

ELBA

A Day in the life of...



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MY ALARM GOES OFF...

My alarm will go off at 5:30am. I leave the house at 6am, and drive to the station to catch my train at 6:30am. Once I get off the train in London it's a short walk to the office. I am typically at my desk by 7:45am, in time for my first meeting of the day at 8am. My work attire varies, depending on what I am planning to do. While I always wear formal work trousers (no jeans!) I choose between a smart polo shirt and a work shirt, which I sometimes wear a suit jacket with.

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

I am responsible for the end-to-end delivery of all IT infrastructure solutions delivered by Technology Services to Financial Markets (FM). I am also the London location lead for FM Production Management. I am responsible for critical production support issue management, facing off to Senior London and European Management and regulatory request management for London and Europe. This role engages with London Senior Management,

London trading floor business leads, audit, compliance, HR and a number of Technology Services (TS) teams. These include Project Delivery, Infrastructure Engineering and Delivery, Data Centre and any other TS teams required. My role has a permanent place on the FM Production Management Global Leadership team.

I GOT MY JOB...

I originally started out as an electrical/electronics engineer on military avionics. Then I went to the University of Essex, where I achieved a BEng in electronic engineering and a MSc in computing. Upon leaving university I was a programmer for six months, before becoming a Technical Consultant for two American software houses over the span of three years. My 23+ years in financial services began in trading floor support at HypoVereinsbank, during which I led the design and build out of their trading floor in London. I later worked at Deutsche Bank for 15 years, where I held various positions including infrastructure



management, architecture and production management. I then worked for UBS for 6.5 years, spending two of these years leading the build-out of all the end user technology in the new London HQ. I left there to join Standard Chartered in January 2020.

AT SCHOOL I STUDIED...

I studied O levels at school - Combined Sciences, English Language, English Literature, Geography and Maths. I also took two GCSEs in Computer Studies and French. I chose the subjects I was most interested in (as you tend to do better in things you have an interest in) and which I thought would leave me with the widest possible options, job wise. Upon leaving school I was accepted to go to college to study four A levels. Instead, I chose



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another path of an electronic engineering apprenticeship with a local military avionics company. I had completed a one-week work experience placement with them previously, and at the end they offered me a place on their apprenticeship programme. As part of that programme I undertook day release at college where, over the course of four years, I completed two qualifications - an ONC and HNC in Electronic Engineering.

MY TYPICAL DAY...

My work starts at 8am with the first meeting of the day, though sometimes this might be at 7:30am (or even 6am occasionally!). Working for a company that is principally situated in Asia Pacific means that my mornings are taken up with meetings, due to the time zone difference. I fit in a gym session before lunch, which is a sandwich from M&S or EAT. I spend the afternoon catching up on emails and planning for the subsequent days' meetings. Given the early start to the day, I leave the office between 4:30 - 5:30pm.

THE KEY SKILLS I USE IN MY JOB...

Being organised. I need to know which topics I personally need to progress and which I should delegate to others, as I construct and execute complex change

programmes that span multiple teams and extended time periods. This is the skill that I have worked on the most, as effective delegation increases the amount of work that can be done.

I also need to ensure that the topics I delegate are all progressed through to a conclusion, so not allowing anything to drop is important. I do this by using tools like the functionality in e-mail solutions, for example setting up 'follow up' reminders.

Also, no undertaking ever follows the original plan, particularly as I like to get involved in complex issues and help make them simpler. Therefore, I always need to think about what might go wrong, and what we could do about it before it happens. This is better than having to figure it all out when things go wrong - which they will!

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS...

I have undertaken a variety of roles in my career because I like to be challenged. I have always enjoyed roles where no two days are the same, and different challenges are always being presented to you. I particularly enjoy getting involved in what might seem to be difficult, complicated, or even boring situations and being able to lay out in simple terms what is right and needs to be done. Getting "stuff" done and being results orientated is where I derive my satisfaction from work.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB IS...

Telling someone that you are making them redundant. It is never easy, and never nice. I was made redundant from my very first role post-university, and I have never forgotten the experience. I manage the process by being sure there are justifiable

reasons, and that the person has been given every opportunity to resolve the situation. When having the conversation, I use a script to ensure that all the relevant details are covered. There can be heightened emotions and tension in the conversation, and you can't allow that to distract you. That isn't fair to the individual concerned.

MY ROLE MODEL GROWING UP WAS...

My father. He was a mechanical engineer, which is where my interest in engineering first evolved from. But I was always struck by his work ethic - his focus, effort and determination to always do the best job possible.

AFTER WORK...

I get home by 7:30pm. Dinner is something with fish or chicken, although sometimes I have pizza or a burger for a treat. After watching some TV, bedtime is around 10:30pm. Outside of work I am a National Badge (Men's Premier Panel) hockey umpire. This is hockey's equivalent of Premier League football referees, umpiring the top National players in England and Wales, including past, present, and potentially future Olympians and Internationals.

MY PLAN B...

My career has been Plan B. Plan A, which I passed the entrance exam and interview for, was to join the RAF as a pilot. However, I then failed the medical as my eyesight is not perfect. I was offered the opportunity to be an Engineering Officer, but I declined that on the basis that all I had ever wanted since the age of 10 was to be a pilot.

