

ELBA

A Day in the life of...



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MY ALARM GOES OFF...

My alarm goes off around 8 am, I put on my cycling gear and hop on my bicycle to work. It takes around 45 minutes to get to Whitechapel from home, so I usually get to our building around 9am, where I work my way down to the bike locker and shower room. I generally make it to the Exchange (our canteen) for around 9.20am and arrive at my desk (bagels in tow) at around 9.30am.

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

Advising clients on legal matters and preparing documents to support that advice. I usually work for a partner or a more senior associate. The aim is to provide practical advice which is relevant to their situation (often referred to as being "commercial"). That means whilst you can of course write essays on the law, a client (usually a director of a company or an internal lawyer) wants to know what they can and can't do and how much it will cost.

I GOT MY JOB...

I went to Loughborough University and studied European and International Studies

(basically European politics) as it was a way to study French without reading lots of French literature. I went from that into recruitment, working for Dame Kelly Holmes's charity, rowing clubs, British Rowing (the national governing body for rowing) and Crewroom (a sportswear company).

I started contemplating a career in the law after I found out that a friend with whom I went to university had just completed the graduate diploma in law (an accelerated law course for those who didn't study law at university). My career history between university and joining a law firm was focused on trying to get to the Olympics (which I didn't manage) and then earning enough money to pay my way through post-graduate study. What I did get was lots of valuable work experience in law firms and in company legal departments, which helped me determine what type of law firm I wanted to work for.

I found out about Ince when researching the types of international law firms that practiced shipping/commodities/

insurance law (funny that I ended up as a corporate lawyer!) It was a while ago now, but I suspect I found out about the position on LawCareers.net, which is a website that collates all the application deadlines for pretty much every law firm in the country offering graduate jobs.

Some people apply to firms via their vacation schemes, which is a paid one/two week placement, I actually did one elsewhere. I applied directly for a training contract at Ince and had to complete an online test (I think it was verbal reasoning) and carry out two written exercises followed by an interview with a partner and a member of HR.



Associate

Law

AT SCHOOL I STUDIED...

At GCSE I studied English literature and language, maths, double science, history, French, art, textiles and RE. At A Level I studied English language, French and biology (I dropped art). I studied the subjects I found most interesting at GCSE.

MY TYPICAL DAY...

I get to my desk around 9:30 and start checking the emails that came in overnight. After that, there really isn't a typical day. If I'm in the throes of a merger and acquisition (M&A) deal (i.e. one company buying or merging with another) I might have calls with clients, review documents shared by the seller to find out about the company our client wants to buy, obtain input from other lawyers on company documents or draft legal documents. If assisting on a discrete (i.e. one-off) matter, I might do some research to answer a particular problem and prepare an advice email to a client. I usually spend some time during the day responding to emails from colleagues about marketing/business development and corporate responsibility (i.e. volunteering). I generally have lunch around 2pm and will have a coffee with a colleague later in the afternoon. I probably leave the office around 7.30/8pm on average.

THE KEY SKILLS I USE IN MY JOB...

Communication: I spend a lot of my time writing emails, drafting documents and talking to colleagues or clients. You have to be good at communicating your point succinctly, whether in writing or orally. Our clients (and partners in the firm) are busy people who don't have the time to read long-winded emails. I developed oral communication skills through presenting and I developed written communication skills over time through school, university and my various jobs.

Team-working: Depending on the department you are in you are often required to work closely with more senior and junior members of your team, which means you have to be good at working with other people (i.e. taking responsibility where necessary and supporting others). I developed this skill mainly through team sports at school and university.

Self-motivation/drive: As a junior lawyer you are given work by lots of other people, which you need to complete within set deadlines. That said, as everybody is busy with their own work, you are also relatively autonomous, which means you need to be able to deliver work without being chased.

Time-management/prioritisation: Linked to the above, work gets thrown at you left, right and centre, all of which is seemingly urgent. So you need to be able to prioritise the work you are given and manage your workload so you can deliver to people's deadlines but also maintain your quality of work.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS...

The best parts of my job are my team and the intellectual challenge. I really enjoy how testing the job is, that you learn something every day and

actually the pressure that goes with the job. There is something quite satisfying about having a deadline to work to and completing a project.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB IS...

Sometimes having more work to do than the time you have available, or having lots of urgent tasks where it isn't obvious what is less urgent is tough, as this means having frank discussions with partners as to what is more urgent.

MY ROLE MODEL GROWING UP WAS...

I'd say my parents - they were both loving, hard workers and supported me 100% in my endeavours.

AFTER WORK...

My finish time can vary from 7pm to 10pm and mindful that it takes 45-ish minutes for me to cycle home I generally get in between 8 pm and 11 pm. That leaves time for dinner and a bit of a read. I generally get to bed at some time between midnight and 1am (I know that's bad!)



MY PLAN B...

Had I not followed a career in law I would probably have stayed working in sport... Maybe sport development of some sort - looking at how to encourage more people to exercise or how to use the power of sport to inspire a generation.

