

A Day in the life of...



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MY ALARM GOES OFF...

My alarm rings at 7.30am (although it takes me a few minutes to get up!). I have breakfast and check emails I've received overnight, though I try not to answer any until I'm in the office unless they are very urgent. I work in a corporate environment, so my attire is professional. I don't wear a suit, but I will wear a smart dress, skirt or work trousers with a nice blouse. I then get the DLR and the tube into Canary Wharf. I leave just after rush hour to avoid the congested London underground – at around 8.45am. I live quite close to the office so I'm usually at my desk by 9.30am.

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

I work as a lawyer in a bank in a specialised field/role. My key focus is working with bankers on a certain type of financing transactions. I am the internal legal counsel on these deals, so I review and analyse the transaction documents. My key priority is to protect the bank by identifying, analysing and managing legal risk. I also often have to explain this risk to my colleagues, including senior colleagues such

as my manager, and also to the bankers – most of whom do not have a legal background, and so I have to distil technical legal terms into understandable and practical concepts (which can be quite hard!).

I GOT MY JOB...

At university, I completed two degrees: Commerce and Law. During university, I worked in a legal publishing company (I basically proofread cases and legal textbooks all day) and then as a paralegal at a construction company. The paralegal job taught me about working in a corporate environment, and how to interact with senior colleagues. I enjoyed that role, so I later applied for an internship at a corporate law firm in London. I spent four years at the law firm during which I did a secondment at another bank before moving to Citi. I heard about my current role through my manager on secondment. She knew my boss at Citi and heard that he was hiring and recommended me for the role!



Financial
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AT SCHOOL I STUDIED...

I grew up and went to high school in Australia, so our final subjects and exams are a bit different. I studied Mathematics, English, Economics, Physics, Chemistry and Agriculture (as my school had a farm!). I chose these because I enjoyed them and because I was confident I would be able to get good grades and get onto the university course I wanted. While these subjects don't directly relate to what I do now, they taught me skills such as analysis, comprehension, writing and logical thinking which are very important for my job.

MY TYPICAL DAY...

I'm usually at my desk by 9.30am – always with a coffee. In the morning, I go through emails and prioritise the work I need to do. I write my to-do list the day before, so I then start working through that. However, no matter how organised I try to be, there are always days when one big issue

or problem railroads all my plans, so I have to remain flexible. I may also have calls or meetings that I need to attend. For lunch I'll either get sushi or a salad. My days are quite busy, so I usually have lunch at my desk. However, if the weather is nice, I will try to go for a walk during lunch if I have time.

THE KEY SKILLS I USE IN MY JOB...

There are three key skills: organisation, flexibility and managing expectations and people. I am a naturally organised person so translating this to the office wasn't too difficult. However, given that unexpected issues can arise at work, it is also important to remain flexible. This has been more challenging for me, especially when I was training. I honed this skill through experience and learning from mistakes. As I gained more experience, I understood how to identify important issues. With that, I also learned how to manage expectations and other people at work (who can be very demanding!). Over time, I gained more confidence and learned how long it takes to complete certain tasks, which has allowed me to set realistic expectations for my clients and managers.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS...

Variety, working with motivated and caring colleagues, and the work culture. I do have to take initiative, but my manager is supportive of involving me in different types of work and I work on a variety of projects. For example, volunteering is important to me and so I organise our team's annual volunteering day. I am also part of a committee that represents the views of the legal team and communicates these to senior management. A lot of your week is spent at work, so it's important to like your work

culture and work with colleagues who challenge, motivate and respect you. My colleagues are hardworking and intelligent, but there is also a strong belief in having a good work-life balance, which is important and allows me to enjoy my workday because I know my evenings will generally be free.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB IS...

Workloads and self-doubt are my personal biggest challenges. My workload can get very busy and sometimes I have to work evenings or weekends, which can be exhausting. I tend to get quite anxious when things don't go to plan, so remaining calm and flexible is still something I am working on! It's helpful to think about what I am learning from the experience and remind myself that next time, it will be easier. This goes hand-in-hand with self-doubt. I have been in my profession for about seven years but I still suffer from the "imposter syndrome", where I don't think that I'm making the right decisions, or that I'm doing my job well enough – days like this can be hard! To manage this, I try to take my mind off work, whether it's going for a coffee or a walk during the day, or switching off my work emails for a few hours in the evening, as this helps me get perspective. I also find it helpful to talk to my colleagues and friends – it's surprising just how many people have similar thoughts about themselves!

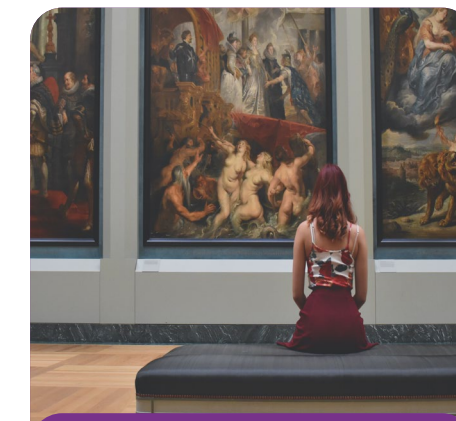
MY ROLE MODEL GROWING UP WAS...

I was a big tennis fan growing up and looked up to Roger Federer. I used to get quite stressed and anxious about school and I admired how Federer always remained calm in stressful moments and hoped I could do the same one day. This is still very important in my job today. I

do have stressful moments and days, but it's important to keep things in perspective and remain calm so that you can think clearly about solutions.

AFTER WORK...

I live quite close to the office so my commute is only 20-30 minutes. I exercise 2-3 times a week after work - working out is a great way to switch off and unwind. I may also try a new recipe as I enjoy cooking or go out for dinner with my boyfriend or friends. I try to read before bed, although I'm usually so tired I only manage 5 or 10 minutes! I'm in bed by 11pm.



MY PLAN B...

When I was younger, I wanted to be a professional figure skater – although, I'm not sure how realistic that dream was! If I hadn't pursued law, I would have done something using my other degree related to business or economics, because I really enjoyed economics in High School. If I was to choose something completely different, then I would have liked to study art history and work as a curator at a museum. This would merge business and art together, which I think would be interesting.