

Sanchit Chaturvedi - Managing Director, Halewood Laboratories



Success in business requires more than just aggression—it requires strategy, understanding, and relentless dedication

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Halewood Laboratories' Sanchit Chaturvedi discusses the impact of taking on a leadership role in a challenging personal moment; the company's enduring commitment to innovation and quality; and its planned expansion into new international markets.

Could you tell us about yourself and your journey in the pharmaceutical industry?

My journey in the pharmaceutical industry began back in 2002 when I was studying in Mumbai. At that time, my family decided to shift to Ahmedabad because our manufacturing unit was there. Unfortunately, shortly after the move, my father suffered a heart attack, leaving me to take on significant role along with my college studies. I was around 19 years old at the time. With my elder brother focusing on his B-Pharm studies, I took on the task of overseeing operations at our factory.

During this period, I spent a considerable amount of time at the factory, practically living there, as my parents were occupied with my father's recovery. His heart condition required surgery, and the recovery process was slow. Despite the challenges, this experience allowed me to immerse myself in the workings of the industry. I gained hands-on experience, learning about processes and dealing with various aspects of running a pharmaceutical business.

From handling labor issues to understanding packaging processes, I gained valuable insights into the pharmaceutical industry's intricacies. It was a period of significant learning and growth, where I realized that success in business requires more than just aggression—it requires strategy and understanding, relentless dedication.

After completing my Masters, I joined the business full-time in 2008, gradually taking on more responsibilities. By 2009, I began to take full control alongside my brother, especially as my father's health deteriorated further in 2011. This journey has been challenging but immensely rewarding, shaping my understanding of the industry and preparing me for the leadership role and beyond.

What is Halewood Laboratories and how has it evolved?

Halewood Laboratories, founded in February 1984, boasts four decades of experience in the pharmaceutical sector. Our core values emphasize ethical practices and unwavering commitment to quality, setting us apart in the industry. We operate globally, exporting to over 52 countries and distributing our own brands in 27 nations. Our diverse product portfolio spans Nutraceuticals, Veterinary, and food supplements, catering to a wide spectrum of healthcare needs. Additionally, we engage in API manufacturing and pharmaceutical distribution, ensuring comprehensive coverage across the pharmaceutical landscape.

Initially, Halewood primarily focused on contract manufacturing, but over the past eight years, we've made significant strides in developing our own product range. We've established dedicated teams in various regions, including the US, French West Africa, Southeast Asia, Nigeria etc. I take pride in our strong brand presence in the Middle East. It's a challenging market known for its unwavering commitment to quality over price and Now we are expanding into Latin America. Our strong presence in these markets reflects our commitment to delivering high-quality products globally.

We are pioneers in developing ORS Ready to Drink, effervescent tablets and every form and format of electrolytes. These innovative products have garnered attention globally. We've already begun exporting them to several countries and are in the process of securing registrations in others. Among our standout innovations is our Ready to Drink ORS, conceived from a realization during our travels to interior parts of India and Nigeria. We observed the challenge of providing clean water alongside ORS for hydration during dehydration or diarrhoea. To address this, we developed the ready-to-drink concept, which has since become a significant offering in our product line. Today, we

stand as the largest global players in the ORS ready-to-drink and electrolyte market.

Could you provide more insights into your product range and the balance between contract manufacturing, R&D, and regulatory services versus your own products?

Initially, our focus was primarily on contract manufacturing, which remains a part of our business even today. However, over the past eight years or so, we've expanded our own product range extensively. Building ourselves as a strong player globally.

Expanding into Emerging markets is a key focus for us. One of our strengths lies in leveraging the economies of scale we've learned from our contract manufacturing experience. Producing in large volumes allows us to maintain high quality while keeping prices competitive. This approach aligns with our belief that every pill we manufacture plays a crucial role in saving lives, regardless of the individual's socioeconomic status.

As for our product range, we're proud to be one of the largest manufacturers of electrolyte-based drinks globally. This includes ORS sachets, effervescent tablets, and Ready to Drink ORS.

Innovation, research and market analysis are key drivers behind our product development efforts. For example, our Ready to Drink ORS is a testament to our commitment to addressing real-world challenges with practical solutions. Additionally, we've established a backward integration API plant to ensure a consistent and affordable supply of raw materials.

Moving forward, we aim to maintain our position as a leader in the ORS and electrolytes through continuous innovation, research, and a steadfast commitment to delivering world-class quality products at competitive prices.

In light of recent achievements such as being ranked among the top companies in India, how would you characterize the growth trajectory of your company?

Our company's growth trajectory has been remarkable, and we're proud to have achieved a ranking among the top and most trusted companies in India. Looking ahead, we have two clear goals driving our expansion strategy. Firstly, we aim to establish our export presence and marketing teams in over 95 countries within the next two years, with a specific focus on regions like French West Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, Australia, South Africa and Southeast Asia. Secondly, we are keenly focused on capitalizing on the projected growth of the

electrolyte market, which is expected to surpass 900 million dollars by 2028 due to factors such as global warming. To achieve this, we are planning complete backward and forward integration to leverage our strengths. For instance, our current manufacturing capacity for ORS sachets stands at an impressive 1.5 million sachets per day. With our new facility that we have just got operational will double the current capacities making us the largest player of ORS and electrolytes.

Your father seemed very enthusiastic about the new factory opening when we spoke to him. Could you provide some insights into this new facility?

This new facility is a significant milestone for us, as it represents one of the largest single-block manufacturing units spanning approximately 210,000 square feet. It will accommodate the production of tablets, capsules, sachets, ointments, gels, Dusting powders and we're also exploring innovative drug delivery systems for which our team is working relentlessly. Our goal with this facility is to create a world-class manufacturing plant with high output and automation. We've incorporated top-of-the-line equipment, primarily sourced from Indian manufacturers, with a few imports from Germany and Spain for specialized machinery. Architecturally and technologically, it's a state-of-the-art facility aimed at supporting our export markets.

Regarding our recent acquisition of a company specializing in injectables, that's another exciting development. While we haven't begun production yet, we plan to further upgrade the facility to meet our standards shortly. This addition aligns with our strategy of both organic and inorganic growth. Currently, we have three manufacturing units in Ahmedabad and an API unit, along with several other facilities across India dedicated to ready-to-drink ORS. Looking ahead, we're also exploring opportunities to establish manufacturing facilities in African countries, balancing our growth strategy with a sense of responsibility towards the nations we serve. It's an exciting time for us, and we're eager to contribute to the growth and development of the pharmaceutical industry on a global scale.

What has contributed to making Halewood one of the most trusted partners in the Indian pharmaceutical industry?

I believe there are two fundamental factors that have played a crucial role in establishing Halewood as a trusted partner in the pharmaceutical industry. Firstly, quality lies at the heart of everything we do. Whether it's in the pharmaceutical sector or any other industry, maintaining high

standards of quality is imperative for sustaining any partnership. Our experience in contract manufacturing has allowed us to understand the paramount importance of quality, as we've worked closely with some of the world's leading companies who have instilled confidence and trust in us for providing and maintaining top-notch quality standards. Secondly, timely delivery is equally essential in the pharmaceutical realm. Being in the market, we've learned firsthand that delivering products on time is critical for our partners, customers and for Public in general. These two principles—quality and timely delivery—have been central to our operations and have helped us earn the trust and confidence of our partners.

In addition to these factors, innovation has been a constant driving force for us. Whether it's vertical or horizontal innovation, we're committed to constantly evolving and exploring new avenues within the pharmaceutical, nutraceutical, food, and veterinary sectors. The pharmaceutical industry offers a unique opportunity to make a positive impact on society while also generating financial gains. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were called upon by a state governments to continue our operations to ensure the uninterrupted supply of essential medicines. Which we proudly did and delivered the best product and at the required time, this is the reason we love this industry, we can make difference to human lives. This experience reaffirmed the importance of our work and the satisfaction derived from knowing that our products are helping countless individuals during challenging times.

As you're now at the helm of operations and Halewood is experiencing significant growth, what's your executive vision and priorities for the next three to five years?

My immediate priority is to expand our presence in the export market. Over the next two years, we aim to establish our footprint in more than 95 countries, leveraging our global offices and positioning Halewood as a leading brand in each region. Specifically, we're targeting growth in various regions like Europe, South Africa, Australia and many more. where we aspire to known as the top manufacturer of pharmaceutical companies where people know us as a brand, a company which delivers quality healthcare solutions. Additionally, we recognize the immense potential of the Indian generics market, given our country's large population. Our goal is to strengthen our position in the Indian market by deepening our penetration and expanding our presence across the nation. To support this objective, we're launching a new division in Mumbai, complementing our existing operations in Ahmedabad. Overall, our focus is on sustained growth, both internationally and domestically, ensuring that Halewood continues to thrive and lead in the pharmaceutical industry.

Reflecting on your role as a leader, what management principles have you found most effective in guiding Halewood's growth?

My approach to management has evolved over time, and now I operate with a simple motto: delegate and control. This strategy acknowledges that individuals are often best suited to their respective roles, and my role is to empower them to excel rather than micromanage. I've learned from past, trying to do everything myself, realizing the importance of trusting and empowering my team. People possess incredible potential, and my job as a leader is to unlock it by providing support, guidance, and opportunities for growth. One of the things that truly inspires me is the dedication and long-term commitment demonstrated by our employees. Despite the challenges, we've maintained a low attrition rate, with many team members dedicating over a decade of service to Halewood. This loyalty speaks volumes about the positive work environment we've cultivated. Ultimately, my management philosophy centers on respecting, motivating, and supporting my team, fostering a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

As we wrap up, would you like to share some final thoughts with our international audience, perhaps shedding light on India's role in the pharmaceutical industry and Halewood's mission?

From an Indian perspective, our country's commitment to quality and reliability is unmistakable. India's recent advancements in pharmaceutical manufacturing standards, coupled with our Prime Minister's emphasis on quality in all aspects of life, underscore our dedication to excellence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, India's responsiveness and generosity in supplying vaccines and medicines globally have demonstrated our reliability as a trusted partner. As the third largest pharmaceutical producer by volume worldwide, India possesses the scale and capabilities to meet global healthcare needs while upholding international standards.

As for Halewood, we take great pride in being part of India's pharmaceutical community. With a focused team and a wide range of high-quality products, we have established long-standing partnerships with satisfied clients across more than 50 countries. Our commitment to nurturing enduring relationships mirrors our Indian ethos of loyalty and longevity. Looking ahead, we aim to solidify our position as a leading manufacturer of electrolytes and ORS while elevating our brand, Electro Rush, to global prominence. These are the simple yet ambitious visions that drive us

forward.

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