to build a relationship with doctors – which is not always easy," explains Iain. A typical day for Iain starts at about 8.30 am, visiting three or four doctors' surgeries and leaving his business card. Doctors see patients until about 11.30 am, so Iain returns then to find out if anyone is willing to meet him.

Iain explains that, if it's a good day, he will get to see just one doctor. "We get months of training, which all has to be put into practice for just one 10-minute meeting! In that time you must give the doctor information on the latest treatments, but equally

important is that you listen to the doctor, ask probing questions and find out their needs." This could be Iain's one chance that morning to make a difference. "It is so important to develop a rapport with the doctor, so that next time they will agree to see you again, maybe spend a little longer with you and begin to respect the information you give to them."

Sharing knowledge

While waiting for the doctors to finish surgery, Iain may have met with practice nurses or consultants at the hospital. Or he may have shopped at the local supermarket to buy sandwiches, because twice a week he arranges lunchtime educational meetings at the hospital (the regulations in the UK limit the amount of money that a pharmaceutical company can spend on a doctor, but allow a modest lunch to be provided at such meetings). "Usually I have 30 minutes to present our clinical trials data, key product messages and answer questions," explains Iain. Sometimes he may have arranged for a colleague from the clinical trials or medical departments to attend the meeting to provide more detailed information about a particular clinical trial of interest to that hospital, or on a product that has not yet been launched.

During the afternoon, Iain visits hospitals to meet with specialist nurses and consultants. "A great part of the job is turning around a disinterested consultant," says Iain. "When you first meet someone like this they are disengaged and cynical. But after weeks or maybe even months, you earn their trust. You show them that you are only there to provide information to help them improve their patient care." To meet with a consultant, a sales representative must first

get past the gatekeeper: the consultant's secretary! "To be a good sales representative you need to know how to build relationships with the receptionists and secretaries as well as the doctors and consultants," smiles Iain.

The lows and highs

The hardest part of the job is rejection: some consultants and doctors simply refuse to see sales representatives. Says Iain: "To be good at this job you have to be thick-skinned. You have to know when to invest time in building a relationship and when to stop trying. You also need to learn coping strategies, so that when you've been rejected for the fifth time that day – and it's not even lunchtime – you are able to pick yourself up and move on to the next appointment without losing any of your passion."

But Iain believes the good parts of the job more than make up for the rejections. "To see sales increasing in my area and know that I have made this happen is amazing. I feel almost paternal about our products. Realising that the relationships I am building with the doctors and consultants are bearing fruit and that more people are using our products – products that can make a difference to their lives – is a great responsibility."

Iain was recently promoted to the role of sales manager. "Today my role is about coaching and developing sales representatives. I tell anyone new to the role that yes, you get a nice car and a good salary, but the role of a sales representative is tough. You have to work hard to build relationships and get used to rejections. But if you are passionate about our products and you really believe in what you are doing, you will be successful."



Name: Iain Sinclair

Age: 37

Length of employment at Novo Nordisk: Nine years

Job title: Diabetes sales manager, East Scotland

Education: Degree in Hospitality Management, Higher in Biology

Taking charge of personal development

Sobia Akram started her career in Novo Nordisk as a member of the graduate scheme in 2004. Today she is executive assistant to the company's chief operating officer.

When Sobia started as a graduate in Novo Nordisk it was part of her career plan. She had carefully thought about the type of company she wanted to join. Even as a young student, Sobia had a determination to take active charge of her own professional and personal development.

Before graduating with a business degree from Copenhagen Business School in 2002, Sobia had chosen to include two study trips to the US: one semester at Boston College, and another at an MBA programme in North Carolina. "These trips not only helped me learn something new in my area of interest, they also gave me an insight into how it is to live somewhere else, to get a feeling for cultural differences and thereby develop a cultural responsiveness," she explains.

Finding the right match

Having finished her degree, Sobia considered continuing with a doctorate. "I like theory, but I realised that I like practice even more, so I decided to look for a job."

But not just any job. Sobia wanted to combine her interest in sustainability with a wish to work in a knowledge-intensive industry, such as biotechnology, pharmaceutical or telecommunications.

A friend of Sobia had just joined the graduate programme at Novo Nordisk and convinced her to apply. "It was a good match and still is. I can honestly say that my heart beats for Novo Nordisk! Of course the values and sustainable business approach that we exercise in Novo Nordisk makes all of us feel proud. But equally important to me is that Novo Nordisk is a company that has an extremely strong performance focus and reaches this by making an actual difference to patients' lives."

Managing a team

Sobia was offered one of five graduate positions available in 2004 and started in the Business Processes Programme. Her two years as a graduate took her from Denmark to Zurich and back. The first rotation in Denmark was focusing on IT and Sobia joined the team responsible for implementing of the Customer Relationship Management platform in affiliates in Europe. In Zurich, amongst other things, she worked with sales and marketing effectiveness within diabetes, and on her last rotation, in Denmark, she

worked in Product Supply as an internal consultant with the aim of optimizing production processes through the use of lean principles.

"I liked this role very much," Sobia says. "I think it offered me a good understanding of the actual business processes. And

Graduate programme in Novo Nordisk

The graduate programme in Novo Nordisk is aimed at young students who have just finished their university studies. The programme provides a motivating and results-oriented work setting that allows the competences and talents of the graduates to flourish.

The programme consists of three eight-month assignments. The graduates complete at least one of these at Novo Nordisk headquarters in Denmark, and at least one at a regional office or affiliate in another part of the world.

In 2008 Novo Nordisk received around 2,500 applications: 278 phone interviews were conducted and 82 students from 20 countries were invited to a two-day seminar in Denmark in March 2008. After the seminar, 32 people were offered graduate positions within Novo Nordisk.

It is not guaranteed that all graduates are offered jobs within the company when they complete the programme. Participants need to apply for Novo Nordisk jobs on the same terms as other job seekers.

To find out more about the graduate programme, including the application, process, visit novonordisk.com/careers

working in a consultant role gave me the opportunity to drive results, partially through others, making sure that we would deliver as a team and that results were achieved."

From graduate to executive assistant

Having finished the graduate programme by the end of 2005,

Sobia stayed on in Product Supply eventually working with device development which meant a lot of travelling. At the time Novo Nordisk had a production facility in Hayward, California, and Sobia along with her team would travel there every five or six weeks.

Progressing

Going from device development, Sobia went on to assisting the senior management of Product Supply, before taking up the role of executive assistant to the company's chief operating officer. Today, part of her work is to drive and coordinate different corporate processes such as the balanced scorecard for Operations, representing the chief operating officer in different internal committees and also solving ad hoc tasks.

Learning every day

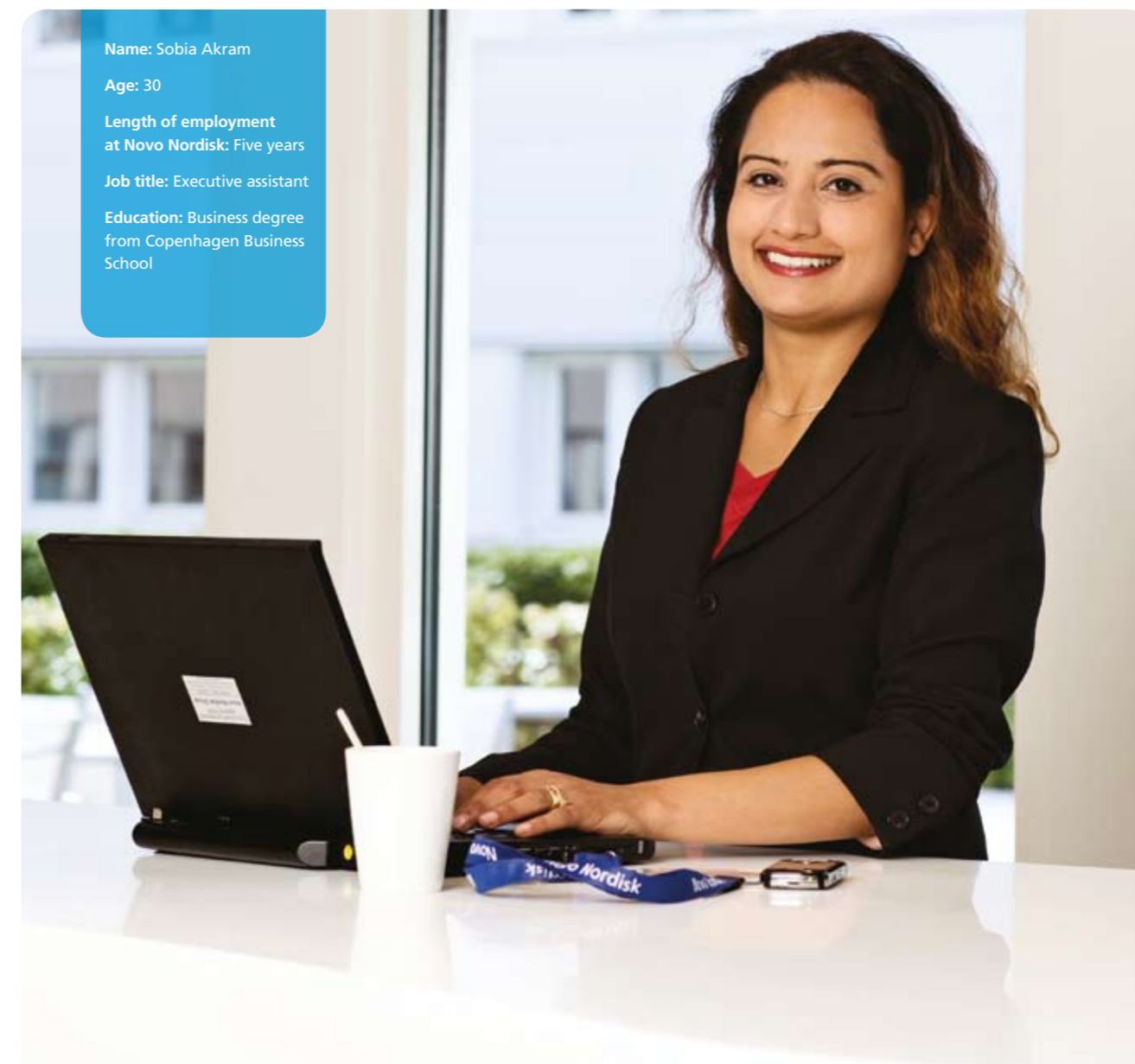
What Sobia likes the most about her latest job is that she is continuously learning about the business. She also enjoys the freedom and flexibility it offers: "I feel very much encouraged to come up with new ideas, but of course it is equally important that I deliver

what has already been planned. In any case, I like a working environment that is intensive and fun, otherwise I get restless."

Characterising herself as a 'doer', Sobia explains: "A good day to me is when I have solved a problem, finished a task and feel I have made a difference to a colleague."

Sobia has been in her present job since December 2008 and still sees many opportunities to develop both professionally and personally. "I feel that I develop every day in my job. To me development does not necessarily mean going away for seminars and training courses. I actually feel I learn the most just by being here on the job – getting new challenges and working with my colleagues."

Sobia sees herself working for Novo Nordisk for a long time and offers the following advice to young graduates: "Think carefully both about what you expect from an employer and what it would require of yourself to be a good employee. If you have a notion of the answers to these questions, I think there is a great chance you will find a good job match!"



Name: Sobia Akram
Age: 30
Length of employment at Novo Nordisk: Five years
Job title: Executive assistant
Education: Business degree from Copenhagen Business School

An enduring dedication to science

When Søren Erik Bjørn started work at Novo Nordisk almost 25 years ago, he was part of a small team researching the use of a protein to treat haemophilia that, according to the text books, shouldn't work. Today this protein is a life-saving medicine and Søren's dedication to his work is as strong as ever

"I get a huge kick from discussing how we can apply science to help people!" says Søren Erik Bjørn who describes himself as a technology freak who learned to appreciate biology, understand diseases and connect with business reality. As scientific vice president for haemostasis at Novo Nordisk, there is no such thing as an ordinary day in the office for Søren, but it can be guaranteed that he will spend much of his day working on the company's research projects.

"My job is to build and progress projects that address the needs of people with haemophilia, and to secure support for new projects," Søren explains. This is done in collaboration with colleagues and stakeholders in Denmark and around the world. "This is a two-way street. I explain about our aspiration to change

the possibilities within haemophilia, our strategies and plans, and in return patients, doctors and colleagues give their perspective on unmet needs, which I can take home to foster further innovation in research."

A major breakthrough for a limited market

Søren began work at Novo Nordisk in the research laboratory, as a member of a small team investigating the use of recombinant factor VIIa for the treatment of haemophilia with inhibitors. At the time there was no proper treatment for people with this condition, which resulted in uncontrollable bleeding, disabilities and premature death. "When I started out I was fairly 'green', but was given resources and a huge responsibility – I felt like Pinocchio when his strings are cut!" says Søren.

"With only 3,500 people in the world with haemophilia with inhibitors, not many pharmaceutical companies would have invested the resources into finding a treatment. But Novo Nordisk saw there was a great need for it and after many years of research, we were able to prove that the treatment was safe and effective", explains Søren. "Since then the treatment has helped many people and saved many lives and I feel privileged and proud to have been part of its development. Today the company still puts great responsibility on our research scientists – but while it is hard work, it is also incredibly rewarding.

Søren delayed switching from a lab coat to a suit for as many years as he could: "There are many opportunities for different career paths within Novo Nordisk. I was probably seen as somewhat persistent when I insisted on following a path where I saw the best chance of making a difference, and which I felt was right for me. I found working in a laboratory and researching new proteins extremely fascinating and highly relevant."

The fight for funding

Almost 25 years later, and now out of the laboratory, Søren still feels a great sense of responsibility. "When I meet with patients and physicians, who provide real-life input, it ensures that we focus on products that are most needed – we have the chance to do good for people and this is what gets me going each morning", explains Søren.

But Søren admits that his job is not always easy. "To be an innovative company we must invest in research. I have become a realist – I know that we are a business, with an obligation to shareholders – so I appreciate that funding isn't unlimited. Funding decisions are made across all therapy areas in the company, so haemostasis research is competing with other important areas, for example diabetes research. I have to communicate our aspiration to change the possibilities within haemophilia in a credible way, including the potential benefits of our research, but also the risks of failure. I hope that I have done a good enough job to secure funding for the right projects that many years later will become products that adds value to our costumers and the company as well. We have embarked on an ambitious plan for expansion within haemophilia – it is a huge responsibility."

A team effort

Nevertheless, Søren describes his job as a "dream position", as he interacts with many different people and functions across the company. "We all have the chance to challenge each other in a positive way and I think this is what keeps our focus and makes us good at what we do. It is a cross-organisational team effort and while sometimes it may take us a while to reach our goal, when we reach it we know that our work is of the highest quality. There is no alternative: we are making products for people, to hopefully change their lives for the better. This is highly motivating and often great fun too. To me this is very much the Novo Nordisk way."

Søren Bjørn in the laboratory with a colleague, Brit Binow Sørensen

Haemostasis and haemophilia

Haemostasis is the body's response to blood vessel injury and bleeding. It involves a coordinated effort between platelets and numerous blood clotting proteins which results in the formation of a blood clot. Generally, control of bleeding is achieved very quickly and without the need for medical intervention.

However, in major trauma or surgery, doctors may need to help patients achieve adequate haemostasis – in order to minimise blood loss and related injury. In addition, some people are born with a bleeding disorder that impairs their ability to achieve haemostasis. Most of these bleeding disorders, including haemophilia, are hereditary. Sometimes people who have never had any bleeding problems can develop acquired haemophilia, when even minor cuts and bruises may require medical intervention.

Novo Nordisk's protein treatment (recombinant factor VIIa) for haemophilia with inhibitors was an innovation of its time and, 12 years later, is still the only recombinant treatment available.

Today there are over 4,000 people working in research and development at Novo Nordisk, many of them in haemophilia. To support an expansion within haemophilia the company's research pipeline contains six haemostatic compounds in clinical phases 1–3 of development, with more compounds in earlier stages of discovery.



Name: Søren Erik Bjørn
Age: 52
Length of employment at Novo Nordisk: 24 years
Job title: Corporate vice president and scientific vice president within haemostasis
Education: Degree in biochemistry



Name: Dercília Ventura

Age: 26

Length of employment
at Novo Nordisk: Five years

Job title: Global clinical
compliance coordinator

Education: Degree in
Linguistics, English and
Portuguese

The cultural challenge

Novo Nordisk's arrival changed the town of Montes Claros – and the life of Dercília Ventura de Moura.

In Montes Claros, Brazil, a Dane visits a local supermarket. Outside the temperature is 38 degrees Celsius, so he finds himself enjoying the coolness inside. He has long ago stopped paying much attention to the fact that he looks so different from the locals, however, he is aware that most people in the supermarket know that he represents the company from abroad, Novo Nordisk. Later on, at a Brazilian dinner table somewhere in the city, it becomes the story of the day: "I saw one of the Danes at the supermarket."

Back in 2003, Novo Nordisk acquired Biobrás, one of Brazil's well-established insulin plants. Dercília Ventura de Moura was an eyewitness, experiencing the meeting between the Latin-American and Western cultures. She is herself a representative of the bridge between Novo Nordisk and Brazil. Dercília beams with pleasure as she explains how Novo Nordisk was instrumental in giving her life an exciting new direction – both professionally and privately: Today Dercília is employed as a global clinical compliance coordinator in the Quality R&D area in Søborg, Denmark, and she is happily married to Lars Evan Jørgensen.

An opportunity to learn

Montes Claros is a small city for Brazil. When Novo Nordisk acquired Biobrás it was a major event for the city, because Novo Nordisk intended to double the size of the plant. For the Brazilians this meant more jobs. Construction workers were needed to build the plant as well as people to work at the plant at all levels, from sales to production and from secretaries to managers.

Dercília was a trainee at Biobrás and got a job in Quality Assurance with Novo Nordisk. Everybody in the city with a relevant background was eager to get a job at the Montes Claros site and it became a very competitive environment. Few of the locals spoke English though, so it was difficult for the Danish managers to find the right people. Job seekers came to Montes Claros from all over Brazil. Dercília was finishing her bachelor's degree in English and Portuguese from the public university, so she was a perfect match for the crucial skill required: to be able to understand, speak and write English.

"None of us had expected that a foreign company would settle here and that we would have daily contact with foreigners. It was an opportunity for all of us to learn," explains Dercília.

Dercília recalls an intense interest from locals in Novo Nordisk, for instance when she and her colleagues were walking outside the plant wearing their Novo Nordisk T-shirts. Locals would stop them and ask about the project, or if there were any available jobs.

Dercília stresses the fact that Novo Nordisk was sensitive towards the low standard of living in the region. The company engaged in social and educational programmes and made donations in order to improve life for the locals. "All this meant a lot," Dercília notes.

Being in Scandinavia

It was while Dercília was introducing new employees to a training programme that she met Lars. He had taken the opportunity to work at the plant in Montes Claros for one year. Dercília was teaching Portuguese to a small group of Danes and Lars was among them. "I just got straight A's," Lars says, with a big smile. After settling in Malmø, Sweden, Dercília got a job at Novo Nordisk headquarters in Denmark, and so takes the short commute to the Danish office each day.

Being in Scandinavia their roles have now changed. Today Dercília is the expatriate, but outside Novo Nordisk she doesn't encounter the same kind of curiosity from the locals as Lars did at the supermarket in Montes Claros.

However, moving to Scandinavia hasn't been an entirely easy experience. "I miss my family and friends back home and the immigration process was difficult," explains Dercília. "The Danes are friendly but it takes a long time to forge a strong friendship. But since the launch of the International Club last year I've met lots of expatriates. We meet often and it's a great opportunity for me to network and exchange experiences."

The couple have decided to stay in Scandinavia for the foreseeable future. "At work I feel very welcome and fully accepted. My colleagues are open-minded and many have experienced living abroad. Settling in to a new country with a different culture is definitely a process – and one I haven't yet completed!" says Dercília.

The International Club

Novo Nordisk's International Club is funded by the company but is driven on initiative from its volunteers. The Club aims to help expatriates in Denmark meet new people and integrate into Danish life. Heather Palen, an American working in Denmark and one of the original promoters of the International Club, explains. "The Danes are open. But it takes initiative on the part of the expatriate to create a sustained relationship with them. Learning how to practise the concept of 'dansk hygge' (Danish cosiness) is so important." The Club enhances both social and professional networks, with organised events taking place in the evenings and at weekends.

More help needed

Karen Vink from Novo Nordisk's Dutch affiliate was a TakeAction! volunteer in Bangladesh. Her trip changed the way she looks at her work and the company.

After working for more than eight years for Novo Nordisk and being in daily contact with people with diabetes or those involved in diabetes care, Karen Vink felt she knew the diabetes care situation in the Netherlands. However, she was less familiar with how diabetes as a chronic condition was dealt with in other countries.

So when the possibility came to volunteer as a TakeAction! reporter on a trip to visit and subsequently promote a project for children with type 1 diabetes in Bangladesh, Karen applied immediately. "I felt so fortunate when I was selected to be part of the team," says Karen.

The diabetes situation

Karen spent nine days in Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries in the world with approximately 150 million inhabitants. The average life expectancy is 58 years. In 2007, it was estimated that four million people in Bangladesh have diabetes. With only an estimated 1% having type 1 diabetes, most have type 2 diabetes.

Novo Nordisk employees TakeAction!

Novo Nordisk's social and environmental responsibility is at the heart of the company's employee volunteer programme, TakeAction!

The TakeAction! programme, launched in 2003, encourages employees to engage in voluntary activities in local communities. Activities are developed and carried out by Novo Nordisk employees during working hours. The types of activities are only limited by the creativity of employees and could for instance be fundraising, diabetes youth camps, awareness campaigns, tree planting, walkathons. Since the programme began in 2003, employees have carried out more than 500 different activities.

The TakeAction! programme in Bangladesh is aimed at children with type 1 diabetes. The programme is physically located in the BIRDEM diabetes hospital in the capital, Dhaka, and provides 100 children from the Dhaka area with basic care and insulin. The funding comes from Novo Nordisk employees and is donated through the World Diabetes Foundation.

While the TakeAction! programme is making a difference to some children's lives, there are millions of people in Bangladesh with diabetes who the programme can not reach.

In Bangladesh, people with diabetes don't generally have a blood glucose meter. And even if they do have one, there may not be any monitoring strips to use in the meter as they are simply too expensive. Diabetes treatment consists of daily administration of a fixed dose of insulin. "There is no discussion of self-management and self-regulation," Karen explains. "It is literally treatment to survive."

Although many people have diabetes in Bangladesh, misunderstandings still exist. "Lots of people think diabetes is contagious," says Karen. "Children are sometimes abandoned if they have been diagnosed with diabetes. Especially for women, life becomes more difficult if they have diabetes: a man can divorce a woman because she has diabetes. Having diabetes is often seen as socially undesirable."

Large and organised

In spite of all this, Karen found diabetes care in Bangladesh surprisingly organised. In Dhaka there is a special hospital, called the Bangladesh Institute for Research in Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism (BIRDEM), which is owned by the Diabetes Association of Bangladesh which drives diabetes care in the country. "The hospital is an unexpectedly large institute, which doesn't exist in this form in the Netherlands," says Karen. Every day 3,500 people are seen by the 800 doctors who work there and BIRDEM has expanded operations with 65 smaller establishments across the country.

Care and medicine

Novo Nordisk's TakeAction! programme in Bangladesh is aimed at children with type 1 diabetes. Almost all the children are injected twice a day with short- and long-acting insulin. Once a month, the children go to the hospital to pick up their insulin and have their blood glucose checked. Unfortunately, many children develop diabetes-related complications after only a few years. "I saw a boy from the programme lying in a hospital bed. His blood sugar levels were so high that he had been admitted," says Karen. "I wondered how that was possible, as he gets insulin from TakeAction!?! Unfortunately it's more complicated than that. His insulin was indeed ready to be picked up from the BIRDEM hospital, but he had no money for a bus ticket to get there."

From brick to corrugated iron

To better understand how families with a child with diabetes live, Karen went to visit a family affected by diabetes.



Name: Karen Vink
Age: 34
Length of employment at Novo Nordisk: 10 years
Job title: Communication & corporate brand manager
Education: Master's in Health Sciences



Porimol, a boy with diabetes

In Dhaka's shanty town Karen visited the house of Porimol, a nine-year-old boy who has had diabetes for two years. After speaking with Porimol's father for a short while, Karen discovered Porimol has developed complications from diabetes. Last year, he had eye surgery.

Karen saw that at Porimol's house there is no refrigerator – but insulin should be refrigerated. "The insulin is kept in a glass bowl. When I asked the father why he doesn't at least place the bottles in cold water he told me that the labels come off and he won't know which one to use," says Karen. "I tried to explain that one type is cloudy and the other one clear, but the father is illiterate and he uses the colour of the label to recognise the correct insulin and that's all he wants to know."

Karen asked Porimol what he wants to be when he grows up. "He didn't respond. His father finally said that they don't have an answer because they are living day to day. For the time being, he is simply grateful for the help that the family receives from TakeAction!. As a result, his son is still alive."

Resolution for the future

Karen explains that during the days she spent in Bangladesh, she saw so much and had so many impressions that at night it was very difficult for her to fall asleep. However, when she returned to the Netherlands, Karen says she didn't feel tired: "I felt energised. The realisation that I work for a company that accepts its responsibilities, gives something back to the world and does its best to improve the future of people living with diabetes, fills me with pride."

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is the term for several metabolic disorders in which the body no longer produces insulin or uses the insulin it produces ineffectively. Insulin helps glucose (sugar) get into the body's cells where it is used to make energy. The most common forms of diabetes are type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is characterised by abnormally high blood sugar levels. Symptoms include extreme thirst, fatigue and frequent urination. If left untreated diabetes may result in coma and ultimately death.

However, people with diabetes can live normal, healthy lives by combining the elements of diet, exercise and medicine (if needed), along with regular blood glucose testing.

Working towards changing diabetes

Novo Nordisk is committed to providing treatment for people with diabetes and invests in research to not only find better treatment solutions but also to ultimately find a cure for diabetes. But this is not enough. There is also a great need to raise awareness and educate people about diabetes.

Every 10 seconds somewhere in the world two people develop diabetes and one person dies from diabetes-related complications. This makes diabetes one of the leading causes of death across the globe: The disease currently affects 250 million people worldwide and this number is expected to grow to 380 million by 2025. The largest increase in diabetes prevalence is taking place in developing countries. But with the right knowledge, people can live life well with diabetes or can influence their own risk of developing diabetes. Novo Nordisk is involved in various activities with the aim of informing the general public, media and politicians about diabetes. The Changing Diabetes® Bus and World Diabetes Day are two such activities:

A global drive to change diabetes

The Novo Nordisk Changing Diabetes® Bus started its world tour in 2006. This rolling diabetes exhibition centre contains video screens, information boards and quizzes providing information and interaction for visitors of all ages. The bus is open to everybody and stops at parliaments, schools, hospitals, pharmacies, convention centres and town squares.

The bus has so far visited five continents and provided more than 160,000 visitors with diabetes information. In addition, more than 64,000 blood sugar screenings have been performed. In 2009 the bus will visit 16 countries, mainly in Europe. Follow the bus world tour: novonordisk.com/diabetesbus



In 2007 the Changing Diabetes® Bus visited Sydney, Australia.



On World Diabetes Day blue circles are formed to mimic the symbol of the UN diabetes resolution.

Uniting for a cause on World Diabetes Day

World Diabetes Day is a global awareness day, celebrated every year on 14 November. The date was chosen as it is the birthday of Frederick Banting who, along with Charles Best, first conceived the idea which led to the discovery of insulin in 1921.

World Diabetes Day was first introduced in 1991. Since then it has grown in popularity and now brings together hundreds of thousands of people in over 160 countries including Novo Nordisk employees, opinion leaders, healthcare professionals, the general public and people with diabetes. Since the adoption of the United Nations Resolution on diabetes in December 2006, World Diabetes Day has become a UN-observed day. The UN resolution signifies that all nations recognise the severity of the worldwide diabetes pandemic and are committed to urgently dealing with it. It encourages Member States to develop national policies for the prevention, treatment and care of diabetes in line with the sustainable development of their healthcare systems.

Novo Nordisk has a long history of celebrating World Diabetes Day and for several years has organised a Global Diabetes Walk to raise awareness about diabetes and put focus on the importance of an active lifestyle. Learn more about World Diabetes Day at: worlddiabetesday.novonordisk.com

Test your Novo Nordisk knowledge

What do you know about Novo Nordisk? Test your knowledge with this quiz (hint: all answers can be found in this magazine!). For the chance to win an Ipod touch submit your answers at novonordisk.com/careers/testknowledge*

1: When was the company founded?

- a more than 80 years ago
- b more than 60 years ago
- c more than 100 years ago

2: Which is Novo Nordisk's biggest therapy area?

- a heart medicines
- b treatment options for haemophilia patients
- c diabetes care

3: How many people are estimated to have diabetes globally?

- a 100 million
- b 250 million
- c 300 million

4: How many employees are expected to work for Novo Nordisk worldwide by 2018?

- a Fewer than today
- b Around 30,000
- c Around 43,000

5: In how many countries does Novo Nordisk have market presence?

- a 97
- b 125
- c 179

6: What is the name of Novo Nordisk's employee volunteer programme?

- a TakeAction!
- b Novo Nordisk volunteer programme
- c Taking action now

7: How long does it take to complete the graduate programme at Novo Nordisk?

- a One year
- b Two years
- c Three years

8: What is the name of the values-based framework the company operates by?

- a Novo Nordisk Way of Management
- b Novo Nordisk Way
- c Novo Nordisk Values

9: For how many years has Novo Nordisk achieved double-digit sales growth?

- a Three years
- b Seven years
- c Eleven years

10: How many people worldwide have haemophilia with inhibitors?

- a 3,500
- b 6,500
- c 12,500

* Correct entries will be entered into a draw to win an Ipod touch. One winner will be drawn on 1 December 2009, 1 March 2010 and 1 June 2010.

Your career begins at novonordisk.com/career

Novo Nordisk's careers website contains relevant information about the company and its life-changing jobs:

Job database:

More than 100 vacancies are advertised in the job database. Use the database to search for vacancies in different countries.

Job agent:

Sign up for the e-mail service and receive notification if any job that matches your criteria is advertised.

Graduate programme:

More than 30 graduates each year are enrolled in the Novo Nordisk graduate programme. Learn about who can apply, what the programme consists of and deadlines for the next round of applications.

Working at Novo Nordisk:

What is it like to work for Novo Nordisk? Read more employee stories and watch their videos.



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