

#WeAreViskoTeepak



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RIA KUPPENS

**A Career of
Growth Since
1985: From
Telephone
Operator to
Sales Service
Director**

Four decades of being
a ViskoTeepaker



RIA - ASSISTANT PLANNER (1990-1992)

Learn more
about our team



Ria Kuppens, Sales Service Director: Four Decades of Growth.

Ria Kuppens started her journey at ViskoTeepak in 1985 — not entirely by plan, but with curiosity and an open mind. Originally intending to pursue studies in programming, she changed course when the program was unexpectedly extended from two to three years. A conversation with her school director led her to Teepak, where she applied for a temporary role and got her first position as a telephone operator.

From her very first days, Ria remembers how much the workplace has changed. She recalls sitting at a telephone exchange managing eight busy lines, where incoming and outgoing calls queued up. The fax machine felt like magic, sending a message across the globe in seconds. Even the electric typewriter was a challenge compared to the mechanical ones she had used in school. These early experiences only hint at the transformation she would witness and help shape over the next four decades.

FACTS ABOUT RIA:

- **Current role:** Director Sales Service and FIB/WP Production Planning
- **Started at ViskoTeepak:** 1985
- **Career path:** From telephone operator to director, with roles in planning, sales service, and business analysis
- **Hobbies:** Walking, bicycling, enjoying good food and drinks
- **Personal life:** Married, with one daughter

Cheers after a 35 km walk
with her daughter



Evolution & Legacy

Ria's career is a story of evolution — of roles, systems, and perspectives. From telephone operator to planning assistant, fibrous planner, sales service coordinator, business analyst, sales service manager, and now director, her journey reflects both personal growth and the development of the company itself.

“

Despite my broad experience, I believe **no role is more important than another**. You need to like your job and do it with passion—every step brings value, responsibility, and a chance to learn.

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Technology, in particular, has driven continuous improvement in the way of working. Ria remembers a time when orders arrived by mail, fax, or telex, and sales teams relied on printed stock lists updated once a day. Double-booked inventory and delayed information were common. Today, real-time systems and automation make

it possible to respond quickly and accurately. As Ria puts it, “speed is the biggest change, and customers expect quick and reliable answers all the time.”

One of the most unexpected challenges came when she stepped into leadership. “Leading people is a much bigger challenge than I ever thought it would be,” she reflects. Her approach has always been grounded in honesty and authenticity — staying true to herself, recognizing individual strengths, and fostering a culture of teamwork and partnership.

She has continuously improved not only systems but also her own leadership skills, always aiming to tailor-make her approach to the team and the unique challenge at hand, adapting as needed.



“The open culture is something that’s stayed the same. You can give your opinion, as long as it’s done respectfully,” Ria adds, highlighting a core element of ViskoTeepak’s identity that’s endured across decades.

Looking Ahead

Ria sees the coming years as a time to strengthen unity across the company. “Work even more on building the global team,” she advises. “Try to break down the walls between departments and locations. Decisions need to be the best for the global company, not for one person, one group, or one location.”

With decades of experience in customer service and production planning, Ria knows how much digitalization has already improved internal efficiency and customer satisfaction. She also knows there are still opportunities to build smarter systems, communicate more clearly, and react faster as one unified company.

“If you could describe ViskoTeepak in one word, what would it be?”

“Challenging. There will always be new challenges — some you can influence directly, others you just have to find a way to deal with. That’s what keeps the work interesting: finding solutions.”

“Any message for younger employees just starting their journey here?”

“Take the time to learn and grow in your job. Find the passion, so you can be proud of what you do. Don’t be afraid of a challenge — because you will be faced with them. But we’ve survived them in the past and will continue to do so.”





Always around

