

Day in the life of a....



Solicitor

I am a solicitor working within a large legal department for a local authority. My team predominantly deals with prosecuting criminal cases on behalf client departments such as environmental health, trading standards, licensing, food safety, parking services and housing.

We prosecute cases in both the magistrates and crown courts. I appear in court several times a week. This is the part of the job I enjoy the most.

The rest of the week is spent preparing for trials, assessing new cases, analysing evidence and preparing court documents. We have well established relationships with our clients and I am lucky to have such a great team. The hours can be long but working for a local authority affords good flexible working.

We are all working from home in recent times. The courts are moving to digital hearings with advocates appearing remotely, something I suspect will become the norm as we move forward.

The legal department also has other teams dealing with personal injury matters, employment tribunal cases, buying and selling property, contract law, education appeals and compulsory purchases. It is a great environment to gain knowledge of the workings of a local authority.



Training

I work for a manufacturing group. Our company is global and we make all sorts of kitchen equipment that go into commercial outlets like restaurants, cafes and hotels. We make items like ovens, fryers and griddles. We supply the equipment to customers like McDonalds, Burger King, Hilton, Costa, BP, M&S and supermarkets. Most of the companies you can think of worldwide use at least one piece of our equipment in their kitchens. We also supply one off end users, so if you opened a café you could buy one of our ovens as well.

In the UK, I run the training department. My job is really varied. I look after all the training for the people who are in the kitchens using the equipment. My team of trainers and I visit sites all over the country and show the staff how to use the equipment safely and get the best results out of it. For one off end users, we also help them to cook products through it and work out the right timings for their products, for the larger customers, known as Key Accounts, that is done with their head office, sometimes I do this but it also done by our culinary team, they are development chefs

so they work with the big accounts head office chefs to develop the menus based on the new products that are coming to the menu. This can be quite exciting as you see all the new food that is coming to the restaurants. Sometimes we also get to go to quite special places, my best ones have been Anfield, Windsor Castle and Number 10 Downing Street!



I also write the training guides for the Key Accounts, so that when new members of staff join their teams, they can easily grasp what they need to press on the equipment to get it working how it should do. They need to have these guides in place to show due diligence and protect themselves legally if anyone gets hurt. That work often involves meetings at their head offices and lots of emailing back and forth so some days of my week I work from home doing jobs like that. I also have to book training sessions in and organise where all my other

trainers are working so when I work from home, I do that as well, sometimes there can be 30-40 training sessions in a week so this can take a lot of organisation and planning. Our customers often want to open quickly to start making money so there is a tight window of time to get a trainer into the site. Sometimes I do the training session over the phone so they can open faster and then we have to visit them at a later date.

I work as part of the UK Sales team, so I work with them in planning big rollouts with key accounts so we can definitely support lots of sites opening at the same time. In addition to that I also train staff on Food Safety Courses when they need it as well, and those are generally one day courses that give them a qualification to work with food safely within a commercial environment.

Unfortunately, we have been hit hard with the Coronavirus situation. As all restaurants and cafes have been closed, no customers are buying our equipment at the moment. We don't know how long it will take for the sales to pick up when the restaurants reopen as they will have lost a lot of money during this and may not be a position to buy lots of new equipment as they had done. However, it could be that if normal life resumes swiftly there will be an uptake in people eating out and then the demand for new equipment will actually increase. It is hard to know anything right now though, if people aren't buying our equipment there is no need for the sales team or the training team at the moment and even our factories will be affected.



Air Steward

Working as cabin crew for TUI Airways can mean long days at the 'office'. Just popping to Spain and back can be an 8-hour day, but if you're going to Egypt, that can be a 15 hour round trip. I start work any time from 4am to 11pm, often working through the night and sometimes Christmas Day too!

Teamwork is hugely important as you may only meet the rest of your crew at the pre-flight briefing so is essential that we all know what's expected of us for the day ahead. A day on board the aeroplane starts by welcoming our customers to the start of their holiday, serving drinks and snacks from the bar trolley, serving hot meals on longer flights and selling duty free shopping... then doing it all over again on the way home, unless you've done a long haul flight, then you get to relax on the beach for a couple of days.

The skills needed to become cabin crew include customer service, friendly personality, very good time keeping and the ability to swim (you'll find out why you need to swim during your training) once you start your training you'll gain skills in first aid, evacuation procedures, fire fighting, restraint training and you get to go down the huge evacuation slides too...



You'll meet people from all walks of life when you work as cabin crew, they may be your customers or your crew. You could meet people travelling on their honeymoon, families on a once in a lifetime holiday to Disneyland or students travelling on an educational visit to Auschwitz...we even had the England football team on board once!

No day is ever the same when you're cabin crew, that's probably what I love the most about my job.

Registered General Nurse

Becoming a registered nurse entails completing a 3-year programme at a chosen university, previously a Diploma level, this is now a degree course with the option to advance to a masters.

A general registered nurse is somebody who has chosen to specialise in the care of adults, in a general setting, whether that be in an acute, or primary care setting. So, a hospital or maybe out in the community, or within a GP practice. There is also the option to become a paediatric nurse, specialising in the care of children, or a mental health nurse. The paths for all 3 nursing types, all begin the same, with people branching off into their chosen area during the 2nd year of learning.



Being a Registered Nurse, you are a professional person, answerable to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) who set the standards expected of you, in a both personal and professional capacity. In other words, you need to behave yourself, both in and out of work.

Day to Day, nursing can be such a varied role depending on which, of many areas you have decided to base yourself within. Working as an acute hospital, ward nurse you begin your journey as a band 5 staff nurse, managed by an individual, or team of ward sisters or charge nurses. Now although you are supported by these senior members of the team, you are 100% accountable for your own actions and omissions. So, whatever you chose to do, or not do, you are responsible, you can't blame the boss because they told you to do something!

As a nurse, you are expected to work a variety of shift patterns so flexibility is an absolute must and stamina also, with the majority of shifts now being 12.5hrs day or night. At the beginning of a shift, day or night we have what we call a handover. This consists of the previous shifts, staff telling us who, what and why is on the ward and what their needs are. They will inform us of any outstanding jobs or any concerns. That's their day done and off they go. You will be allocated your patients and they are now 100% your responsibility.

1st job of the day, visualise your patients, introduce yourself and familiarise yourself with them. See them for yourself, so you can quickly recognise any changes, good or bad, later on during the shift. Check what their vitals are doing, Blood pressure, Pulse and temperature. We are very lucky now and a computer actually calculates a person's risk of deterioration, though nothing can actually compete with your own assessment. Computers don't always get it right. Any concerns with a patient, a quick call to the Dr for advice will hopefully sort this. Check for outstanding

I am a Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountant having completed a 3-year training role with the Audit Commission. Being a qualified accountant gives you more opportunities to develop/advance than not being qualified (with the qualification taking about 3 years once you have a degree or completed AAT). I do know people who haven't finished their qualifications who have progressed to senior management level regardless.

A significant amount of my time is spent managing the team, particularly with corona virus meaning some of the team are working remotely. I try to touch base with each of the home workers each day but it means that my work doesn't start until 10am (I start at 8.30am). Every day is different but there are daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual tasks that have to be completed. I try to finish by 5.30pm but occasionally deadlines mean I work as late as 7pm (particularly over the financial year end when we're producing the accounts).



As we are the finance department of a hospital, everything we do, had to continue during the pandemic but with social distancing in the workplace and some individuals unable to come to work due to underlying health conditions lots of things had to change. The technology was there for most individuals to work from home at least some of the time with the team working flexibly and spending some days on site and others at home or working long days/ Saturdays. There is still a lot of paper-based work so it hasn't been possible to do everything from home. There have been lots of urgent payments/ orders that have needed to be facilitated requiring somebody to be in the office to answer calls (it isn't possible to divert from the work landlines) to action them in a timely way. Things have settled down into a sort of routine now though and I can't imagine that we'll ever completely go back to being an office based team.

Founder and Director of Angel Media PR and Media Consultancy

As someone who is self-employed, I work as many, or as little, hours as the work that comes in dictates really. I've even worked all day and into the early hours for the best part of a week in order to edit a novel for a client for publication – it ended up being more of a rewrite so took far longer than expected.

As a former award-winning journalist, who used to be a news editor and a feature writer working to tight deadlines, I'm used to work swiftly and under pressure, having to adapt interview techniques to get the best out of high profile figures, including celebrities and Prime Ministers, as well as normal people. It's far more relaxed working for myself and as a PR and media consultant working from an office at my home.



I'm fortunate that my experience and skills, which includes being able to pull stories out of people and reams of information, to know what will work, and how it will work, in the media, allow me to be able to adapt to different client situations I'm faced with. Journalism skills are actually very transferrable to other job roles, and I'm proud to have happy clients and a 100% success rate in securing their PR gets media coverage to date as a company director on the back of this.

In addition to the qualifications, it's experience of doing the job that stood me in good stead to be able to transition into running my own PR and Media consultancy. It's often quite clear that some PR agencies/workers have had no journalistic backgrounds which means that when it comes to working with the media they fall flat as they don't know how things work the other side of the desk.

Good interview skills are also essential – which you can demonstrate yourself by doing interviews on a topic/doing a video diary at home. You can then edit into a professional video that you can share to show your talents. What's also imperative is to know social media and trends inside out as this is the basis of what journalist's jobs are now based on. They have to report figures for engagement, click through, time on page etc daily and reach certain figures every month as a key part of their progress and development reviews.



Apprenticeship Workplace Trainer

I work in the Apprenticeship department for a college and my role is to teach and coach Leadership and Management Apprenticeships. I typically teach once a fortnight, as that's what my apprenticeship area requires, but some of my colleagues teach three times a week. If I have a teaching day, these days start very early, as I like to be nice and prepared! I arrive and set the training room up and check (and double check!) the IT equipment and give the room a general quick H&S check to ensure there are no hazards. I make sure the sound systems work and that I have all the additional materials I may need. I then wait for my apprentices to arrive and start teaching! We usually have a fun day and I try to incorporate fun activities into the day. It's normally a tiring day as we cover so much information, based upon what needs to be learned for the apprenticeship. Each taught session finishes with apprentices writing in their journals and updating their logs.

A general day for me where I am not teaching consists of me planning my day around supporting my apprentices in the way that works for them. Sometimes I start my day at a workplace, conducting a 1:1 progress review with an apprentice and their manager, and then I will leave that place of work and drive to see another apprentice to complete a professional discussion and also an hour of coaching. I then may observe an apprentice completing a team review so that I can assess them in this. After I have been out and about, I will head to the office to write up my assessments and notes and ensure they are recorded. If I have no planned visits in the afternoon, I will continue to mark work that I've set for my apprentices on One File and create new learning assessments for them. I may also do some coaching over the telephone or on Skype for Business. A caseload is typically 40 learners, so that is a lot of marking to undertake!



What skills do I need? Well, in my role I need to have the ability to work on my own initiative and have very good planning skills in order to structure my day efficiently, but I also need to be flexible to the needs of my apprentices. I need creativity to make the learning fun and enjoyable, and I also need to have an in-depth knowledge of the subject, as well as having attention to detail for the marking. I also need to ensure I am up to date with the latest theories and trends, so I spend some time each week on my own professional development and learning.

Administrator for Programmes and Networks, Academic Office, St Anne's College, University of Oxford

Working hours: 9am – 5.15pm

Skills and qualities:

- Friendly and positive outlook - I help students, academics and colleagues in other departments on a daily basis.
- International experience useful - used to working with and interacting with people from different cultures.
- Enthusiastic about travel – this should be a perk of the job, not a chore!
- Organised – need to plan the year ahead
- Basic administrative skills – Word, Excel, etc.
- Attention to detail – useful for most office-based activities

I work for [St Anne's College](#) which is one of the colleges that make up the University of Oxford. Colleges are friendly places to work and have a good community feel about them. The two largest parts of my job are organising international summer schools and arranging internships.



International Programmes - We hold a summer school in Hong Kong every two years for approximately 100 students in Hong Kong who are aged between 15-17. I travel there with 18 academics who teach the students a variety of subjects, and I have to oversee the programme. It's quite a challenge looking after 100 students, but even more challenging looking after Oxford academics! There is a lot of organisation involved in the 6+ months leading up to the programme, including booking flights, accommodation, overseeing student applications etc. But this aspect of my job is very exciting and I love being able to travel.

We also run an annual programme in Singapore for a much smaller group of students which is taught by only 4 academics. Unfortunately, I don't attend this programme but I do organise the set up like the other summer school.

Internships - For our current students at St Anne's, we arrange internships across a variety of sectors and based in different countries. This is a great way to gain work experience, see if you like the industry, make useful connections, and sometimes gain experience of working in a different culture. All the internships we organise are paid and take place over the summer holidays for a period of between 3 – 12 weeks. They are based in London, Belgrade, Tokyo and New Delhi. We also offer a Year in Japan scheme, which is a chance for 6 final year undergraduates to spend 10 months fully paid learning Japanese and teaching English at a University on the southern island of Kyushu. For all these opportunities I liaise with the companies and oversee the student applications and interviews.

Undergraduate Admissions - I also take part in the undergraduate admissions cycle in December each year, which sees hundreds of potential undergraduate students interviewed in College over 2 weeks. I create interview timetables for different subjects and generally help things run smoothly.

Funding - College also offers funding for students who may be struggling financially to meet the costs of College and University life. We offer a large scholarship for Muslim students for the rest of

their time at University, and also funding for students who are doing scientific work in a laboratory over the summer and cannot afford their accommodation. There is also financial help for students who take language courses once they are at College. I oversee the advertising and application process of all these opportunities.

Replacement cards - Students often pop in to the office as they've lost their ID cards so I help them order new ones!



Transcripts - Alumni of the College sometimes need a certificate from the College to say that they were a student here and what grades they received. I am responsible for looking up these details in our archives (some people who ask were students here in the 1970s!) and writing their transcripts.

Committees - We have an International Committee meeting 3 times a year where we discuss the international activity of the College, and I am responsible for setting up the meeting, getting the papers ready and taking minutes during

the meeting.

Team meetings - The 10 of us who make up the Academic Office have a team meeting every Tuesday morning, where we discuss what we have been up to and if there are any issues that need raising.

Open Days - College has 3 open days per year which sees hundreds of potential undergraduate students visit to find out more about the subjects they are interested in, accommodation, food, etc. I tell students all about the internships on offer and am a cheery face for them to chat to!

Tours for international groups - We get groups of potential students visiting the College every couple of months, so I give them a tour and try my best to answer their questions!

Oh, and possibly the best part of working for a college - you get a free cooked lunch every day! Which partly makes up for the not so brilliant salary of an administrator.

Effects of coronavirus – College has had to shut basically, so send all students home who are able to do so. All lectures, seminars and tutorials next term will be remote, first year exams cancelled and final year exams will be done at home. All events and conferences are cancelled which will cost the College millions. Quite a few staff have been furloughed. Oh dear!

A Car Sales person

As Retail and Corporate Sales Executive for Mini, my role is to help individuals and companies buy brand new cars from the Mini range. My day typically starts at 8:30 - planning out my time and organising my jobs for the next 8 hours. First and foremost – Do I have any cars being delivered today? If so, I need to run through my list of pre delivery checks to ensure the cars have been safety checked, fuelled, cleaned and parked, ready for handover. I also need to make sure the financial arrangements have been made – How



is the customer paying? Have we arranged finance or lease agreements? Has an invoice been raised for them to pay the balance?

Selling the car is typically the easy bit for me, then the challenge is to ensure we have something for them to drive away in, on their delivery date. I respond to enquiries customers have sent, asking me to check colours, specifications and availability of cars. Others are asking for prices to part exchange cars or deals on buying lots of cars at once. As with everything in life, these questions range from simple 1-line responses to requests that may take several hours and lots of calls, emails and chasing to answer.



The common misconception with my role is that, as salespeople, we wait around for someone to walk onto the car lot, spend an hour selling them a car and then wait for the next person to roll in. The reality is, my job is about being proactive.

To be successful in a corporate position, I need to be in almost constant contact with anywhere between 100 and 200 potential customers at any one time. I sell anywhere between 10 and 50 cars a month, all of which need to be ordered, paid for, tracked, followed up, prepared and delivered, all while I try to sell another month's target. It can be stressful and challenging, but ultimately.... I love my job. I'm fortunate to work with some great people. On the whole sales people tend to be quite outgoing and lively; you need to be able to talk to anyone, at any time, regardless of how your day's going, so we're also a pretty positive group – most of the time.

Due to our targets, key performance indicators and our own egos, when a month is going badly, we all feel the pressure. But when it is going well, there are very few things that can compare to the feeling you get. Closing a sale is a rush, the feeling of accomplishment is fantastic, especially when it is the result of hard work, determination and knowing your product inside out.

The car industry is extremely competitive; like pretty much all sales roles, your customers have all the choice. They could choose from cheaper cars, faster cars, bigger cars, better marques and different options. It's down to me to understand what they need, what's important to them and find a solution that gives them all of that and sometimes things they didn't even tell me. People don't always trust sales people, which I can understand. They may have had bad experiences in the past, or heard horror stories of unscrupulous sales tactics, but ultimately, it's my job to help.

To succeed in sales roles, you need to be friendly and empathetic, good at asking questions and even better at listening to the answers. Listening skills are key to my job, sometimes it's not what people say, but how and when they say it that's important. You need to be tenacious, resilient and hardworking, maintaining a positive attitude when times are bad and support your team and colleagues. But the payoff can be amazing. I have a good basic salary and earn commission for every car I sell. I get a corporate discount scheme for Mini partners and best of all - I always drive a new car!

A Chef

A chef's life is always busy, varied and interesting, not one day is the same! It helps to plan your day by thinking about what you need to cook first and how long it's going to take. You need to have good timing skills, using a knife and know how to make food look and taste good. Tasting the food is very important!

You also need to make sure you prepare food safely and record details like temperatures, stock control and use ingredients when they are fresh.

Being a chef can be a fun way to experiment with different flavours and tastes and is a great way to be part of a team who all get along and have fun!

I trained at college and also did an apprenticeship to gain my qualifications and have worked in numerous different places from restaurants and conference centres to boarding schools. It's good to get lots of experience from different places. Try and eat out, trying new food if you can!



I start at 7am and could be cooking a full English breakfast for 65 children or sometimes a selection of Danish pastries, pain au chocolate and homemade fruit smoothie. Lunch is at 1pm and can be all kinds of dishes from lasagne, Italian salad, garlic bread or chicken fajitas with roasted peppers and onions, cheese, guacamole and sour cream. Sundays are roast dinners with all the trimmings! We make puddings too and afternoon tea which can be cookies, eclairs, homemade sausage rolls. Then suppers are pizza or make your own Caesar salad, burgers and fries etc. My day finishes at 730 pm but I go home for a while in the afternoon. Sometimes I work weekends too but I only work 80 hours over 2 weeks!

A Fitness Instructor

I have recently started my career in the fitness industry and currently work as a Group Exercise Instructor on a self-employed, part time basis. For those in the industry who are employed by a gym or leisure centre, the job mainly involves planning a safe and effective exercise class and delivering the class to a group of customers. Most employed Group Exercise Instructors also have a gym instructor / customer service role in gyms and leisure centres, dealing with membership queries, inductions, exercise programme plans etc. Being self-employed, I have chosen to focus on delivering exercise classes that I am passionate about and enjoy. I deliver these at venues I have hired, as well as at local leisure centres / gyms when they have needed classes covering – this has been a great way for me to gain experience, build confidence and become familiar with the process of invoicing a company for my work. I am hoping to secure weekly classes at local leisure centres / gyms as this is guaranteed income.

I have had to quickly develop my IT and marketing skills in order to promote my own class. I have learnt how to design my own logo, create posters and leaflets and my own Facebook page. Marketing is an ongoing job and takes up quite a lot of my own time, in addition to planning the classes. Fortunately, I enjoy this work.



Communication skills are vital when working in the fitness industry – it is important to be able to make the customer feel at ease, able to ask questions and trust that you can help them to achieve their fitness goals. Exercise instructions must be clear and easy for customers to understand and follow. It is also important to have empathy for customers – many attending fitness classes lack confidence and need a lot of reassurance. You also need to be organised and motivated in order to find the work at local gyms/ leisure centres or to get the customers through the door at your own venue, as well as planning your own timetable. You also need to be fairly confident speaking in front of groups of people, but this is something that can come with experience.

There are a wide variety of fitness courses available at different learning providers. In order to deliver classes, you need a suitable level 2 qualification (Exercise to Music and/ or Gym Instructor) and ideally an additional qualification in the class that you deliver such as Kettlebells, HIIT or Circuits. You will also need an up to date First Aid Certificate. There can be a lot of competition in the fitness industry so the more qualifications you have the more likely you will find employment. Most of these qualifications are not funded so you would need to consider how you will pay for them. I used an Adult Learning Loan to pay for my qualifications. Some leisure centres and gyms may pay for these qualifications if you are an employee.



Another financial aspect to consider (particularly if you are self-employed) is the cost of Public Liability Insurance, venue hire, marketing materials and music licence or licence free music. It is also a good idea to become a member of the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs), which is a requirement at most gyms and leisure centres – this comes at an annual fee. To maintain your membership, you must attend additional training courses of your choice to keep your knowledge up to date. These courses also come at a cost.

So far it has taken a lot of hard work to find opportunities to gain experience and earn money but I am at the beginning of my career and am feeling positive about future opportunities now that I have more experience, confidence and additional specialist qualifications. I have loved delivering my classes so far – it has been really rewarding having regular customers who have reported that their fitness levels are improving. It has also given me the time and opportunity to work on my own!