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Mr. Speice

Independent Study & Mentorship

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**Interview Assessment #4**

**Name of Professional:** Ms. Beth Hochko

**Profession/ Title:** Account Manager

**Business/ Company Name:** American Airlines

**Date of Interview:** November 2, 2017

 After my interview with Ms. Alison Taylor, In an attempt to gain more knowledge about Global Sales after my interview with Ms. Alison Taylor, the Vice President of Global Sales for American Airlines, I was fortunate enough to get into contact with Ms. Beth Hochko, the Walmart Account Manager for American Airlines. Due to the brevity of my interview with Ms. Alison Taylor, I was able to truly understand the logistics behind Global Sales after my follow-up interview with Ms. Beth Hochko.

 To begin, I asked Ms. Beth Hochko to explain the different duties that she has as an account manager at American Airlines. She explained that because she deals with Walmart, the largest retailer in the world, her duties often extend well beyond the scope of the average account manager. Managing an account requires more dedication and commitment to the job since the Walmart has one employee solely dedicated towards airfare interactions. Furthermore, given that Walmart has been recently expanding to the Latin American region, the company has a greater need for travel. As a result, American Airlines made sure to jump at the opportunity to form a partnership, thus ensuring that Walmart only uses American Airlines for travel.

In regards to the Walmart account, Ms. Hochko is responsible for meeting the needs of the company even during the contract period. The negotiations for the account are carried out by the Senior Vice President, so Ms. Alison Taylor carries out the negotiation formalities and she conveys the terms of the contract to Ms. Hochko. Nonetheless, there are many times when Ms. Hochko has to address the concerns of Walmart in terms of travel despite not being responsible for that role. This is similar to the situation that many of the other professionals that I interviewed went through. For example, Ms, Regina Borda, the Chief Brand Officer of Pizza Hut, often has to stay back later than the normal work day in order to be available for the international franchises.

As Ms. Hochko was explaining the roles of the sales team, I wondered about how the contracts were dealt with when they applied to different countries. Ms. Hochko explained that there are airline alliances, such as OneWorld and Skyteam, that were made in order to make the flight routes and connecting flights much more easier. For example, OneWorld is an airline alliance that consists of American Airlines, Japan Airlines, British Airways, Qatar Airways, and eleven other flight agencies. Because of these alliances, however, it becomes even harder to coordinate and negotiate contracts with corporate clients because the terms of the contract have to be agreed upon by all members of the alliance. Nonetheless, because of these partnerships, American Airlines is able to reap in more sales. In fact, corporate clients and sales make up the majority of the profits that the company has.

Through my different interviews, I have come to realize that I enjoy the marketing aspect of international business. As a result, I asked Ms. Hochko whether the global sales team at American Airlines interacted closely with the marketing team. In my mind, I had always associated marketing and sales as closely related, but through my discussion with Ms. Hochko, I realized that sales does not interact with marketing closely unless there is a need. Marketing teams are only assembled on an ad-hoc basis.

Through my interview with Ms. Hochko, I was able to gain more insight on what global sales consists of. Ms. Alison Taylor conveyed the importance of global sales through a more holistic approach, whereas Ms. Hochko explained the actual logistics of global sales through the Walmart account. My interview provided me with valuable information, and I look forward to further exploring International Business.