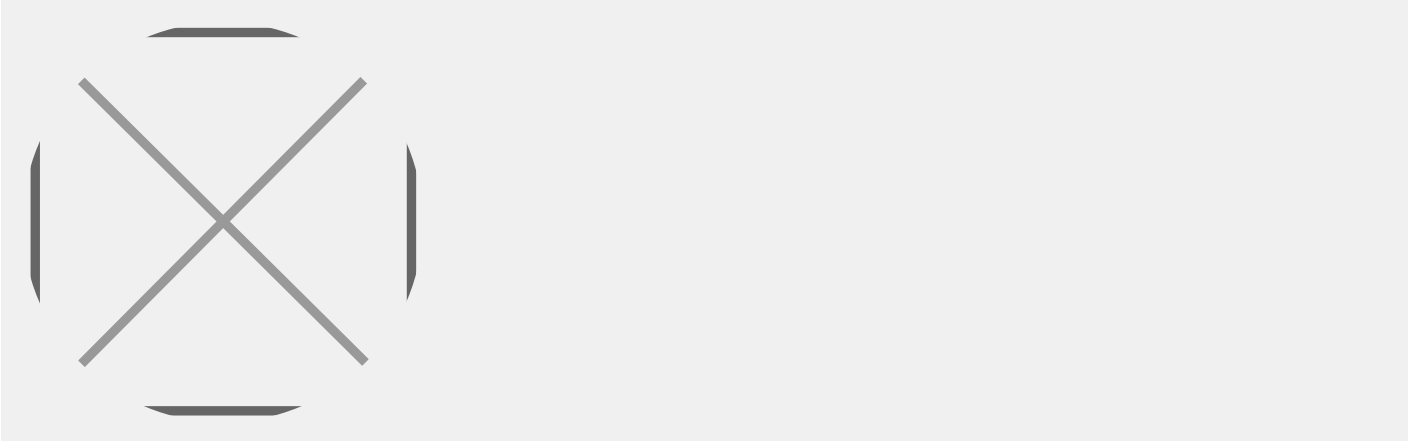
# Interview with Sabine Dandiguian, President, Janssen-Cilag France



03.03.2010

Tags: Janssen-Cilag France

sabine-dandiguian-president.jpg

**Janssen-Cilag is involved in not only selling its products in France but research and production as well. As France is a leading subsidiary, can you speak to the importance of the market not only in Europe but overall for the group?**

We are very proud of being the largest Johnson & Johnson affiliate outside of the US as it represents a great success for the French team. It's important to us to go beyond a commercial presence and have our R&D as well as manufacturing in Val-de-Reuil in order to be a real actor in the industry. We have a very complete company established in France.

**Janssen- Cilag originally came to France with production sites while today research is a bigger focus. What makes this an attractive market for research?**

While this all happened before I joined the company, I believe there are two key elements, the first being the quality of researchers due to academic standards. And these researchers, like us, live in France; they really enjoy the Val-de-Reuil campus and interfacing with manufacturing and training centers.

Secondly, and importantly for the future, there is a real political willingness to support private/ public partnerships, primarily in research which is valued by a very favorable environment tax with the "Crédit d'impôt Recherche". Thus in net investment value, France can compete with other locations even some emerging markets. We are very pleased to see President Sarkozy not only voice his support but express his desire to increase the level of investment into France.

**In 2007 you entered into a long-term partnership with the Institut Pasteur. As you are also the president of AGIPHARM can you speak to the importance of multinational companies partnering with the local landscape?**

I am very pleased with this partnership for many reasons not the least of which being our portfolio. At that time we were entering into HIV research and the Institut Pasteur is very well known in this field; it meant a lot to enter into a partnership with those who had originally discovered the virus.

Secondly, we strongly believe the potential of our industry relies on improving public/private partnerships; of course while the institute is not really public it has a designated status. If we really want to play the role of not only delivering pills but creating a cohesive approach to health issues then we need to demonstrate to authorities that we can be a real trustful partner.

Thirdly, the scientific reputation of Institut Pasteur is beautiful and fits with Janssen-Cilag as a research based company. In this context, building such a relationship was very meaningful and the high quality of the campus and its people is truly helping us. As a result we have the opportunity to send physicians from the field to the institute and they are not only interested but proud to see what France can accomplish.

As we are the leading Johnson & Johnson subsidiary we can be viewed by French authorities as the big, “bad” US pharmaceutical corporation. Conversely, within the company, I represent quite another view; many perceive France as a complex environment inundated with strikes and riots. It’s up to me to change this image and show that France is an attractive location with high quality researchers and trusted partnerships with authorities and other actors.

I am highly focused on sustainability which is why what we built with the Institut Pasteur is for the long-term. Both parties thought a lot upfront about choosing the right partner as it’s a big commitment for both sides. So far we have been able to understand one another’s issues and it has proved to be a successful partnership.

Image is an important thing to our employees as well. They can be hurt by the law opinion that general public can have on pharmaceutical industry. My first concern is the people within our company and it’s important to make them proud of their work. This relationship with the institute not only makes them proud but it is rewarding for them to see such group choose to work with Janssen-Cilag.

**Janssen-Cilag has a very well perceived reputation in HR policy. How important is it to keep the people that work for you engaged?**

This is absolutely key and its part of my personal belief that people make the difference. We have two pillars to our development: the high quality of innovation in our drugs and the high quality of people expertise behind them. Historically, it is accurate to say that the pharmaceutical industry

answered to the challenges of the market with a quantitative approach meaning a lot of sales force and expended resources. In the future this cannot be the case as we are turning towards highly specialized areas with an increasingly complex environment.

It's more than adding headcount: we have to find the right people in the right position with the right mindset and keep them engaged. These people are very important. I am the ambassador of my company to corporate but they are the ambassadors of Janssen-Cilag in France to each and every healthcare professional we can meet. These people build the commercial success of the company delegate to them the responsibility of the company's reputation and image.

Johnson & Johnson is a caring company caring for people and I feel that we are one of the few companies truly measuring the engagement of our people. Every two years we have a completely anonymous, worldwide 'Credo' survey where more than 100,000 people evaluate the customer orientation of the company, quality of their leadership, ethical approach and care for the employee.

It's very powerful to see how people rank their leadership team because I feel their engagement is a leading indicator for success in the future. If people see the point of their work, have energy and are prepared to work within a team then good things are to come. We refer to this synergy as the 'collective intelligence' which in such a complex environment where an individual holds only one part of a broader solution is integral to success.

Personally, I am very careful with our people management because they dedicate so much energy to our work. I do my best to anticipate the road ahead – patent loses are not impossible to foresee – and protect their future as well: we are one of two companies in the top ten pharmaceutical companies in France never to have done a social plan here. In today's environment this represents a lot to our employees. My first customer is the people working within Janssen-Cilag because they are the ones who build our future.

Johnson & Johnson has a special Credo based on the four populations we have to care, the first being the patient including their families and healthcare professionals. The core of our daily business is adding value to people's live by relieving pain and contributing to daily health. I have already noted our second populations: the employees of the company. Our third population is the community because working in health we are aware we have a social responsibility. Lastly, as we are not a philanthropic organization, our shareholders are an important population to consider. I joined and I remain in this company because everyday I see – from top to bottom – people being respectful of these values summarized in "our Credo"

**You have been at Janssen-Cilag for a considerable portion of your career, originally coming from a French company. What is it about this American 'big pharma' company that attracts you?**

On a personal level, I have always chosen my companies based upon the people I have met. I had the opportunity to meet with the leaders at that time who told me a story of interest so I would say the first choice is very emotional.

Why did I stay is another question. Every time I witnessed the company encounter a dilemma I saw it stick to its values which is highly important. When you see the media coverage of many businesses gone wrong I can honestly say to myself that I have never seen that in my company. Everyone has had to face difficult pharmacovigilance and clinical development issues but I have always seen my company acting to serve the patients above the commercial impact. All commercial complications can be overcome but damages to the patient, their families and our reputation cannot.

I also enjoy the complexity of a company like Johnson & Johnson because it is a very diverse company with three different sectors: pharmaceutical, medical device and consumer. Of course, this provides a lot of stability to the business. Historically, many have pushed to go fully pharmaceutically oriented because it is more profitable, but with the shift from a blockbuster model many opinions are changing.

In light of the challenges of the future it may be best to work beyond the pill by being a real partner with authorities in tackling big pathologies. Janssen-Cilag is perfectly situated for this because we cover prevention, diagnostics, drugs and education to patients as a result of our large scope. We need to establish global solutions to big problems that involve more than just a drug but we are not at this point yet because the trust between the actors is not there.

For example, say I have an outstanding product for schizophrenia which requires a twice-monthly injection. If the patient doesn’t come to the appointment and there is no infrastructure for compliance or medical education, what is the interest making such an offering? Education for physicians is a big concern because authorities are convinced that we attempt to manipulate their opinions. I hope we will be able to demonstrate that we must work together.

Indeed, looking forward, one of the challenges for the pharmaceutical industry will be to trust one another enough to make an alliance against the diseases rather than attempting to control one another. If we can do this we will win, if not then pills will continue to remain a small answer to big problems.

**See more interviews**