



The Responsible
Business Network
Northern Ireland



Karen Wright

HR and Facilities Administrator

What does your job entail?

My job involves all the mainstream admin functions which are found in an organisation– recruitment, appraisals and leave etc - basically any administration function you could think off that would find in a workplace. I am also involved in dealing with the facilities (building), checking if any work needs to be done and ensuring that all health and safety routine checks are carried out on time. This is a wide and varied role – which gives a great variety of tasks from the everyday administration jobs to more unusual like checking fire alarms and emergency lighting etc.! This job type is a role that requires you to be a team player within the organisation as you are working with colleagues from all the teams and be able to work independently to deal with any issues that arise. It is a role that gives you a lot of variety of tasks in your working day.

How did you get into this line of work?

After serving 22 years in the Royal Air Force as a Personnel Administrator I was looking for something to do and I applied for a maternity contact at BITCNI and nine years later I am still here working at Business in the Community

Outline your career to date

After A-levels I worked for a while in a shoe shop whilst applying for the RAF. This was a career I had always had an interest in. I joined in July 1990 and spent the next 22 years working at different bases in the UK and overseas. After my basic training, I completed four months of trade training as a Personnel Administrator which allowed me to work in many different fields including accounts, personnel offices, 7 Sqn, Chinooks based at RAF Odiham and on the personal staff of the Chief of the Air Staff in the Ministry of Defence, (I was working there the day of 9/11 and we watched the television like everyone else and it then followed a period of very busy days and long hours in the aftermath of the events).

Tell us about your qualifications and training

I completed my O-levels and A-levels and then joined the Royal Air Force, where I completed internal training for my roles as and when required. Along with a BTEC and NVQ in Personnel along the way.

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

I think someone who is very organised, with good attention to detail and is also a good communicator. Patience is also a worthwhile trait as sometimes we are asked the same questions repeatedly.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Family time is the key to relaxing in my spare time, with reading and baking and walking thrown into the mix.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

The scariest thing I ever did, was hanging out of a Chinook helicopter on a winch in the Falklands Islands. It was a perk of having 7 Sqn from Odiham training down there, whilst I was on detachment. The Senior Crewman thought I would enjoy it, I did, but it was quite scary.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

That is a hard question to answer as I don't think there is just one person. I have met and worked with lots of different people especially in my RAF career. But one person who really stood out was a civil servant at RAF Aldergrove who had cancer and after every hospital appointment, she just said everything was ok. But it wasn't and her diagnosis was terminal, and she kept working, being involved in her church activities and the Boys Brigade until she had to stop. I think her attitude to never give up and carry on with life is something to aim for.

What advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

Take every opportunity in life that you are able to and don't worry what others think – do what makes you happy.