

The Price is Right

BRINGING THE LATEST HEALTH CARE PRODUCTS TO MARKET



"I've watched the development and evolution of the group purchasing organization from the vendor side for 25 years of my career," he says. Then the opportunity arose to join the group purchasing industry, providing greater alignment with hospitals and a greater opportunity to help achieve cost reductions. "The value to hospitals is to leverage a larger stake of buyers to get a better price. In health care today, I would say almost 98 percent of hospitals belong to a group purchasing organization."

HealthTrust can save hospitals 8 to 10 percent on products, as products are the second largest expense after labor, he says. "If you can take 10 percent off their expenses and not compromise patient outcomes, it's a pretty compelling story," he explains.

When Holroyd was a student at the Leeds School, the country was just emerging from a recession and many companies were in recovery mode.

Upon graduation, he was offered three jobs possibilities: Ford Motor Company, a PC manufacturing company, and American Hospital Supply (which later merged with Baxter Healthcare, spun off with Allegiance and was then acquired by Cardinal Health).

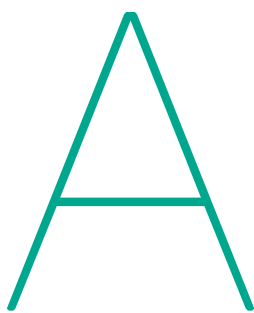
While pursuing an emphasis in marketing, Holroyd and many of his classmates didn't want careers in sales, he recalls, though the marketing professors at the Leeds School assured them this was a normal path to a marketing career.

As he puts it: "Sales scared the daylights out of me! But this was the career path at American Hospital Supply and from what I learned from the people I met during the recruitment process, it was a company I wanted to be a part of and was willing to take this chance."

After graduation, he went to Memphis, Tenn., where he covered the

territory in western Tennessee, northern Mississippi, and eastern Arkansas, selling products for American Hospital Supply. His first product: surgical products like disposable gowns and drapes which reduced infection. At the time, many hospitals were using linen gowns and drapes and hospitals staff and administrators were reluctant to change products. Their reasons included that disposable gowns and drapes wouldn't be as comfortable and that they would fill up landfills.

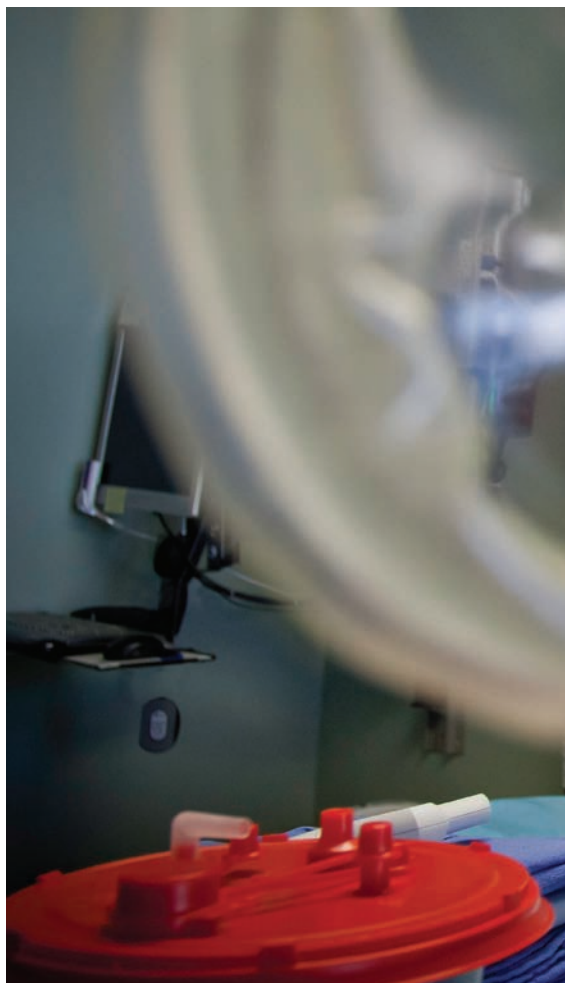
"But once they understood the inherent advantage of the disposable, paper-based products were a way to improve patients' outcomes and promote patient safety, I saw sales as a great opportunity to affect the way health care is being delivered," Holroyd



As a student at the Leeds School of Business, **Mark Holroyd (MBA '83)** thought he didn't want a sales career. But nearly three decades later, his career in

sales lets him bring the latest, most advanced products to hospitals without breaking their budgets.

As regional vice president of sales for HealthTrust Purchasing Group, a division of HCA Healthcare, which owns 170 hospitals and is the largest hospital company in the country, Holroyd is responsible for growing the membership of the group purchasing organization (GPO). The company launched the GPO to leverage vendor negotiations. Almost 1,400 hospitals use the GPO to command the best pricing in the market for products that are used in hospitals.



Read about Mark Holroyd's volunteerism with a diabetes organization at leeds.colorado.edu/blogs/alumni.

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Mark Holroyd (MBA '83)

says. “Sales is really about learning, and listening, to the client’s needs and wants, and then aligning your product or service to these areas.”

Still, Holroyd considered sales just a stepping stone in his career. But once he began to work with the “brilliant professionals and highly-skilled people” within the sales force, he saw it as a

pathway to the respected leadership and management roles within a company, with many coaching and mentoring opportunities. After reaching his goal with a promotion into marketing, and achieving a senior level position, the career track included moving into sales management. Once he accepted the position in sales management and later corporate sales, he never looked back.

“My career included three positions within marketing, which was my area of focus while attending the Leeds School,” he says. “However, once I took the career path back into sales, via a sales management role, the realization set in that this was my passion.”

Holroyd says that he finally determined that the mix of customer service, diversity in the daily activities,

and driving results were best aligned with his goals.

“From a sales perspective, as a vendor you have the opportunity to improve the care that the hospitals give to their patients, which seems contrary to the expectations of going into sales,” he says.

“I mean, these are trained medical and clinical professionals, so of course they are making the right decisions. But if you think about a pharmacist or nurse or physician who has so many layers of their job to think about, they may not be aware of new technologies or advances in the vendor community that could improve what they are doing today.”

