

ODS OF INDUSTRY



JILL SAXON, OD, FAAO

Tell us about your background.

I grew up in the suburbs of New Jersey, just miles outside of New York City, where I was exposed to people who had many different types of careers. Opportunities seemed to be everywhere, and it showed me that the world was my oyster. Even as a young girl, I knew I needed to find something that I loved and had a passion for so I could make a meaningful impact on the world.

How did you develop an interest in optometry?

Optometry is quite literally a part of my family. My younger brother and two of my uncles are optometrists, as is my father. Although my journey through optometry has been different from those in my family, our vocation as optometrists all began the same.

How did you come to be in your current role?

After working in various consultative roles for a couple years with Bausch + Lomb, I was presented with the opportunity to join the professional strategy team. Although it was difficult for me initially to think about leaving private practice and my patients, I realized that this opportunity would allow me to support patients on a larger scale and have a greater impact within the optometric profession.

What does your typical workday look like?

I love that every day is different. One day I might provide education and training to sales representatives on new technology and its benefits for doctors and patients, and the next day I might attend a national conference where I listen to, learn from, and educate my colleagues. I also continuously work to better understand and determine ways that industry can better collaborate with doctors and the optometric

community to impact the future. This begins with listening to and understanding the needs of doctors directly from doctors. In my role, I bring the voice of the doctor, and those of their patients, into what we do throughout the business. This can result in the development of a new product, education and training, and more.

What have you learned through your industry role that you never would have learned working in a practice setting?

I never realized how much goes into the development of new technology. From researchers and scientists to the medical teams, manufacturing, and commercialization to marketing and more, there are so many different functions that come together to bring a new innovation to market. In my role at Bausch + Lomb, I am involved in every step along the way to help ensure the voice of the doctor and the needs of patients are critical parts of the process. Although the development of a new technology can take years of hard work and collaboration, it's been rewarding to see the result of all the hard work through the launch of many different products that are addressing the needs of patients.

What advice would you give to someone interested in pursuing a career in the optometric industry?

If provided the opportunity, just say "yes." There may always be a part of you that never feels prepared enough, and that is OK. There will be people along your journey who can help guide and challenge you to try and achieve new goals. And as you say "yes," always remember that the transition from clinical care to industry can give you the opportunity to impact hundreds, if not thousands, of patients around the world.

What motivates you?

I am motivated by the success of those I support, either through mentoring, training on a new product, or seeing a doctor and their patient experience the benefits of one of our products. Their happiness and achievements are inspiring, and helps me work even harder to accomplish my own goals. I also believe that when we help others achieve success, they will be motivated to pay it forward. These little moments add up over time, create momentum, and ultimately help us all leave a positive impression on the world. ■

JILL SAXON, OD, FAAO

- Executive Director, Professional Strategy, Bausch + Lomb
- Jill.Saxon@bausch.com
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