



PROGRESSIVE



Geraldine McKee

Savings Support Manager

What does your job entail?

I am the Savings Support Manager for Progressive Building Society which means I am responsible for managing the Society's savings products.

How did you get into this line of work?

I started in Progressive on 1 June 1988 and my first role was in the Deeds Department as an Administrative Assistant. I worked there for three years before moving to the Wellington Place branch in November 1991 as a Customer Service Assistant. I applied for a position in the Investment Department as an Administrator and moved to the Department in July 1997. A few years later, the position of Investment Manager became available. I spent 20 years there working with a great team looking after 7 members of staff.

When the position of Savings Support Manager came up I jumped at the opportunity to broaden my knowledge and skills base and took up the mantle towards the end of last year.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

I left high school with nine O Levels and completed a BTEC National Diploma in Business Studies before joining the Society. Progressive offers an extensive training programme and are proactive in encouraging their staff in personal development. They have helped me complete a wide variety of training courses including management and leadership which have really helped me progress my career and boosted my confidence.

Whats the best thing about your job?

I am passionate about working for an organisation that values their people, both members and staff. Working for Progressive for over 30 years and as a working mum I have benefited from Progressive's commitment to a positive work-life balance and family friendly policies. With 33 flexible working patterns available, it has been great to find a working pattern that works for me and my family. Other benefits include work from home days, a private health insurance plan and an open-door policy for transfers across locations. Management were extremely flexible when the kids were growing up allowing me to work condensed hours and take time off when I needed it – this approach was invaluable to me as many other working mums out there will know.

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

Financial services is a rapidly changing environment so it is important to be flexible and to embrace different opportunities. You need strong leadership skills in order to deal with unexpected situations and make sound judgements. Communication and interpersonal skills are vital as I work with staff across several departments and it is essential to keep staff updated on key developments within the business.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

My spare time is very precious, and I enjoy spending it with my family. I have two teenage boys, so a lot of my time is devoted to supporting them in their vast array of ever changing activities! As a family we like to go to the cinema, the local leisure centre or just out for a meal. Recently we have even enjoyed a bit of mountain biking! I also try to keep reasonably fit by swimming on a regular basis. It is a great way to relax and unwind.

Any advice for someone considering a career in your profession?

Go for it! Working in the financial services sector is very rewarding. If you are starting out from school or University take the time to consider your options and remember there are many routes into your ideal job so if you don't succeed keep trying. I think it's key to always have a focus on self-improvement as I believe you should never stop learning and don't be afraid to ask questions – it's the quickest way to make sure you fully understand your role and keep one step ahead.

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