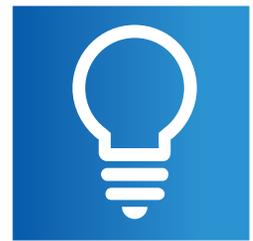
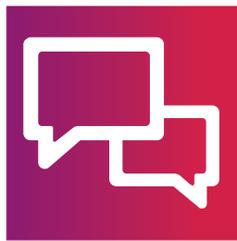


CASE STUDY: CONNECT CAREERS



Profile: Rebecca Wallace
Part-time Banking & Savings Adviser
Belfast Contact Centre

“From part-time hours to fit around my studies, to supporting me now that I have two young children, Connect has always been flexible in the working patterns it offers.”

Some people build their lives around their careers, but if you want a career that fits around your life, Connect is the ideal way to go, according to Rebecca Wallace. Since she first arrived from Australia in 2005, her life has transformed – and her working patterns have adapted to match.

Earning while studying

“Initially I applied for a part-time role at LBG because I was studying Massage Therapy and wanted a job that fitted around my studies. The bank were very open to discussion and I started out working 9am to 2pm Monday to Saturday in the Belfast Contact Centre. It suited me down to the ground.”

After she qualified as a massage therapist, Rebecca wanted to build her own business “but I didn’t want to lose the security of working for the bank, so I asked for a change in hours,” she says. “I worked on the phones three days a week, although I also came into the building at other times to offer desk massages!”



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Full-time challenge

After about 18 months, Rebecca was invited to apply for the in-house recruitment team. “I was so excited to get the role that I decided to prioritise building a career with the bank and went full-time for the next four years. It was still very flexible. For example, if you wanted to attend an outside appointment you could work back the time as and when required. I absolutely loved that job but, when our recruitment operation was outsourced as part of the LBG restructure in 2011, I went back on the phones.”

Childcare commitments

By now she was married with a young child: “I was worried about how I was going to balance my childcare with the requirements of the contact centre role, especially as I was working on a shift pattern known as Flextra, where hours vary week to week. When you’re trying to arrange childcare, you need to have more regular hours, so I approached my manager and we sorted it out. If you have a genuine need and you can find a way to fit in with business requirements, LBG are always willing to support you.”

In 2013, Rebecca had her second child. “I came back to work with new requirements about my work-life balance and there was another discussion about my shift patterns. LBG were happy to accommodate me. I now work every Wednesday and Friday, alternate Saturdays and alternate Monday evenings. It’s a working pattern negotiated to suit my unique situation.”

“I’m a prime example of how LBG’s flexibility helps to retain experienced people. I do sometimes think to myself: ‘So what do I want to be when I grow up’! But my job really suits me,” she says. “You don’t have to take your work home with you. And when you’re a parent to two young children, that’s a real bonus.”

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A rewarding role

Does that mean it lacks challenges? “Not at all. It’s a job that really keeps you on your toes. Every time that little beep comes in my ear, I have to be ready for anything. It could be a simple request for a transfer of funds or it might be an elderly person who’s been the victim of fraud. You have to have those human skills and a desire to help, but you also have to be on top of the financial side. It’s also a regulated environment, so professionalism is key. The level of responsibility is really quite high and there’s rarely a day when I don’t learn something new.”

Rebecca’s family is her main priority at the moment, but what about the future?

“While I’m working on the phones, there are plenty of opportunities to develop new skills with wider applications in the business – for example in team management or analytics. In the future, I could look at a role in risk, or fraud, or call monitoring.”

What would she say to someone considering a role with Connect? “You need a passion for customer service as we’re measured on the quality of customer experience we offer. It can be challenging, but it’s very rewarding. If you put in the effort you can really build a career out of this role. And if you prove your worth to the company, you’ll always be able to negotiate a way of working that suits your other commitments.”