



Senior Innovation Manager (8M)

job description



the finer details

Which site am I based at?

Newton Abbott / Hybrid

Which team am I a part of?
Development

Who do I report to?

Head of Product – Own Label

Who do I look after?

Innovation Development
Managers

Team size?

2 direct reports (5 indirect
report)

Do you have responsibility for a
budget?

Yes

Qualifications &

Experience

Essential:

- ♥ **Technical Skills –**
Expertise in product trends,
foodie vision
- ♥ **Project Management-**
Experience in managing
multiple product
development projects
simultaneously, with a focus
on meeting deadlines and

The purpose of your role

An essential role in the co-ordination of the Innovation Development team to deliver multi customer product launches across multi categories to enable best-in-class innovation for our customers.

Under the direction of the Head of Product- Own label, the Senior Innovation Manager will be responsible for the leadership of the Innovation Development function at Yeo Valley. This role be required to empower, lead & priorities the workload of the innovation function. To successfully launch & evaluate the new & existing products within the following categories (ice cream, desserts,). Ensuring innovation team delivers the strategic demand pillar plans with rigor and pace.

This individual will work collaboratively with senior leadership peers from across the business to deliver best in class, trend setting, insight led innovation concepts that are aligned with customer & business strategies.

The role requires the ability to oversee the development process with the customer and the internal functions from Gate 0 to 2 kitchen approval. Using advanced project management skills to solve complex problems and deliver highly complex projects.

- ♥ Encourage creative and WOW innovation that pushes boundaries.
- ♥ Make “Better Impacts” through innovative product & new technologies
- ♥ Lead Capital Projects

This role is critical in shaping the future of the Yeo Valley Product Portfolio.

Key responsibilities:

- ♥ Empower and lead Yeo Valley Innovation Development and be the senior contact for all internal and external projects associated with Innovation Development.
- ♥ Successful in providing visionary leadership whilst developing product teams.
- ♥ Lead the Innovation Team for all NPD projects from Gate 0 approval to Gate 2 and to identify potential platforms for new food opportunities, ensuring the relevant stakeholders are involved at the right stage and aligned, including chairing gate meetings and embedding best practice.
- ♥ This role has a direct impact on the team’s ability to deliver on highly complex customer briefs, ensuring quality and timeline objectives for new product launches to enable the delivery of the strategic NPD Pipeline.

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managing resources effectively.

♥ **Knowledge of Ingredients-**
Strong understanding of the functional properties of yogurt, desserts & ice cream

♥ **Teamwork –**
Ability to work well with a collaborative, cross-functional team environment and lead in own area of expertise. Ability to encourage & lead within own team

♥ **Problem solving –**
Excellent troubleshooting skills and ability to analyse complex technical challenges & implement solutions. Support & mentor team members to reach solutions

♥ **Communication -**
Excellent verbal & written communication skills with the ability to present ideas and data clearly to technical & non-technical stakeholders

Qualifications:

- ♥ Food qualification or previous food manufacturing or catering experience
- ♥ Minimum 8 years of experience in a food NPD role, preferably within dairy, desserts or ice cream. Essential people management experience.

Desirable Skills:

♥ **Industry Knowledge-**
Strong knowledge of Brands, values & processes as adopted by the retailers.

Working knowledge of relevant legislation criteria and food production industry standards/HACCP

♥ **Large Scale Capital Projects-**

♥ Lead oversight and accountability for multiple project critical paths across multiple timelines, including project and stakeholder management, identifying risks and developing mitigation strategies to ensure launches are delivered on time & in full across the portfolio.

♥ To develop and maintain excellent customer relationships with senior customer contacts, through a customer 'intimate' approach.

♥ Ability to troubleshoot – address and resolve concept challenges that arise during product development, collaborating with internal teams to ensure solutions are implemented effectively.

♥ To work collaboratively with Head of Process, R&D Team, Technical, Sourcing and Operations teams on new products, raw materials, packaging & factory processes.

♥ Drive a passion for food and creativity to support NPD Pipeline planning for the future and getting ahead of the curve

♥ Driving the profit for SP28 – understand how the brief impacts the business at sales, volume and margin level. Applying their business acumen to the Innovation Teams performance to develop products that deliver our ambitious growth transformation targets.

♥ To drive down all aspects of Direct/Indirect costs to make a continual and sustainable improvement in profitability in areas that can be impacted by clever concept development. Influence other departments to adopt best in class procedures and ways of working.

♥ Accountability of the teams performance to meet BRC and ISO accreditation standards adopted by the business and legislative standards.

♥ Have overall accountability of the results and performance of Innovation Development with regards to NPD success and reaching targets/objectives

What good looks like for this role

General Profile:

The individual possesses advanced culinary expertise and practical knowledge in the ability to design products with a strong business acumen to ensure innovation is a creative stretch but realistic. They bring a expert knowledge of the categories, the market trends and consumer insight that influences them alongside a strong knowledge of manufacturing principals. The individual will have extensive experience in independently solving complex innovation development challenges to mentor and guide their team through the development process of new and existing products.

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Ideally experience in managing or supporting

Personal Attributes:

- ♥ **Detail-Oriented** – Meticulous attention to detail in both product development and documentation
- ♥ **Adaptability** – Able to work in a fast-paced environment and adjust to changing priorities & project timelines. Resilience and supporting others is key.
- ♥ **Analytical Thinker** – strong, analytical skills, capable of interpreting data to guide decision-making processes
- ♥ **Tenacious** & “can do” attitude
- ♥ **Self-driven** with a growth mindset & can use initiative
- ♥ **Desire** and ability to influence & drive change
- ♥ **Hands on** & practical approach to working
- ♥ **Good IT skills** -Microsoft and database systems
- ♥ **Influential-** Ability to pull cross functional teams in one direction with right level of data and detail to make decisions

Business Expertise:

This individual has a comprehensive understanding of how their area integrates with other business functions, including commercial, process development, production and R&D to achieve departmental and organisational goals. They apply this understanding to oversee the delivery of efficient, scalable, and high-quality concepts that support our customer NPD Pipelines and meet market demands. Additionally, they stay informed about industry trends and the competitive landscape, using this knowledge to drive strategic innovation for customer accounts. This role requires a focus on both short-term objectives and long-term strategic goals, balancing them to ensure the company's competitive edge.

Leadership:

In this leadership capacity, the Senior Innovation Manager oversees a team of Innovation Managers and Technologists, guiding them to meet our NPD Strategic goals. They must adapt departmental priorities and plans as necessary to meet changing needs and ensure successful product launches within available resource capability. This individual must provide visionary leadership that drives a cultural shift in how the Innovation team operates and is viewed by the wider business. They understand how their decisions affect the broader department and business, adjusting to maintain alignment with overall objectives and improving team performance.

Impact:

They are guided by company policies and business objectives goals and how these impact our results. Their ability to lead creative innovation development will ensure the successful execution of SP28 strategies and the achievement of departmental KPIs.

Interpersonal Skills:

The individual will frequently persuade and influence internal stakeholders and external partners, to adopt new perspectives on new product launches. They must be skilled in presenting market trend and insight information in a clear, actionable way, building consensus, and where necessary negotiating on key principles/values to align teams around new innovations.

Additionally, they will provide culinary guidance and support to colleagues, teams, and customers to ensure that new innovations are effectively implemented and continuously improved. They are accountable for the performance of their team, ensuring high-quality outcomes and driving results within their area of specialization.



HR use

Date of last review:

Job reference no:

Job level:

Job family:

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