

A secondment at Shell - the vital facts



Rule 1

Know your contract law

The majority of the work you will do on a day to day basis is contract based.

Rule 2

Know Shell

This organisation is VAST and the number of businesses is overwhelming. It really helps you to find your feet more quickly if you take some time to look at the website and do some background reading.

Rule 3

Confidence is key

Secondees at Shell play a very hands on role and you will find yourself dealing directly with clients (Shell businesses) on a day to day basis. Your clients want to feel reassured and confident in you so you need to feel confident in your own abilities.

Rule 4

Be prepared to deal with all sorts of clients

Shell has businesses at a local and global level so adapting your style accordingly is a must.

Rule 5

Adapt to life on the inside

Things work differently in-house to private practice and it can be difficult to adapt to the less structured, more independent working environment at Shell and the pressure that comes with knowing that you don't have quite the same 'safety net' in place as you would at the firm. The key to overcoming this is careful management of your workload to ensure that you do not take on more than you can deal with and constant chasing up to ensure that things which need to be checked are properly checked.

Rule 6

Dress down Friday

Shell operates a dress down policy on Fridays – this includes denim, very handy if you're heading straight out after work.

Rule 7

Beware the "Shell Stone"

The Shell Canteen is enormous and includes a variety of hot dishes, a salad bar and deli for fresh sandwiches and wraps, all of which is subsidised. But if you really can't resist a second helping then simply pay special attention to Rule 8.

Rule 8

Make the most of the sporting facilities

The basement of the tower building contains a fantastic 25m swimming pool, gym and squash courts. In addition, there will be some sort of team sport being played everyday at lunch time in the sports hall. There really is no excuse for not doing some form of exercise on a regular basis whilst at Shell, except that is, for the fact that the basement is a labyrinth and it could take you most of your lunch break to find said facilities – go with someone who knows the first few times.

Rule 9

Be proactive on the social front

In an organisation the size of Shell new recruits seem to be absorbed and left to their own devices in terms of meeting other Shell people. You will get a tour and round of introductions from the KF trainee handing over the reins but in terms of working out who new secondees are joining at the same time as you, it's a matter of keeping your ear to the ground.

Rule 10

Be out by 7pm

– if you're not, the security guards will throw you out!

by Charlotte Bunn

Recently qualified

and Nathan Hull

Recently qualified



"A Night at the Races" for clients, contacts, and the odd university friend masquerading as a potential client. The night was held at Ortega, Leadenhall Market's Spanish tapas bar, rather symbolically located adjacent to Lloyd's of London.

Why?

The ethos behind the event was to allow more junior members of the firm the opportunity to network and market the firm to their contemporaries. KF believes that its trainees should be active in marketing the firm and cementing relationships with contacts and clients from as early as possible. The bonus of this approach, from a trainee's perspective, is that you quickly learn to feel at ease with clients both socially and professionally, get to understand a client's business through a better relationship, and build a foundation for developing clients of your own at a later stage of your career.

Loads of money

For betting purposes, retro races circa 1973 were screened and, to encourage a flutter, attendees were provided with £1,000 of 'monopoly money'. It was encouraging to see a wide variety of betting tactics. It was never established whether it was best to choose your horse by the colour of its jockey's jersey, the obscurity of its name, or buddying up to the KF print room who had printed the race cards. Rumour has it that young stallion Kyle Sanderson, and bucking mare Victoria Rodley, both trainees, were out of pocket by the second race, having hoped to win big by placing all their money on "Tracey's Rocket", inspired by the jockey's dashing moustache.

Certain contestants, mainly those with an actuarial or accounting background, managed to amass funds of nearly £30,000 from the initial £1,000. Even gossip of horse doping and bribery could not dampen spirits as the rather large bottles of champagne dolled out to the three lucky winners ensured a glitzy ending to the evening and the clinking of glasses soon put an end to any unsportsmanlike sentiment.

by Jamie Humphreys
2nd year trainee