

PRESS RELEASE

Two Sodexo employees among top BAME role models

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Two Sodexo employees have been named among top ethnic minority leaders, published today in the Financial Times.

Sodexo Service Operations finance director Amolak Dhariwal is in the EMpower 100 Ethnic Minority Leaders and Sodexo Brand & Communications head of digital communications Stephen Marshall is number one of 30 EMpower Top Ethnic Minority Future Leaders

The EMpower Role Model lists are a reflection and celebration of the incredible achievements of the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) business community in UK, Ireland, United States and Canada.

The lists are published annually, in partnership with the Financial Times, showcasing the top 100 BAME Business Leaders and top 30 BAME Future Leaders.

A British-born Sikh, Amolak has had a diverse, prominent and successful career in Sodexo over the last 13 years and now over the last two years has been responsible for Service Operations Finance for the UK & Ireland business incorporating Supply Management, IS&T, Health & Safety, Food, Soft and Hard platforms and Business Improvement Growth Strategy.

Externally, Amolak has recently become a governor at a local academy to encourage the understanding and development of the BAME agenda, and has established close links with other organisations outside Sodexo to help understand best practice in this area, this builds and compliments on Amolak's previously responsibilities as Head of the Finance Career Development program.

A Londoner of Caribbean heritage, Stephen is responsible for Sodexo UK & Ireland's corporate website, intranet site, social media, delivering global digital projects and developing Sodexo digital marketing strategy.

Stephen joined the OCM team coaching programme last year to get a professional coaching and mentoring qualification. Stephen's goal is to become a mentor in Sodexo and outside the company.

Amolak and Stephen are co-chairs of the Sodexo UK & Ireland Origins employee network which has a membership of over 300 colleagues.

Under Origins Amolak and Stephen launched a Sodexo-wide campaign called 'My culture and me', which is aimed at raising cultural awareness of people from different BAME backgrounds within the organisation to create a more inclusive workplace.

Suki Sandhu, CEO and founder of EMpower, said: *“The EMpower lists exist to encourage more business leaders and companies to drive forward the diversity agenda and inspire the next generation to succeed. Despite the fact that 14% of the population are BAME, only 4% of the CEOs in the FTSE100 are from BAME backgrounds. This lack of representation and diversity at the highest levels is why the EMpower Ethnic Minority Leaders and Future Leaders lists exist. They’re here to showcase visible, inspiring BAME role models at all levels, who are demonstrating that background or ethnicity should not and will not be a barrier to professional success.”*

Amolak Dhariwal, Sodexo UK & Ireland Service Operations Finance Director, said: *“The experience of BAME people in the workplace could clearly be different and we exist to help them develop, be promoted and be included. It is my personal privilege to be first of all being given the opportunity to lead this within Sodexo UK & Ireland and then secondly recognised externally for work that is key to Sodexo’s diversity and inclusion program.”*

Stephen Marshall, Sodexo UK & Ireland head of digital, said: *“I’m honoured to be recognised amongst my BAME peers for my achievements and delighted and surprised to not only be included on this list but receive the number one nomination. I work very hard in my professional life to deliver successful results and am passionate about helping others to develop. I’m ambitious to drive real change in the workplace where people from BAME backgrounds are accepted and have equal opportunities to develop and be selected for senior positions.”*

“While representation on this list is a great honour, it’s existence reflects the lack of diversity and under-representation of senior leaders that still exists within many businesses today. I hope that I and others from diverse backgrounds can change and level the playing field to pave the way for future BAME leaders.”

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