

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

An accomplished and authentic R&D executive who elevates business performance. Broad experience in developing consumer-driven innovation strategies that deliver business results both at a global scale and with early-stage companies. Responsible for R&D leadership of a diverse product portfolio generating \$1B in revenue, building and executing portfolio management strategies that consistently deliver category leading innovation performance, and leveraging industry expertise and business acumen to found a successful beverage startup. Expertise in building strong internal and open innovation partnerships that unlock future possibilities to deliver today's results and high-performing organizations where each team member brings their best to achieve outstanding results. Key strengths are developing strategies, leading collaboratively through ambiguity to deliver business results, technical agility, and business model innovation.

CAREER EXPERIENCE

Global R&D Leader, Zone AOA, LATAM Cereal Partners Worldwide (CPW)

2022 – Present

Selected to be the R&D Leader for the newly formed Asia, Oceania, Africa & LATAM zones. Responsible for leading the R&D organizational design and startup efforts while partnering with the cross functional leadership team to enable successful organization startup and attainment of key LTP business goals. Responsible for zone strategy development including new product innovation, portfolio renovation, margin improvement initiatives, and white space exploration across 1 billion CHF in revenue while leading a team of 15 developers and quality specialists.

Global R&D Leader, AMA/LATAM Regions, Cereal Partners Worldwide (CPW)

2019 – 2022

Appointed to be the R&D Leader for the emerging markets within the cereal joint venture of Nestle and General Mills. Responsible for leading new product innovation, portfolio renovation, margin improvement initiatives, and white space exploration across 750 million CHF in revenue, leading a team of 11 developers and quality specialists.

- Enabled topline growth and bottom-line profitability through innovation and core product renovation
- Developed external innovation capability, unlocking the most significant global launch in CPW
- Led nutrition reformulation across 75% of core revenue to improve consumer positioning and meet local nutrition regulations
- Partnered with marketing to develop three-year innovation pipelines focused on driving segment building innovation and scale across all emerging markets
- Accountable for quality, regulatory and food safety compliance as designed across all markets

Founder & CEO, Five Vodka / Springboard Partners

2014 – Present

Founded and lead companies from concept to commercialization in the food and beverage space—developed business plans including P&L, product marketing propositions, and market assessments to determine viability and go-to-market strategies.

- Founded a craft spirits startup with 4 SKU's and over 500 points of regional distribution. Named as Food/Ag/Beverage divisional semi-finalist in the 2016 Minnesota Cup startup competition.
 - Developed foundational business model, led brand & product design, and designed the production system
 - Drove brand awareness, trial, and growth via establishing sampling/brand ambassador program and strategic partnerships
 - Achieved profitability in first 12 months of operation and Nielsen ranked by year 4
- Partnered with Venture Capital firm to lead new product opportunity explorations, developed pilot market plan and post-revenue scale-up plan
 - Developed initial market analysis and competitive assessment to determine preliminary concept viability
 - Identified commercialization and brand design partners to enable market test and launch
 - *Project placed on indefinite hold during the pandemic*

CTO Chief of Staff, General Mills Inc.

2016 – 2019

Chosen as the Executive R&D Leadership Team Chief of Staff. Responsible for influencing long-term strategy for the global R&D organization, communicating strategic direction at all levels of the 2,000 person organization while providing leadership to key organizational initiatives:

- Led confidential restructuring effort and org design to relocate R&D center from Switzerland to the US, including facility consolidation between countries, 100 member work system design, staffing, and business continuity planning. The project enabled a 25% ROI increase on R&D investment, retention of all key talent with zero business disruption.
- Developed and implemented portfolio ROI methodology that increased the R&D function's business impact by an estimated \$75 million in revenue.
- Supported key R&D functional deliverables: long-range plan development, pipeline health assessment, and facilitation of 15 member executive leadership team to deliver key annual objectives.

Sr. R&D Manager, General Mills Inc.**2013 – 2016**

Promoted to lead the Product and Packaging Development Team responsible for a \$500 million private label business within the \$1B Convenience and Food Service operating segment:

- Quickly formed cross-functional partnerships to enable clear prioritization and agile consumer innovation cycles, resulting in \$100 million in new business and Strategic Partner of the Year with Wal-Mart.
- Facilitated creation of a multi-year innovation pipeline encompassing New Products, Core Renovation, and Productivity for customer brands ranging from Wal-Mart to fast food chains such as McDonald's & KFC.
- Championed technology application resulting in \$10 million in productivity and a sustainable competitive advantage.
- Successfully developed a high-performance innovation team of 15 scientists, engineers and technicians focused on pragmatic technical solutions, growing profit from \$70M to \$90M in three years.

International Technology Manager, General Mills Inc.**2010 – 2013**

Promoted to lead process technology development for the \$3B International Operating Segment. Technologies supported included savory and grain snacks, baked goods & dry mixes, frozen and chilled meals, and dairy:

- Developed a five-year global technology roadmap for the International Operating Segment for five technology platforms.
- Led development of new to world tortilla forming technology, delivering \$30 million in NPD revenue for Europe.
- Led a team of internal and external developers across the US, Japan and China to deliver dumpling manufacturing technology enabling a \$2.5 million savings and a labor force reduction of 500 people.
- Negotiated a technology licensing agreement with a Japanese partner resulting in \$1.5 million in annual royalties.

Sr. R&D International Engineer, General Mills Inc.**2006 – 2010**

Selected to develop new processes and manufacturing technologies to deliver significant levels of productivity in China and new product innovation in Europe:

- Led a \$1.5 million technology development project with the China automation team to deliver new wonton forming technology, resulting in a 50% labor reduction while building key sensory capabilities within the local team.
- Developed a new process technology enabling ultra-convenient refrigerated muffin batter in Europe and a 3x capacity increase for the China fruit snacks business.

Engineering Business Unit Manager—Baking Division, General Mills Inc.**2004 –2006**

Promoted to lead division capital strategy and planning while providing leadership to key business and supply chain initiatives. This engineering leadership position represents the function as a member of the supply chain business team:

- Responsible for planning and approval of a \$15 million division capital plan across six plants facilities.
- Provided engineering leadership in the successful launch of \$100 million *Warm Delights* and *Bisquick Shake N Pour* businesses.
- Led the cross-functional team responsible for evaluating the dry mix manufacturing network.

Process Engineer I, II, III, General Mills Inc.**1999 – 2004**

Hired to lead daily Cereal and Snacks manufacturing performance and long-term system productivity of the Covington, GA plant. Promoted to lead more than \$10 million in capital projects for the Frozen Dough and Dry Meals product platforms. Promoted to lead \$8 million supply chain manufacturing restructuring project to consolidate operations and build new product capability for frozen dough business, delivering a 10% capacity increase to enable future growth.

BOARD, COMMUNITY AND OTHER LEADERSHIP**Startup Mentor (2016 – Present)**

Formed local startup mentoring circle, fostering connections across early-stage post-revenue startups within the FMCG food and beverage space.

Green Garden Bakery Advisory Board (2018 – 2019)

Selected to the board of advisors for the youth startup based in North Minneapolis, served on the Finance committee. Key areas of expertise leveraged are early-stage business formation and growth strategies.

United Way (2014 – 2016)

Held positions of increasing leadership within the General Mills campaign culminating in a post on the General Mills United Way Cabinet. Consistently delivered \$8 million in employee contributions to the United Way.

Mini-MBA Mentor (2010 – 2015)

Served as team coach for General Mills MBA students at the Carlson School of Management.

EDUCATION

Georgia Institute of Technology, Bachelor of Chemical Engineering, Atlanta, GA

August 1999