
LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

By Susan Manti, HR Director, Deutsche Bank, Offshore Group

Graduation. An exciting time..... sometimes a stressful time. Certainly a time for choices and decisions to be made which will impact the direction of your career.

Some graduates will know exactly what they want to do after graduation and have already chosen their future career path. Other graduates will still be thinking through a number of alternatives and options.

For all graduates, however, the prospect of entering the working world can be daunting. In order to make the transition from student to employee as painless as possible, it pays to think through very carefully what you want from a job – not just in the short term but in the long term. Try and visualise, for example, where you would like to be in five years time in terms of your career goals and aspirations and then plan how you are going to get there.

Be honest with yourself regarding your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes and take these into account when deciding upon both your preferred career path and the type of organisation you wish to join.

Choosing the organisation that is right for you

A local company or an international player? Small or large? What opportunities will there be for travel? Will you get to meet and network with other graduates and professionals? In selecting the organisation that is right for you, there are a number of other things which are also worth considering:

- Does the organisation have a graduate training program? Is there a structured career development framework in place for graduates?
- What is the organisation's policy on further education? Are employees actively encouraged to undertake professional study and what support is provided to them? You should be looking for employers who offer full financial support and study leave and who promote a culture of recognising and rewarding success.
- What is the organisation's attitude towards continuous learning and development? Are employees encouraged to participate in learning events which enhance their skills and career development?
- What is the organisation's policy and philosophy towards equal opportunities and diversity? Remember that it is not just a question of joining an organisation in your chosen field of activity but it is also important to work for an organisation where you are comfortable with the culture and ethics.

Look for opportunities to test the water

Some organisations offer summer intern programs which give students the chance to experience first hand what it is like to work in a particular industry or organisation. Be careful, though, that you only accept summer placements which offer real and meaningful work rather than just being treated as an extra pair of hands to help with low level tasks. At Deutsche Bank, for example, our summer intern program gives students the opportunity to gain a full introduction to our organisation and the opportunities we can offer to graduates. We insist that business areas wishing to take on summer students provide them with properly mentored assignments which give value to the students as well as to the bank.

Finally, talk to as many different organisations as possible and find out as much as you can before making any decisions. And remember that interviews are a two way process – they are just as much about you interviewing your future employer as your future employer interviewing you. Good luck!

Ends.

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Evening Post Careers feature April 2006

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Notes for Editors

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