

A Day in the Life...

Corporate Affairs at Amerada Hess

Jenny Costelloe is 26 and works for Amerada Hess in Corporate Affairs, she always knew she wanted to work in management but was unsure of which area.

Excelling in Sciences at school in Northern Ireland, she gained good grades in her GCSEs and went on to study for 3 A-levels: Maths, Physics and Chemistry.



Enjoying studying Physics Jenny decided to go into further study choosing to go to Bath University where she could undertake a Natural Sciences degree. As the course was module based it allowed Jenny to undertake study of Physics and other science modules as well as management modules.

In third year at University Jenny opted to undertake a work placement year. She believes this enabled her to gain valuable work experience, helped to make decisions about the future and confirmed her aspirations of a career in management.

Securing a placement with BP Jenny joined the Health and Safety Team working in a Public Relations role on management projects. Enjoying working in an office environment Jenny now knew she wanted to work in a science-based industry, her background helped in understanding technical aspects of the

oil and gas industry.

Additional benefits of the work placement were earning a good salary for 14 months and attending training courses developing presentation and IT skills.

Returning to Bath, Jenny graduated with a 2:1 in Natural Sciences. Recognising career break opportunities are few, Jenny decided to travel before pursuing a career. After this she felt she was better prepared for the world of work.

Last year, after settling in London, Jenny registered with an Employment Agency. Outlining her background, work experience and what she wanted to do, she was assigned to a temporary position with Amerada Hess. Recognising that she fitted in with the team and that she had performed well in the role, a permanent position with greater responsibility was offered.

Following discussions with managers Jenny chose not to embark upon the graduate training programme Amerada Hess manage as she wanted to shape her career away from a technical role into a more interactive communications focused role. In only one year Jenny has progressed from cataloguing photographs as a temp to a position with much more responsibility within the Corporate Affairs Department. She is ambitious to progress in her career.

Jenny is about to commence a three-year part time study programme for a Masters Degree relating to Corporate Affairs. She has also completed a 2-day induction to the oil and gas industry, training in Internet writing and writing press releases. "Any personal development we undertake benefits the team." Staff are encouraged to undertake



training related to their role, in some cases the company supports personal development courses not directly related to work.

On a typical day Jenny starts work between 8:30 and 9:30 – living in London, depending upon public transport means that arrival times are varied! (The company is sympathetic to this issue).

With up to four meetings in her diary each day Jenny has a varied workload and has to manage her own time. “I have a personal principle where I have my tasks for each day and I do not leave before the days work is complete”. Jenny’s role covers the following areas:

- *Responsibility for all Charity and Sponsorship activities – this involves the allocation of company resources and donations to certain causes.*
- *Organisation and co-ordination of Public Relations Events and Hospitality.*
- *Organising company events for the London office - for example the Christmas Party, Summer Concerts and Carol Services.*
- *Developing Company Advertising – Jenny has to ensure that the right content, image and branding is delivered on behalf of the company.*
- *Writing and maintaining articles on the company Internet and Intranet.*

Most days Jenny leaves the office between 5:00 and 6:00 but likes to go to the company gym for a workout before going home.

When asked about the good and bad points of her job Jenny comments, “I love my job and it is great experience. I get to meet lots of people and it is a high profile job. However it does have its down side where if things go wrong I’m in the firing line - but that’s all part of the responsibility of the job.” Jenny may get a request to organise an event for 150 people on a set budget - she points out that there are no guidelines for getting it right!

Important skills for Jenny’s job are: the ability to communicate and to relate with a range of people - Corporate Affairs has an interface on all levels inside and outside the organisation; time management coupled with self motivation; teamwork skills are necessary working in a small department and the demands of Corporate Affairs also means creativity is key. Although Jenny thinks she has always had a measure of these skills she says they have been further developed in her role. As with all offices a major element of work is on a computer so practical IT skills are required and training can be given.

Jenny is happy working for Amerada Hess and definitely wants to stay in the oil and gas industry. The fluctuations of the industry do not worry her, pointing out “most people know that there is not a job for life any more - if you move on for development reasons, want to move to a new area or are made redundant, you did not expect to be in the same job for life anyway.” Compared to many of her friends Jenny says the packages offered by oil and gas companies are better than those offered by other industries.

In addition Jenny believes the diversity of opportunities offered within the industry are great. She explains, you do not have to stay in one role – starting off as a Geologist and you can continue doing that and become an expert or move into management. There are also opportunities to travel. “If you know where you want to go and what you want to do the opportunities are there.”

