

**Larry Meyer joined UNIQLO as US COO in January in 2013, after acting as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Forever21 and successfully expanding the chain from 100 to 500 stores throughout the world.**

**He currently leads UNIQLO expansion across North America.**

**Larry Meyer is a retail**



**veteran – before Forever 21, for five years he served as CFO and Senior Vice President of children’s wear retailer Gymboree, and held similar functions at Toys’ R’ Us. Before that, he was Vice President of the Nielsen Company, and launched his career at PepsiCo - spending eleven years in various integral roles. Fast Retailing PR team spoke to Larry Meyer on his views on fashion, his first impressions of UNIQLO, and our path forward.**

**Please introduce yourself, in your own words.**

I really value the important people in my life - family, friends and colleagues. I was born in New York, and have lived in California for the past fifteen years.

**How did you get into the apparel industry?**

I like businesses that relate to people and this is what attracted me to retail. I have been in the consumer business my entire career.

Because our business focuses on people, every day really is a new day and we must constantly be communicating with and adapting to the needs of our customers. We must keep ourselves at the top of our game – if we slow down, our customers go elsewhere.

**What is your most memorable experience in the industry, thus far?**

Opening new stores in new places always stands out as a positive and rewarding experience, because I get to be part of our customers’ excitement in experiencing the brand for the first time. I had the pleasure of opening the first Toys’ R’ Us store in East Berlin, and the first Forever 21 in Dubai. I am eager to get started on opening new UNIQLO locations in the US.



### **What drew you to UNIQLO/Fast Retailing?**

I have always had a lot of respect for UNIQLO. I have seen the heavy traffic in the stores and come to appreciate the fact that UNIQLO has innovative products, and believes in quality and providing value to its customers. We have a very strong platform to grow and expand upon in the US, and I have the required expertise - it is a good marriage.

### **What were your first impressions, after joining?**

The willingness for transparency is greater than any other company that I have been a part of. I also appreciate the supportive nature of the organization – it really is team-oriented. I am particularly excited to be part of this organization, given its commitment to globalization – the company is both thinking hard about what it needs to do, and investing in the right places.

### **What gives UNIQLO an edge on the competition in the US?**

I believe that the same aspects of innovation, quality and value will win in the US as in Japan. We need to ensure that we are communicating our strengths as quickly, memorably and regularly as possible. The apparel industry in the US is highly competitive – we cannot ever afford to forget this. Looking at our customers, the US is a salad bowl population. It is made up of people from all over the place – all different shapes, sizes, and colors. Given this, our focus on as broad a customer base as possible makes sense. However, beyond providing products accessible to all, let's communicate in a way that people can understand - regardless of their background.



### **What products have proven a particular hit with US consumers? Why?**

What is popular in the US is pretty similar to other markets – ultra light down, heat tech, fleece. A big part of our job is making sure that the other products, such as denim, shirts, innerwear, get the same attention and respect. As an example, I would like for us to invest in communicating AIRism and its relevance to the US consumer.

### **What do you do to relax, in your down time?**

As I've gotten older, I've learned to appreciate my time and relaxing for me is playing golf, and spending time with my family.