

Tec graduate is first Mexican in Whirlpool senior management position



Discipline and **focusing on the present** are the keys to professional success for Juan Carlos Puente, the [Tec de Monterrey](#) graduate who was recently appointed **President for Latin America and Executive Vice President** at [Whirlpool](#).

*“The challenge now lies in transferring what we’ve done in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean to the whole of Latin America. We have to **extend to those economies**, which are very interesting, important, and different to the previous ones. It’s a fantastic challenge for me,”* he says to [CONECTA](#).

Puente, an **International Business** graduate from Monterrey campus is the **first Mexican** to hold a **senior management position** at this American company, which manufactures and sells **household appliances**.

He is also a graduate of [EGADE Business School’s Global Executive MBA](#), and explains that Whirlpool encourages him to **reinvent himself every day** to be a better person and overcome problems and challenges.

*“As **Executive Vice President**, the challenge is to see how we really influence and bring the strategy to our region and how we can maximize our effect on the world, where the business should be going, making investments and seeing priorities.”*



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Discipline: the basis for being efficient

When he was a student at Monterrey campus, Juan Carlos began to understand that **discipline** was **essential in his life**, as he dedicated many hours to sport in addition to the academic side.

Juan Carlos was a **swimmer for the Borregos team**, training for two sessions in the pool and one session in the gym, which meant he had to be very disciplined.

*“I was captain of the swimming team. It was just the final year of my degree that I wasn’t in **Borregos** because I was already working at **Whirlpool**. I had to be focused on important things; I had to prioritize.*

*“I paid a lot of attention in classes. As I didn’t have time to catch up on studying later, I had to give it 200% at that time, **make the most of it** because time is the only asset we can’t control,” he said.*

What’s more, he said that being present in the here and now is fundamental, as you can maximize time by **focusing**.

*“You have to **know how to prioritize** and be in the here and now. The most important thing in the world is what you’re doing right now,” he said.*

Adapting, one of his greatest challenges

As he works for a transnational company, **change has been a constant in his life** since he joined Whirlpool in **1996** as an **intern**. He has held different **global leadership** positions since then.

Before taking up his current position, he was President of **Whirlpool Latin America Northern Region**, achieving the integration and transformation of this zone.

He says that traveling has given him different professional challenges, as well as family ones.

One of his first challenges was when they sent him to the United States while it was undergoing a **financial crisis**.

*“The appliances industry in the United States had never had a **double-digit fall in one year** and it happened when I arrived. That was my welcome,”* explained Juan Carlos Puento.

“You have to reinvent yourself, not rest on your laurels, and look for new ways of doing things. There’s always another perspective on the same situation, and you need that sense of empathy to see other possibilities.”

In 2014, Juan Carlos and his family were sent to Italy, where **adapting** to the Old Continent was not easy.

*“We found it **very tricky to integrate** in Europe. That’s probably the posting that I had to work hardest at.”*

*“However, I had to put on a brave face every day, at home and at the office. If there’s one attribute I have, it’s an **optimistic attitude**,”* he explains.

He stresses that you should always be resilient in life, no matter the problem, as he believes there will always be a way to fix it.

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Driven by his family

Having a different kind of family life is the result of his constant travels. For example, his **three daughters all have different nationalities**.

“The eldest is Mexican, the middle one is American, and the youngest is Spanish, born in Italy.”

However, he says that the **support of his family** has been **fundamental to overcoming his professional challenges**.

*“My wife has put up with so many trips, being left on her own sometimes, but **they’ve supported me**. Every time I come home [my wife and daughters] receive me with open arms. They motivate me to do more.”*

*“I wouldn’t have achieved anything without them; my four women are what **motivate** me to give it my all, but they also make me **conscientious** about doing things well and ethically,”* he adds.



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Next challenge: making a mark at Whirlpool

One of Juan Carlos Puente’s objectives as Executive President at **Whirlpool** is **involving customers** in all the company’s processes and **making an impact on the communities** where the company operates.

*“We want to continue involving customers in all our decisions, in all our processes, in everything we do every day, and achieving our objective of **improving home life for thousands of people**.*

*“I’d like people to say that **Whirlpool contributes more to communities**, that it teaches us to be better people, and that they have a better quality of life,”* he says.

He also wants to encourage every member of the company to have **better opportunities in life**.

*“I’d like to **give a boost to the careers of thousands**, hopefully thousands of Latin Americans, who are the people I’m leading, so that they grow, so that they have better job opportunities,”* he concludes.

Whirlpool Corporation appointed **Juan Carlos Puente** as President of **Whirlpool Latin America** and Executive Vice President from **April 1**, replacing **João Carlos Brega**.

Puente has also completed the Advanced Management Program (AMP): Business, Strategy, and Leadership at **Harvard Business School**.

Whirlpool has **15 production plants** in Latin America, chiefly located in Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and Argentina.

The company has three plants in **Mexico**: in Apodaca, Nuevo León; in Ramos Arizpe, Coahuila; and in Celaya, Guanajuato, which employ approximately 11,000 people.

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