

ELBA

A Day in the life of...



Rebecca Chan Operations Specialist, Credit Suisse

MY ALARM GOES OFF...

My alarm goes off at 6:30 as I live on the outskirts of London unfortunately, so I have a 1-hour commute to look forward to. This gives me just about enough time to wash up, get dressed in smart casual wear (we are quite lucky that the rules are fairly relaxed in our function), grab my food for the day and set off for the train station. My commute is rather productive I would say – usually I do my makeup, eat a quick snack, read through the headlines and sometimes even fit in a quick snooze!

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

My job deals with managing currencies and the short-term liquidity (how much cash a bank has) of a bank. Every analyst in our team funds different currencies – for instance, I am in charge of US dollar, Canadian dollar, Mexican peso and Turkish lira. One of the main focuses for us is to ensure there is enough cash within accounts in bank holds with other banks (just like how you

may have multiple bank accounts with different banks yourself) for trades to be processed on time. These trades are types of business instructed by other departments and generate revenue for the bank.

I GOT MY JOB...

My undergraduate degree was in Biological Science at University of Birmingham, so not exactly the typical route into finance. I dabbled in audit for a few months and had a short internship in Investment Banking prior to my current role, but decided they were not for me. Funnily enough, it was a fellow student from University of Birmingham who also works at my bank now that knew I was job-hunting at the time and recommended me for the job!

AT SCHOOL I STUDIED...

I chose a range of GCSEs outside of the core Sciences/Maths/English that were compulsory at my school, as I did not have a clear aim for my career path yet including History, Geography, French, Religious Studies, etc. At A-Level, I was still more inclined towards the sciences and so studied Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Economics. Maths I believed would be useful in most jobs and Economics was something different from a humanities subject and well-respected. None of them actually relate directly to my job, but what I would say is the experience in Excel through different subjects and some concepts in Maths have set the foundation for my work now.



MY TYPICAL DAY...

I start at 8:30am sharp to send a currency forecast for the day to the money markets desk – these are traders that will buy and sell the currency. After this, there are various tasks with an intraday deadline that need to be completed by a certain time. Meetings with the team or your supervisor etc. will also be held in the morning to make time for the bulk of currency funding in the afternoon. For lunch, I am spoilt for choice with in-house canteens, eateries and supermarkets within a 15 minute walk. However, I try to make my own lunch where I can to save money and my health.

THE KEY SKILLS I USE IN MY JOB...

Effective time management and being able to work calmly under pressure is essential in Cash Management as there are times you may find yourself with several conflicting priorities and a few people chasing you to finish different tasks all with deadlines! This resilience to time pressure was developed over time for me with gradual exposure and experience – your team will not expect you to jump in to everything straight away as a

new employee and there will be a training period so you are eased more gradually into a role.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS...

The work culture at my bank and in our function is above the industry standard from what I have heard, with less hierarchy, little pressure to work long hours beyond what needs to be done and strong encouragement to get involved with the company outside of your job, e.g. events, networks and other projects. My teammates are also very friendly and helpful, with no sense of competition or backstabbing as media may sometimes portray the corporate life to be!

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB IS...

The toughest part of my job is probably trying to fit in the ad-hoc tasks and projects in addition to my usual daily workload. The way to overcome this is to manage expectations with your supervisor first and foremost so they can build a realistic idea of progress and help you. Planning and finding ways to stay focused (whether that be to take breaks away from your desk or alternating between tasks) are useful as well. Also IT issues can be a real pain to deal with and since we use more systems than your average office job, they can feel frequent!

charisma to forge strong relationships with everyone who comes her way – she is everything I can hope to become!

AFTER WORK...

I always try to force myself to go to the gym after a whole day of sitting at the desk, but I have found booking a gym class is the best motivation since money and reputation are at stake. If I have managed to avoid the numerous temptations of food along my journey home, I will usually have a home-cooked meal already waiting for me – the perks of living with your parents! To relax, I like to organise outings with my friends whether it be for food, drink or other activities.



MY ROLE MODEL GROWING UP WAS...

I looked up to (and feared) my mother the most growing up. As a tenacious woman with an admirable work ethic, the capability to multi-task at a high standard and the

MY PLAN B...

If I were not in the finance industry, I would probably be working in a field more in line with my degree such as animal conservation or the environmental projects. Both of which are still my passions that I try to get involved in as much as possible!