

## Manager, Forecasting, Grocery, Drinks & Non Food Merchandising

### Core information

<b>Location:</b> Bracknell with blended working ▾	<b>Lines of business or shared capability area:</b> Waitrose
<b>Reports to:</b> Head of Merchandising	
<b>People Management:</b> Yes ▾	
<b>Assignment Management:</b> Please select ▾	
<b>Partnership Level:</b> Partnership level 5 ▾	<b>Manager's Partnership level:</b> Partnership level 4 ▾
<b>Number of direct reports:</b> 2 with team of 16	<b>Partnership level(s) of direct reports:</b> Partnership level 6 ▾

### About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands – John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to Happier People, Happier Business and a Happier World.

### Critical purpose of the role

As Forecasting Manager, you will lead the team responsible for shaping and delivering our end-to-end demand forecasting strategy across all Category Proposition Groups (CPGs). You'll ensure the right balance is struck between product availability, stockholding, and wastage - supporting our commercial priorities while protecting operational efficiency.

This role requires strong leadership, a solid grasp of retail forecasting, and a deep understanding of how customer behaviour, the trade plan, and wider business strategies impact demand. Your team's work will influence everything from replenishment to online performance, and will support the smooth running of our wider supply chain.

You'll lead continuous improvement of our forecasting capability - through coaching, process leadership, and optimising our use of Blue Yonder's LDE platform and its integration with JDA. You'll work in close collaboration with Planning Managers, Merchandising leadership, Commercial Leadership, Trade Planning and technical experts to ensure forecast outputs are aligned, accurate, and add value across the Partnership.

**Key Responsibilities:**

**Strategic Forecasting Ownership:**

Set and evolve the forecasting plan across all relevant product groups, ensuring alignment with customer needs, the trade plan, promotional activity, and product lifecycles. Ensure effective critical path management.

Maintain accurate forecasts across stores and online channels, responsive to changes in lead times, external events (e.g. weather, competitor action), and long-term commercial goals.

Align forecast assumptions with supply and replenishment plans, ensuring consistent execution of shared KPIs across CPGs.

Actively contribute to business planning and S&OP processes, ensuring forecasts support broader strategic outcomes.

**Leadership of People & Capability:**

Lead, coach, and develop a team of Forecasting Managers and Forecasting Analysts, setting clear expectations and creating a culture of trust, high performance, and continuous learning.

Build capability through coaching and shared learning, ensuring consistent forecasting practice across the team.

Create progression and development opportunities that contribute to succession planning across Merchandising.

Set the tone and vision for the team with the customer at the heart, empowering Partners to thrive and play to their strengths.

**Performance, Metrics & Operational Excellence:**

Use forecasting metrics such as WMAPE, bias, availability, and wastage to monitor and improve performance.

Ensure the right KPIs are in place at every level of the team, with visibility of both direct and indirect measures.

Translate category-level goals into clear, measurable deliverables for your team, ensuring clarity of purpose and accountability.

Identify risks to forecast performance early and take proactive steps to address them in collaboration with stakeholders.

**Measures of success**

1. Team and individual performance against key KPIs (availability, wastage, stockholding, WMAPE, bias)
2. Positive 360 feedback from team and stakeholders
3. Team development and contribution to talent pipeline
4. Process consistency and system adoption across teams
5. Forecast alignment in business planning/S&OP
6. Operational effectiveness and cost efficiency
7. Effective Critical Path Management

**Cross-functional Collaboration:**

Work closely with Planning Managers, Category Strategy, Customer Insight, and Supply Chain to ensure that forecast inputs are reliable, timely, and contribute value.

Collaborate with Network Planning & Optimisation Leads to ensure long-range planning is robust, well-integrated, and responsive to business needs.

Actively challenge third-party or upstream forecasts when needed, using internal data to validate assumptions and improve forecast quality.

Champion collaboration across merchandising and planning, sharing knowledge and supporting consistent use of processes and tools.

**Systems, Tools & Continuous Improvement:**

Own and improve use of the Blue Yonder forecasting suite (LDE), ensuring accurate and timely forecast generation at item, location and channel level.

Collaborate with Forecasting Super Users and the Optimisation & Development team to identify areas for improvement in systems, process, and reporting.

Support both day-to-day optimisation and long-term transformation of forecasting capabilities through testing, implementation, and feedback loops.

Drive improvements to the underlying data that powers the forecasting process - including lead times, event flags, and demand drivers.

**Partnership, Culture & Ways of Working:**

Model and champion the Partnership's values, fostering a culture of shared ownership, honest feedback, and inclusive decision-making.

Create an environment where Partner voices are heard and acted on - enabling everyone in the team to make their best contribution.

Support broader Merchandising and Partnership goals through active involvement in missions, cross-functional initiatives, and professional development communities.

**Skills Essential**

- Proven experience leading high-performing teams in forecasting, analytics, or supply chain planning
- Strong understanding of retail demand forecasting, stock management, and replenishment dynamics
- Demonstrable success balancing availability, waste, and stockholding KPIs across large, complex product ranges
- Experience using advanced forecasting platforms - ideally Blue Yonder LDE and/or JDA
- Skilled at interpreting complex datasets to drive commercial decisions
- Confident stakeholder management, with experience influencing across functions and senior levels
- Strong leadership capability with a coaching approach, focused on capability building and talent development
- Experience managing workload and priorities across multiple business units or trading categories

**Skills Desirable**

- Experience building or interpreting dashboards and forecast performance metrics in Tableau or similar BI tools
- Familiarity with S&OP (Sales & Operations Planning) processes and their application in retail forecasting
- Exposure to ecommerce and multi-channel demand forecasting
- Experience contributing to system change or transformation projects
- Hands-on experience with SQL for data analysis and diagnostics
- Understanding of data governance principles and best practice in process design

**Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)**

Desirable

- Degree level qualification
- Project Management

Version	Created/updated by	Date
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