As ManpowerGroup’s Executive Vice President of Global Strategy and Talent, Mara Swan leads the $23 billion company’s global human resources, talent and development strategy, and has ultimate responsibility for the company’s global strategic communications, marketing, innovation and corporate social responsibility functions across 80 countries and territories — the largest footprint in the staffing industry — including ManpowerGroup’s full-time and contingent workforces, accounting for a collective 3.5 million people worldwide. With 90% of ManpowerGroup’s business and revenue generated outside the U.S., Mara’s influence is truly global.

In her seventh year leading ManpowerGroup’s global human resources, Mara is a veteran of the HR industry and has a strong track record of successfully building culture across global organizations. Prior to joining ManpowerGroup, she worked for the Molson Coors Brewing Company where she served as Chief People Officer for its global operations. Prior to her tenure with Molson Coors, she was Human Resources Manager for Miller Brewing Company.

An HR expert by trade, Mara’s unique abilities have demonstrated that she is capable of far more, leading her to her current role in Global Strategy and Talent. It didn’t take long for ManpowerGroup Chairman and CEO Jeff Joerres to see the potential that Mara presented through her contemporary style and ability to make intellectual connections between the company’s strategy, talent and the necessary behaviors to execute. Soon Joerres was testing Mara’s curiosity and creativity with challenging programs and deliverables outside the confines of the traditional HR function. Thus, Mara’s role at the crossroads of strategy and talent was born.

Mara’s impact has elevated the HR function and its importance in the company as the catalyst for accelerating the execution of ManpowerGroup’s business strategy. By bringing these functions together with the core human resources function, HR becomes a key driver of the behaviors required to execute the company’s strategic goals, which are developed and aligned in the context of talent, development and aspiration of talent. Under Mara’s leadership, ManpowerGroup has been recognized globally as Fortune Magazine’s World’s Most Admired and the only company in its industry to be named World’s Most Ethical by Ethisphere.

Mara serves as a mentor, coach and thought leader to fellow HR leaders on how the function has taken on a more strategic role within companies, as talent is quickly becoming the key competitive differentiator. This concept is the cornerstone of ManpowerGroup’s insight, which Mara naturally influences, because when in the business of creating people-driven workforce solutions for clients, candidates and governments that improve workplace models, practices and performance, it’s key to have a leader at the helm who can intimately relate to the needs of these stakeholders and shape contemporary thought-provoking insights and solutions.
One of Mara’s most important objectives is the development of ManpowerGroup’s leadership. The company’s leadership success model was built on the foundation of a mantra that Mara and Jeff Joerres defined as “Great People, Great Place, Great Leadership.” Rather than sending top leadership to academic training courses in management, Mara designed contemporary programs to teach ManpowerGroup executives to shift from being traditional managers to better coaches and leaders. Mara’s finely-tuned sense of what engages and motivates the people of ManpowerGroup, allowed the company to avert significant attrition costs and promote more from within.

Mara is Secretary and Treasurer of the Personnel Roundtable, and is a member of the board of directors for the HR Policy Association. Mara also holds roles with the National Executive Board of the Human Capital Institute and World HR 50. Among others, Mara is a member of the Board of Directors of GOJO and the Board of Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee. Earlier this year, the World Economic Forum pursued Mara to join their Global Leadership Council to help define the new model of leadership and she was one of three global CHRO’s asked to present at HR Policy Association’s “Blueprint for Jobs in the 21st Century,” a critical Capitol Hill event.

Mara was inducted into the Wisconsin Business Hall of Fame, receiving the Peak Performer Award from Junior Achievement for her community service leadership and support. She was named Diversity Journal’s “Women Worth Watching” in 2010 and was named a “Women of Influence” by the Milwaukee Business Journal in 2008. Most recently, Mara was named 2012 HR Executive of the Year by HR Executive Magazine.

Mara holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Buffalo and a master's degree in industrial relations from the University of Minnesota. Mara and her husband Craig live in Wisconsin. They are the proud parents of daughter Madden and new son-in-law Jack Eichorst, and son Jacob Swan.