

Lisa Ashby
Senior Vice President/General Manager of Scientific Products
Cardinal Health

Lisa Ashby began with Cardinal Health in 1988 and has held numerous sales and operational positions, including director of operations for the Eastern Region, vice president of strategic initiatives, vice president of distribution channel and services, and senior vice president of pharmacy services.

Currently, Ashby manages the scientific product division of Cardinal Health, a \$1.2 billion business. She oversees more than 200 people dedicated to the scientific products business, and connects with distributors around the globe.

She also serves as director for a nonprofit organization that supports women's health, education, and professional needs. Ashby supports children's causes and values time with her family, especially her nieces and nephews.

You are the senior vice president of scientific products at Cardinal Health. What is your leadership style like? Part of my leadership style is about transferring ownership. I've learned to let go and to worry only about what I can control. Also, I have high expectations of myself, as I do of others. We can only accomplish things if we work together and learn to leverage the skills of each and every team member. **You run a \$1.2 billion division of Cardinal Health. What's that like?** The pace of our business is extremely fast. You have to be guided by your own intuition. You can't have intuition unless you have perspective. My grandfather taught me that in order to be a success in business, you have to have perspective. You have to understand what each and every role does within a company in order to truly understand the team. Our biggest business is in the hospitals, so I have to understand what is important to them: what's changing, what issues they're faced with, and so on. I deal with people around the world, so I also have to understand what is important to businesses in Europe, as well as what is important right here in the United States. I always tell my team that we are trusted advisors for our clients; they trust us to get the job done right and to get it done quickly. So again, it all comes back to having perspective. **How have you gained perspective throughout your career?** I started at the bottom and worked my way up. I made a lot of lateral moves throughout my career and even took what some might call demotions. I didn't care about the money so much as I did about taking on new challenges and feeling energized about my role. I wanted to learn what each and every role was like, what it did, and how it contributed to a company. I've worked with nurses in operating rooms; I've run distribution centers; I've dealt with counties and cities to coordinate the building of exit and entrance ramps to freeways; and I've learned what it takes to make money for a company. **You graduated from Duke University with a triple major: a BA in public policy, computer science, and psychology. Why three majors?** While at Duke, I was trying to figure out what I wanted to be when I grew up. I had so many interests; choosing just one major felt limiting, and I don't like limitations. So, during a meeting with my counselor, I created my own curriculum. I felt more challenged taking on more, rather than just focusing on one area. **So how did you end up in the healthcare industry?** I went to a cocktail party one night. I had already graduated and was in sales at Baxter, a hospital supply company. A gentleman by the name of Bill Donan, who also worked at Baxter, was at the event. He gave me some life-changing advice. He told me to choose the industry that I was interested in first, and then choose the role that I wanted to have within that industry. It's that simple. I later found that healthcare was the industry that I was most passionate about and it stuck. **What gives you energy?** Winning. But not just for me; I get energy from seeing my own team be successful. In order to win, you must be a student of your business every day. **What advice do you have for young women starting off in their career?** I always like to think that I have the ability to choose my day, every day. I choose my attitude, I choose my work and I choose what my day is going to be like. My advice is to spend your time wisely and make choices for yourself that are right for you. And don't ever be afraid to try new things. It's also okay to go sideways in your career and have diverse experiences. And lastly, do not ever allow yourself to be judged; it is more than okay for your career to come second at times.

