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Dr. Ackermann holds a combined Master of Mechanical Engineering and Business Administration (Diplom-Wirtschaftsingenieur) from Berlin Technical University, Germany, as well as a Master of Science in Physics from Otago University, New Zealand. He holds a PhD from the Royal Institute of Technology (Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan) Stockholm, Sweden.

He has worked for a number of consulting and research companies, including Roland Berger & Partner, International Management Consultants, Munich, Germany; Price Waterhouse, Corporate Finance Consultants, Berlin, Germany; DesignPower Ltd., Engineering Consultants, Wellington, New Zealand; and Industrial Research Limited (IRL), Science and Technology Research Company, Member of the Crown Research Institute, Christchurch, New Zealand. He has also been worked as an expert for the Worldbank.