

LEARNED



"If you are determined but flexible you will get to where you want to be in the end"

Marketing specialist and senior consultant with Recruiters, *Louise O'Reilly* knows that key communication skills, positivity and confidence are what it takes to succeed in work and life.

COMMUNICATING AND DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS IS SO IMPORTANT. I keep in really good contact with my clients and candidates. It's just so important to maintain the relationship and hopefully that will yield long-term value on both sides. In five years' time, you know that they will come back and say that they remember working with you and that it was a positive experience. And hopefully they will want to do it again.

I SOAK UP INFORMATION LIKE A SPONGE FROM INDIVIDUALS I WORK WITH. Hopefully it is reciprocal. In return, I would assist and do absolutely everything I possibly can to help people move on in their careers and they appreciate that so hopefully they don't mind that I am secretly sucking mentorship from them. If I can learn a fraction of their knowledge and ambition then I'm really lucky.

I HAVE A FANTASTIC MENTOR who I report to directly, one of our directors, and she has one of the most inherently positive attitudes I've ever come across – both in work and life. She's really pragmatic and objective with an amazing ability to think on her feet and ensure that everybody around her – such as clients, candidates and colleagues – feel reassured, comfortable and confident that everything is in hand all the time. She taught me not to sweat the small stuff and to take regular holidays and treat myself regularly.

GO ABOVE AND BEYOND YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION. Employers want to know that you're the type of individual who goes above and beyond your position. And that in your life, generally, your approach is to look around you and see what you can contribute, within reason. Roles are defined. You hire an individual for a certain position and there's a certain remit associated. But employers want to know that you are the kind of individual who will go above and beyond.

BE FLEXIBLE, ADAPTABLE AND OPEN. It is good to have a five-year or two-year plan but you should be willing to be flexible along the way. It's important to go with the flow and trust that if you're determined but flexible you will get to where you want to be in the end.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS PEOPLE CONTINUE LEARNING. One of the only reasons someone would want to move at a senior level when they're enjoying their job is if they want to learn more and they have reached the top of the game where they currently are. Success is that constant desire to learn more.

PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEWS IS SO IMPORTANT. You need to prepare anecdotal examples of your strengths and edit them down, hone them and develop them to be concise, hard-hitting gems of information for interviews. You can't assume that you can go in and just discuss what you have done. You need to prepare the examples. They need to be honed and honed and honed, edited and edited and edited, so you're left with this really punchy, strong, undeniably brilliant gem.

LEAVE ALL HUMILITY AND MODESTY AT THE DOOR OF AN INTERVIEW. If you're not going to be boastful and communicate your great strengths at interviews then when else are you going to do it? It's a closed door situation and you should sell yourself.

TAKING TIME OUT TO TREAT YOURSELF WILL MAKE YOU HAPPIER AT WORK. I make as many plans and take as many holidays as possible. I was in Sweden last week and London last month and I've a couple of big trips in the pipeline for November and February. 'Work to live' is ringing around in my head constantly. You want to earn money so you can have a comfortable life. You want to work so you can feel satisfied. Taking time off grounds you, helps you to reboot and allows for objectivity. You'll be more effective with that balance. ■

In conversation with Kathleen Osborne.

LOUISE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT...

My headphones. I'm at a complete loss without them and I hate forgetting them. I love to get away from my desk at lunchtime most days; I will put in my headphones and tune out with a playlist or listen to the radio or a good podcast. I'll stroll around Merrion Square or walk up to Grafton Street or down to the canal and reboot with the music. I enjoy being at one with nature but the sirens and the seagulls don't allow that escape as well as a carefully chosen tune or two.

