Thursday 9 February: Careers in Market Research

SPEAKER PROFILES

Lucy Oates
Research Director, Narrative Health

Lucy works for Narrative Health, a start-up healthcare market research agency. She really enjoys working for lots of different clients, researching different disease areas, which means the work is varied and interesting, but high pressured. She has travelled to lots of places with work: all over Europe, the US (incl. a weekend in Las Vegas), Canada, South America...and also had the opportunity to work out of the US for a year! However, being at the mercy of the client’s demands and changing timelines can lead to some very long days. Her degree in Psychology prepared her well for her career, giving her the analytical skills she needed to question and interrogate findings and get “beneath the surface” of the obvious responses. It also gave her a grounding in both qualitative and quantitative research skills, as well as experience in interviewing others, which is now a key part of her day-to-day role.

A piece of advice: “Think carefully about which sector you are truly interested in: healthcare, media, FMCG? Each has its own quirks and needs and once established in one it can be hard to move to another. Think about whether an industry or agency role is a better fit for you. Do you like to know a lot about a few things in detail? Then industry may suit you. Or do you prefer to be more “hands on” and enjoy variety? Then the agency side may be better for you. There are pros and cons to both.”

BSc Psychology, Royal Holloway, 2008

Melissa Jones
Senior Research Executive, Cello Health Insight

Melissa works with clients across the healthcare & pharmaceutical sectors and describes her role as “interesting but challenging”. Meeting tight deadlines and juggling ad-hoc tasks alongside her normal workload can be a challenge, but she enjoys the variety of disease areas and treatments that she works on at any one time. Looking back at her time at Royal Holloway, she says that her geography degree, and particularly her dissertation, gave her the experience in research project structure and methodologies, for a role in Market Research.

A piece of advice: “Be prepared to work in a fast-paced environment, where proactive project management is key and you are always learning."

BSc Geography, Royal Holloway, 2013
Danielle Finch

Research Executive, MMR Research Worldwide

In her role at MMR Research Worldwide, Danielle provides market research into Fast Moving Consumer Goods, focusing on food and beverages. She enjoys working on new projects every week and gaining an insight into new products (especially food and drink!). She also gets to work on projects from the initial set up through to completion which she finds very rewarding. There is a lot of deadline driven work, so making sure you can manage your time is really important. Danielle says that her time at university really helped with her to develop her time management skills. Similarly, as Geography has a research element, she was familiar with a lot of the concepts before starting at MMR.

A piece of advice: “It’s important to have a real interest in what you are researching as it makes you feel more engaged with the insights you are aiming to provide, so try to find something that really engages you.”

BSc Geography, Royal Holloway, 2015

Jake Hodgson

Discovery Insight Executive, MEC

Jake began as one of MEC Global Solutions’ first set of graduates in August 2015. He was then offered a role in the Discovery team as an Insight Executive, following the end of the graduate rotation process. He describes his work as “fun, varied and testing”. He particularly likes the variation in jobs on a daily basis: “No two days are the same; client demands and new campaigns keep the working week feeling fresh and you never know what the week may hold for you when you go in on a Monday morning (99% of the time in a good way!)”. The most difficult part can be juggling 80 different markets across the world if the client is requesting uniformed information across 40 or 50 different countries with a tight deadline, then unifying all the information into a strategic insight for the client.

A piece of advice: “Try and gain some work experience, just to test the water and confirm it is the right industry for you. Then there is no better way to get involved than through a graduate scheme. Enough persistence and you will break onto one!”

BSc Geography, Newcastle University, 2015