NOVARTIS

Commercial Portfolio Lead

Job ID
REQ-10091303
Nov 03, 2026
LOC_ZA

About the Role

Major Accountabilities:

Strategy & Commercial Planning

- Prioritisation of the portfolio and portfolio mix, including customer engagement plan
- Define the role of each channel (virtual, field, digital) per customer segment and set a coordinated engagement model with clear handoffs between the Virtual Engagement and field teams.
- Run the annual planning cycle and quarterly business reviews; make go/no-go and reprioritization decisions based on data and ROI.
- Manage budget and forecasting for the channel; keep spend aligned with investment guardrails.

Execution Excellence

- Ensure rigorous, timely execution of the plan across both teams: call planning, targeting, message delivery, follow-up and pharmacy-level activation.
- Set clear operating rhythms (weekly pipeline and activity reviews, field coaching, virtual quality checks) and hold teams accountable to KPIs.
- Anticipate and resolve execution bottlenecks quickly; adapt tactics in-flight when market, access or supply conditions change.
- Partner with Supply Chain and Market Access to protect availability and pull-through at pharmacy level.

Omnichannel Engagement, Innovation & Solutions

- Lead the integration of virtual and field engagement into a seamless omnichannel experience, including remote detailing, digital content, and CRM-driven next-best-action.
- Apply a test-and-learn approach: define hypotheses, measure impact, and scale what works.

Analytics & Performance Management

- Use internal and external data (sales, pharmacy and market data, CRM, engagement analytics) to monitor performance, spot trends and risks, and direct resources to the highest-value opportunities.
- Build and maintain dashboards and insights with Analytics teams; translate them into concrete actions for both teams.
- Track and improve productivity, engagement quality, channel effectiveness and customer experience.

Leadership & Culture

- Lead, coach and develop a high-performing team spanning virtual and field roles, applying situational leadership: adapting style to the person, the task and the context.
- Drive change agility: lead the team through new ways of working, channel shifts and organizational change, bringing people along with clarity, energy and trust.
- Attract future-ready talent, manage performance, build capabilities (digital, analytical, pharmacy-specific selling) and strengthen succession across the organization.
- Role-model Novartis Leadership Expectations and Behaviours, foster an inclusive, engaged culture and a growth mindset.

Compliance & Cross-functional Collaboration

- Ensure all engagement activities comply with the Novartis Code of Ethics, internal policies, local pharmaceutical industry codes and data-privacy requirements (including consent management for remote and digital contact).
- Collaborate with Legal, Compliance, Medical, Market Access, Finance and Execution Excellence to deliver aligned, compliant execution.
- Influence and align stakeholders without direct authority across a matrixed environment.

Key Performance Indicators (Suggested priority KPIs)

- Execution quality: plan delivery, reach and frequency, engagement quality, follow-up completion
- Omnichannel effectiveness: virtual and field integration, digital engagement and conversion metrics
- Pharmacy and customer experience (e.g. customer feedback, activation, pull-through)
- Budget and forecast accuracy; compliance with investment guardrails
- Team performance and health: engagement scores, retention, capability development, succession coverage
- Compliance: adherence to Code of Ethics, policies and training requirements
- Adoption of AI

Ideal Background

Education:

- University degree in business, life sciences, pharmacy or a related field.
- Advanced degree (e.g. MBA, Master’s) preferred.

Experience/Professional Requirement:

- 3+ years in commercial roles in the pharmaceutical or healthcare industry, with a proven record of delivering results in pharmacy or a comparable channel.

- 5+ years of people leadership, ideally leading field-based teams and/or managers, including hiring, coaching, performance management and succession planning.
- Demonstrated experience with virtual or omnichannel engagement models (remote detailing, CRM, digital content) and leading teams through change.
- Track record of strategic planning plus hands-on, disciplined execution; budget and forecast ownership.
- Experience working with Legal, Compliance, Market Access and Medical in a regulated environment.

Functional Capabilities

- Customer segmentation, targeting and territory/call-plan optimisation
- Consultative selling, objection handling and sales coaching
- Customer, competitor and market insight generation
- Customer journey design and integrated marketing activation
- Commercial performance, conversion and promotional Mature Brands Life Cycle optimisation
- Strategic and tactical: turns strategy into practical plans, then delivers them with rigor and pace.
- Strong analytical skills: interprets commercial, CRM and market data and acts on insights; comfortable with dashboards and performance analytics.
- Deep understanding of the pharmacy environment and customer needs; pharmacy-specific commercial acumen.
- Knowledge of digital and omnichannel engagement tools, and of compliant content and data use.
- Budgeting, forecasting and resource-allocation discipline.
- Promotional content creation software knowledge
- High level of AI engagement in day to day activities

Leadership Capabilities & Mindset

- Situational leadership: flexes between directing, coaching, supporting and delegating depending on the individual and context.
- Change agility: embraces ambiguity, adapts quickly and helps others do the same.
- Innovative and solution-oriented: spots opportunities, experiments, and finds practical ways forward when resources or conditions are constrained.
- Outcome-oriented, with clear KPIs and ownership; operates lean and with demonstrable ROI.
- Enterprise mindset: collaborates across functions, leads without authority and influences decisions.
- Builds diverse, high-performing teams

The Company’s approved Employment Equity Plan and Targets will be considered as part of the recruitment process. As an Equal Opportunities employer, we actively encourage and welcome people with various disabilities to apply. Novartis recognises, appreciates and values diversity & inclusion.

Role Requirements

Division
DIV_IM
Business Unit
General Management
Location

LOC_ZA
Site
Midrand
Company / Legal Entity
ZA01 (FCRS = ZA001) Novartis SA (Pty) Ltd.
Functional Area
FCT_CM
Job Type
Full time
Employment Type
Regular
Shift Work
No
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