

The Big Interview With Kelly Hector

Head of HR, Churchill Retirement Group



The HR Heads Career Profile Series...

We speak with HR professionals within our network to find out what 'a typical day in the office' looks like, what they consider their greatest career success to be, what advice they'd give their 20 year old self and we also explore some of their favourite things.

Churchill Retirement PLC



“ I joined the team in July 2015 and in 2017 we received 13th place in The Times Top 100. We received 3-star accreditation for employee engagement - which is the highest you can get! There's still lots of work to do but it just shows that we are a really great company. ”

1. What does your typical day look like?

I like waking up early and getting to the office with plenty of time to gather my thoughts and plan for the day ahead. As many HR professionals would testify - there is no such thing as a typical day! My role as Head of Human Resources is very broad, one moment I will be talking to the PLC board about the commercially linked people strategy, the next I could be coaching a senior manager about having a difficult conversation with a member of their team. Whilst I am based from our head office, I do try to get out and about visiting our regional offices and site based colleagues. I really enjoy catching up with our Sales Executives for a coffee or putting my hard hat and rigger boots on to meet colleagues on our construction sites. I find this part of my role very rewarding!

With a team of 10 HR and training professionals reporting to me, I always try to be supportive while allowing them the freedom to operate. I enjoy coaching the team and seeing them develop and find best solutions. I like to understand what motivates each of the HR team and what their career aspirations are. Wherever possible I aim to focus their development so that they can achieve their own personal goals whilst meeting the Company requirements. I'm lucky enough to take part in various industry leading forums - and it's exciting to feel that you have the opportunity to shape the HR agenda at a broader industry level! Meeting my fellow HR leaders on a regular basis is beneficial, we share best practices and find solutions to potential challenges facing the industry.

2. What do you both love and find frustrating in your role?

What I really love is being able to make a difference, and make a positive contribution to a company. People are at the heart of any company and they are the ones that will make it a success. I love the fact I can put forward initiatives and work alongside the Board of Directors. The ability to make change happen is very important to me.

I don't really have a frustrating part of my role. That being said, ER cases are not my favourite part of the role, but it is part of every HR job. I try to look at the positives within any ER situation and to try and set it on a better course for everybody concerned.

THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR HEAD OF HR, ACCORDING TO KELLY

1. To be a solid Head of HR you need to get to grips with the commerciality of the business and understand how the business 'ticks'
2. Be people focused
3. Don't be afraid to ask questions as it's the only way you will understand
4. Self-analyse and have the ability to understand how you can evolve and change to each scenario you are faced with

3. What is your proudest career moment?

I have two! I was awarded a national award for coaching and mentoring individuals that were unemployed. The aim was to encourage and support them back into work quickly and give individuals the tools and understanding of themselves so that they can move forward. This sometimes led to a change in career direction. I found this incredibly rewarding, and then I received a national award for it – it was very overwhelming as I was nominated by those who I had the pleasure to coach.

The second highlight came this year when Churchill Retirement Living came 13th in the Times Top 100 Best Companies to work for. It was a fantastic accolade to a great business and it was wonderful to be at the awards with 30 Colleagues celebrating the Companies success. This was a definite stand out moment for me...13th was lucky for some!



4. What lies ahead for the next 12 months?

A big topic of conversation at the moment is our company values, making sure they have been designed and delivered effectively and most importantly - that they embed in our culture.

As an HR team we're looking at improving our induction process to ensure new colleagues have the right induction into the company so they are set up for success from day one. Alongside that, it's making sure people have development opportunities and continually focus on performance.

In the last 12 months' we have designed something called 'The Manager's Essential Programme'. It takes the employee life cycle and breaks it down by modules with the aim to fully support our Managers in their role, and in turn their teams. This has been designed and delivered in house. We will be continuing to focus on attracting and retaining talented people who can contribute to the Companies success for years to come.

5. What advice would you give your 20 year old self?

I would say: follow your aspirations. **Make a plan and stick to it.** Sometimes you will find that there will be bumps in the road – but that's OK as you can learn from them. Keep your passion and stop worrying!

If you would like to be involved in 'The Big Interview' please get in touch with us, we'd love to hear from you:

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FAVOURITES

Book of Choice

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China - anything by the author Jung Chang!

Dream Destination

America has a place in my heart, it's a childhood destination. I love Spain and Menorca, and now I am older I can appreciate it more.

No.1 Cuisine

Anything and Everything – I really love cooking.

Favourite Memory

My brother being born. He's much younger than me and I can remember when my mum bought him home from the hospital. I am really lucky that we have a really close bond.

