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Work Inspiration

What does your job entail?

I work with functional leadership and HR Business Partners to identify learning and development needs for their teams and I work with my team to create and deliver development programs for our professional business services. This includes people who are new to their role, aspiring to become a manager or team leader in the future and teams who are experiencing a lot of change and need some additional support to deal with this. I also get involved in any projects which will result in a lot of change for our people, working with their functional leaders to develop plans to help them cope.

How did you get into this line of work / Outline your career to date

I originally worked in leisure management, managing leisure centres and while I enjoyed this career I didn't see myself doing it all my life. I thought about the parts of that role which I enjoyed the most, working with others, developing people skills, leading others and I thought about other careers where I could focus on these areas. I went back to university and studied business studies and working with adult learners with a view to moving into learning and development. I have had a number of roles with different global companies including beverage manufacturing and payment services, each time progressing to a more senior role. I joined Baker McKenzie 4 years ago initially supporting our Lawyers in EMEA region. I have since moved to my current role supporting professional business services people from across the Firm.

Tell us about your qualifications and training?

I have a Hons degree in Business Studies and I have done a number of professional development courses throughout my career, these include project management, a post grad in executive consultancy and most recently executive coaching. In my role, how we help others develop is constantly changing. It is important to keep up to date with these changes and sometimes that means doing additional qualifications to improve my skills.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

When trying to work out what you want to do with your life think about what really makes you happy and decide if you can make a career out of it. We spend a large part of our lives working so it is important for our own wellbeing that we enjoy what we do. Also money isn't everything but it helps. When looking at potential careers find out what your earning potential will be and decide if that is enough for you to have the lifestyle that you would like. It is hard to be happy in a career that you enjoy but pays very little. It is all about getting the balance. When you start out you will be in more junior roles but that's fine as long as there is room to progress so you can fulfil your potential

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Hill walking, swimming, preferably outdoors. I also enjoy cooking especially for family and friends. I am quite good at DIY and I enjoy doing projects around my home although some are more successful than others.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself?

I started to learn how to swim when I was four in a lake near my home. I never went to a swimming pool until I was about seven or eight. In the past I have swum distances of up to four miles.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

It is difficult to pick one person, my parents had a very strong work ethic and I have aspired to be like them and have the same. I have been inspired by some of the managers I have worked with who have encouraged and mentored me throughout my career.

What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

Listening - People come to me with challenges they are trying to overcome. Taking the time to really listen and understand what they need helps me to provide effective solutions.

Influencing - I work with lots of teams and often need the support of other people to get things done. Building relationships and being able to influence people is incredibly important. I always have to think about building long term relationships with people.

Learn from your mistakes - We all make mistakes, it is part of life. I always try to reflect on what I have done and think about what I would do differently if I had this situation again. If your intentions are good and you learn from your mistakes you will continue to grow and develop both personally and professionally.