



Maeve Gorman
HR Business Partner, Talent



Work Inspiration

What does your job entail?

My role is very generalist, ranging from coaching and supporting managers, to advising on HR Policies and procedures, providing day-to-day performance management guidance, delivering training, HR reporting and analytics, employee engagement and providing advice on all employee issues.

I act as an employee champion and change agent and I deliver a value-added service to managers and employees that reflects our firm's objectives. Our culture at Baker McKenzie is everything to us and it is my responsibility to maintain and build that culture as we grow.

How did you get into this line of work?

I studied as a primary school teacher for two years but returned home and took a placement in the marketing department of a large telecommunications company. Following this I studied a HND in Marketing which then led onto me completing a Chartered Institute of Marketing qualification which was the equivalent of a degree. The company I worked for at the time were looking for a temp to assist with large scale recruitment and I asked if they would consider letting me do this and they said yes! I then travelled to Thailand, Australia, NZ, Fiji and US for one year which was one of the best decisions I ever made!

When I returned I got a job working in a recruitment agency and this led to many other HR roles including a move to Liverpool and working for Reed in Partnership, which supported individuals into employment through mentoring, financial and emotional support. I then returned back to Belfast I worked as an office Manager for a startup IT company and they sponsored me to study the Post Graduate Diploma in Personnel Management at Queens.

From there I worked in a number of different organisations to gain experience in Training and Development, Recruitment, Employee Relations, and Diversity & Inclusion and have worked in IT, Financial and professional services industries.

Writing this down is making me feel very old!

What is the best advice you have ever received?

"Life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% how you react to it" which is a quote by Charles Swindoll. This has always resonated with me as it makes you realise your attitude is so important.

Tell us about your qualifications and training?

I have a HND Marketing, Chartered Institute of Marketing Advanced Certificate (as it was known then) Pg Dip Personnel Management and CIPD Level 7 and am currently studying ILM Level 5 in Coaching and Mentoring.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like to meet up with friends and family (not so much this year!) and have taught Irish dancing for the past 20 years! (now I feel old). I enjoy singing and have sung with our workplace choir and Cathedral Arts choir and before lockdown had done some recording, so I am looking forward to getting back to that and having a few more gigs to perform at.

I also have an eight year old daughter who keeps me very busy!

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself?

I have moved 17 times and have lived in four countries (and that is not including the two moves I made when I went travelling!).

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

One of the most important qualities is to be trustworthy and honest so that people can open up and have faith that you will do the right thing whilst maintaining confidentiality where necessary. You need to ensure that you have empathy in order to build and sustain positive relationships, foster diversity and inclusion and encourage collaboration. Having the skill to actively listen is key to communicating effectively and building relationships which is very important in HR. You need to act with integrity and genuinely care about people.

Being forward thinking and strategic will ensure you maintain a positive culture and are prepared for any challenges. Being neutral and having strong problem solving skills ensure that you can gather information and analyse in order to take action. Finally you need to manage your time effectively in order to balance a variety of different tasks and be flexible and responsive and ensure that you act as a positive change agent.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

I love reading and listening to podcasts of inspirational leaders such as Brene Brown and Simon Sinek but I would have to say that my parents have been my biggest inspiration.

Growing up in north Belfast in the 60's was hard but they both were able to get away from Northern Ireland to study or work. My dad worked extremely hard and became a successful Chief Executive, and he taught me to not take life seriously and to have a positive attitude. My mum trained as a teacher and raised the four of us while dad came home at the weekends, and I really admire my mums strength and compassion.