



Vicki Gemmill

Buying, product and growth strategy specialist. Experience in global markets in multi brand, omnichannel environments. Scale up and new market entry expertise.

📍 Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

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Languages

English (Native)

About

A creative brand, product and business development specialist with 19 years' experience in luxury and commercial industries, working with globally iconic retail businesses.

Highly analytical with a flair for international commercial strategy, exceeding sales and profit targets across multiple categories.

Expertise in buying strategy, consumer engagement, trading and operations across physical and digital channels.

BRANDS WORKED WITH

- ACCESSORIES
- Bally
- Contemporary Womenswear, Contemporary Accessories
- Department for International Trade
- Harvey Nichols
- Northern Powerhouse
- Rigby and Peller
- Rigby & Peller
- Selfridges

Experience



● Head of Trade and Investment Campaigns

Department for Business and Trade | Mar 2023 - Now

Head of Trade, North East Region Leading the management and delivery of regional trade and investment campaigns to drive business growth and economic development in the Northern UK regions.

Responsibilities include:

- Strategic leadership of business development and communications teams.
- Direction of regional sector and market campaigns; maximising awareness of international trade and investment opportunities, driving an increased client base engaging with DIT across key sectors.
- Stakeholder management throughout the Northern regions; building strategic partnerships for service delivery.
- Collaboration on delivery of large-scale events including the Green Trade and Investment Expo, Commonwealth Games and Cop 26.
- Management of official correspondence and ministerial engagement across the region. Aligning government priorities with business needs and partner priorities.
- Integration throughout the department and wider government, acting as a senior advisor to feed export and growth barriers into policy development.
- Change management; driving efficiencies within the wider team and building increased flexibility and agility into best practice during an ongoing large-scale restructure.
- Local board advisory participation: Business Durham and North East Local Enterprise Partnership.



● Head of North East Region

Department for Business and Trade | Nov 2020 - Mar 2023



● Global Head of Buying

Rigby & Peller | Dec 2016 - Apr 2020

Leading strategic and operational execution of product and brand selection for 38 owned and operated stores and the R&P digital channels. Overseeing product and brand directive for all franchise partners; developing seasonal product strategy in line with global retail directive whilst delivering growth and profit targets.

Key aspects of my role:

- Directing the product and trading strategy for global markets with a clear brand identity. Management of £30m annual budget for global retail product.
- Responsibility of intake margins, monthly growth targets and new market growth. Evaluation of retail model by market and development of partnerships for new market integration.
- Collaborating with the wider management team to ensure delivery of strategic objectives.
- Ownership of stakeholder management and negotiation on a global and local level.
- Management of buying team; focusing on employee engagement and embedding brand values.
- Building consumer and retail insight into wholesale sales and operational planning to strengthen B2B sales.
- Maintaining market knowledge; understanding the competitive market and future growth opportunities to deliver against international growth strategies.

● Rigby and Peller | Oct 2015 - Apr 2020



● **Buying Manager**

Rigby & Peller | Oct 2015 - Nov 2016

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● **Buying Consultant (freelance)**

Harvey Nichols | May 2015 - Sep 2015

A short-term freelance project working on product selection within Women's Designer Collections. I was challenged to quickly adapt my buying skills to a new market, building engagement with a younger audience and increasing brand presence on harveynichols.com.



● **Senior Buyer;**

Bally | Jun 2013 - Apr 2015

Management of the £22m annual budget for Women's RTW, shoes and accessories for 28 European stores as well as the Bally online channel. Key aspects of my role included:

- Product selection and in-season management of all women's categories.
- Bi-annual creation of sales plans and forecasting by season, category & location.
- Regular liaison with key European personnel to review sales trends and profitability.
- Product presentations, store training & visits; inspirational as well as technical training presentations & review of local markets.
- Development of in season retail strategies to take up short notice opportunities for prime location pop up stores.



- **Contemporary Womenswear Buyer**

Selfridges | Jan 2013 - Jun 2013

Purchasing responsibility for 4 UK stores with an annual budget of £12m. Key achievements include:

- Negotiation of sell through guarantees on 60% of purchases to protect margins.
- Achieved of 70% sell through at season end through effective negotiation and relationship building.
- Relaunched the department through the introduction of 'shop in shop' concepts from key brands (including Isabel Marant, Phillip Lim, Acne) with a 3-month lead time.



- **Contemporary Womenswear Buyer**

Harvey Nichols | Jul 2011 - Dec 2012

Development of the contemporary accessories and womenswear collections; maintaining exclusivity and creating a point of difference during a change in strategic direction for the business. Growth of exclusive brand offer and increased online partnerships generated through commercial negotiation and development of new brand collaborations.



- Harvey Nichols | Oct 2004 - Dec 2012



- **Senior Assistant Buyer**

Harvey Nichols | Oct 2004 - Jun 2011

Buying support within the accessories team with an annual budget of £4million. I additionally maintained autonomy for the continuity accessories covering an additional £1m purchasing management.



- **Buying Administrator**

Harvey Nichols | Oct 2004 - Dec 2006

Key administrative support role including departmental organisation, retail store support and supplier relationship building. Key support staff in harveynichols.com launch; copywriting, logistics and co-ordination.

Education & Training

2000 - 2003

- **University of the Arts**

Fashion Management, Fashion and Retail