

MRA
SEARCH

ROUTEMASTER
LONDON'S BUS OF THE FUTURE



IT'S YOUR CAREER

WE CAN TAKE YOU THERE

INTRODUCING MRA SEARCH, foreward by Paul Roxburgh

The MRA journey began in a serviced office for two people in 2009. The founders had all been partners in successful international legal recruitment firms and shared a vision of how to build a business with a difference.

Our company now has 40 consultants in London, Hong Kong and Milan. We have evolved in many ways and will continue to do so in the years to come. Our founding principles and beliefs however, remain as they were on the day we launched.

Recruitment is a tough industry and search firms are highly competitive institutions. If you are considering a career in the profession you will already be well briefed on the necessity of a ferocious work ethic, tenacity and resilience. You will be excited by the meritocratic nature of the reward system and the speed with which potentially high rewards are on offer.

All of the above is true at MRA. Fierce resolve, fortitude and a competitive nature are characteristics we look for. Such attributes will serve you well as a recruiter but are not enough to build a truly collaborative and collegiate company. You rarely hear words such as humility, thoughtfulness and generosity used in the context of recruitment, but they have been essential to our success. A commitment to learn, a commitment to teach and a growth mindset that accepts mistakes as an essential part of development are also part of our DNA.

So what should you expect if you join us? An environment that values character and determination. That encourages continual improvement, that expects you to aim for the highest possible standards and for you to keep raising them. Our culture is both extremely demanding and supportive. All we ask from you is your commitment and your willingness to listen and learn. You will be given time and encouragement to grow and develop and you will benefit from a leadership group that prioritises the collective over the individual. During 2020, MRA did not make a single redundancy or furlough a single member of staff. The whole company rallied around each other, worked extraordinarily hard and perfectly demonstrated the virtues of self-sacrifice and commitment to the greater good that we believe in. I challenge our competitors to be able to say the same.

One of the key founding principles at MRA was that it would be an employee owned business. There are now 13 shareholders in the company and there remain no barriers to entry. Our first graduate hire is now a shareholder and helps to drive our strategy and growth. Unlike many other recruitment firms you will speak with, the ultimate goal of MRA's leaders is not to sell the company and enrich only themselves. We believe everyone should have the opportunity to lead and share in the rewards of this business. The company will continue to empower its most important asset – its people – by giving them a stake in its future. Our journey began 11 years ago. It is far from finished. If you believe you have the personal attributes and the commitment to succeed that we are looking for, this opportunity remains open to you.

My personal journey with MRA will end in due course. At that point I will have handed my share in the company down to those who have joined me in helping it become such a unique and special place. I hope that in time they will follow the same path and the business will continue to thrive with the same ethos that existed on the day it launched.

This guide is a small snapshot of MRA. I hope having read it, you would like to meet us. If you would and you feel you have the character and desire to succeed here, I very much look forward to hearing from you.

WHAT WE DO

MRA is a high-end international legal search business. Launched in 2009, we are committed to providing a reliable, professional, and quality service, and we have built an outstanding track record of success to back this up. We have a highly knowledgeable team working with clients across the globe to build their teams at all levels; from newly qualified associates to senior and managing partners, legal counsels, heads of legal, global general counsel and risk and compliance professionals. It is our aim to add value for clients and candidates at every stage of every process. We are committed to offering quality in everything we do.



LAW FIRMS

“ Our team has some of the most stellar connections in the legal sector. We have worked with so many of our law firm clients for many years and built-up solid relationships which we are particularly proud of. We help our clients build their teams at all levels from newly qualified associates all the way up to partners and senior and managing partners. ”

WARREN LEFTON



IN-HOUSE

“ As an in-house team we work with leading corporates and financial services businesses to grow their own legal and compliance teams across the world. We have extensive experience of building large in-house teams for clients, hiring lawyers and compliance professionals at all levels from newly qualified and junior legal counsel to heads of legal, general counsel, legal directors and heads of risk and compliance. ”

ELLIE PRICE



ASIA

“ From our office in Hong Kong we are able to work with law firms and corporates across Asia. Our consultants have worked in this market for many years and have a unique understanding of the way it operates; they have local knowledge and local language skills to sit alongside our international capabilities. ”

SHALINA DASWANI



INTERNATIONAL

“ We work with our clients throughout the world and have moved hundreds of lawyers around the globe over the years. We have teams that focus on Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Australia and offshore. MRA is a truly international business and offer all its consultants the chance to work outside the UK. ”

MATT HALL-TURNER

OUR GRADUATE PROGRAMME



Our graduate programme runs for 12 months. During this time, you will have the chance to work with each of our teams on a rotational basis. You will gain exposure to different clients and markets and gain a complete 360 degree understanding of the candidate recruitment process. In addition, because of the international nature of our work, you will also have high interaction with our overseas offices, particularly when on rotation with our international search teams. You will talk with clients and candidates from all over the world and across different time zones. This can also bring with it the opportunity for overseas travel between offices.

Our training is conducted by our own internal recruitment experts. They are some of the very best in the sector and collectively have decades of experience for you to learn from.

During your training, we will take the time to get to know you and your strengths, so that at the end, we can work together to place you into the team that is right for you. You will become a key player in the MRA Search family.

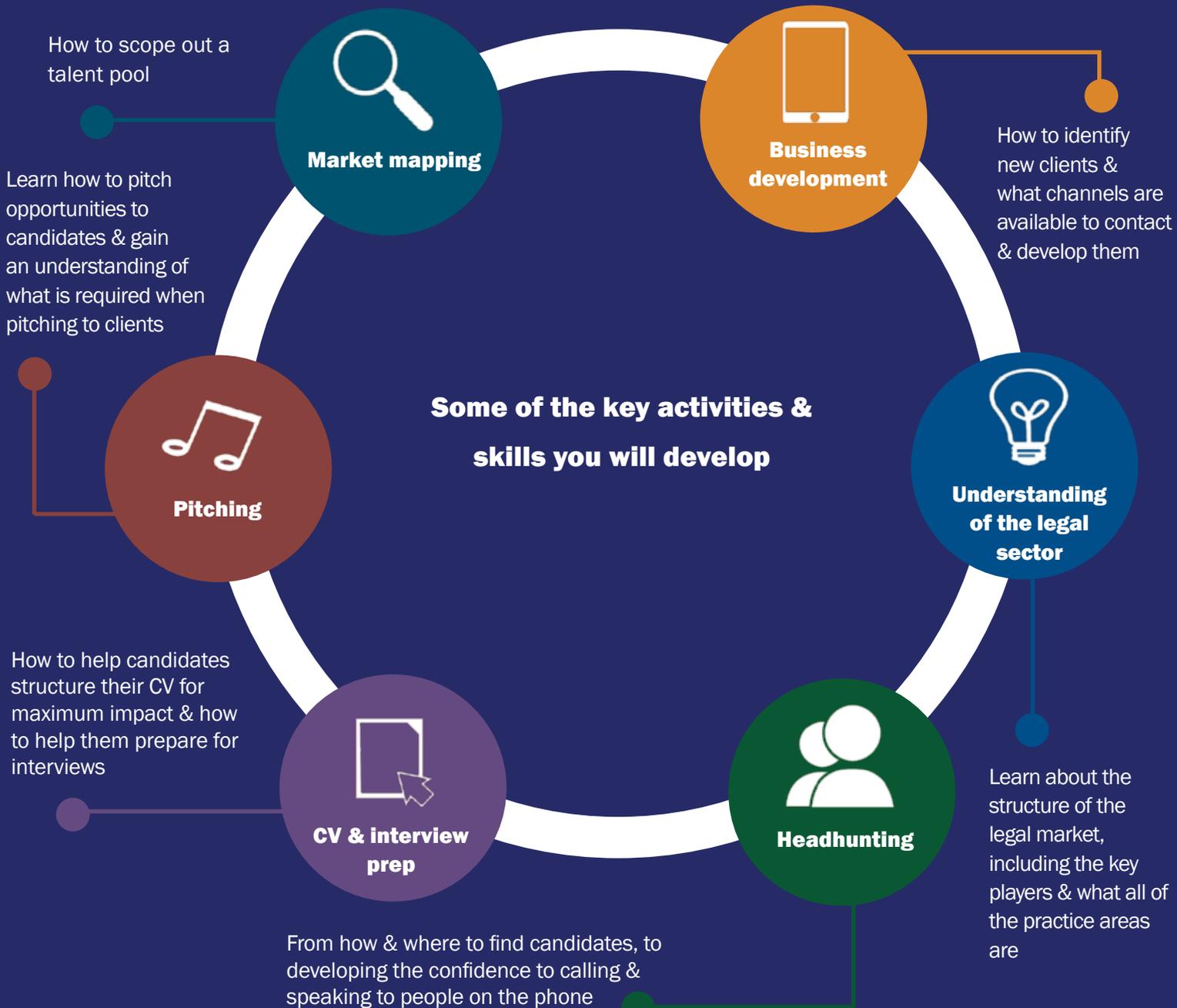


AMANDA SIMPSON

Private practice - UK firms
Graduate 2019

“ What really stands out about MRA is the culture, which has been evident throughout my time here. MRA provides for a supportive and friendly environment, where those who are driven and ambitious can build a long-standing and successful career in recruitment. It is a truly rewarding place to work. ”

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN



A photograph of three young women with blonde hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. They are in an office or meeting environment. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent yellow border and a dark blue text box.

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**THE SUPPORT I RECEIVE
EVERYDAY FROM
COLLEAGUES IS SECOND
TO NONE - MRA IS A
TRULY COLLABORATIVE
ENVIRONMENT TO GROW MY
CAREER. ”**

ROSIE SIBERY

Private practice - US law firms, London

WHY CHOOSE MRA SEARCH

At MRA we offer a well-rounded and unique working experience. This is not just for graduates, but for all our employees, no matter what point in their career they join us.

We believe we have built an environment that looks after your professional development but also you as a human being. We aim to be a fun and inclusive workplace that genuinely celebrates success and rewards everyone. This is why we are able to boast such high retention rates in comparison to our competitors. We are wholly owned by our employees and some of our previous graduates are already shareholders in the company.

“ MRA Search has provided me with the perfect platform to begin my career in recruitment. The collaborative and social atmosphere, alongside excellent training and support, has given me the confidence and drive to produce results. ”

ALICE HOWARD,
Private practice, Germany, Graduate 2019

EVERYONE

is rewarded for their own hard work and success

TRANSPARENT COMMISSION STRUCTURE



NO

hierarchy. Everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the shape of the business



REGULAR TEAM AND WHOLE COMPANY EVENTS

EARLY FRIDAY FINISHES

with drinks in the office



WE ARE AN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

with overseas offices, offering opportunities for consultants to visit and work

LONDON | MILAN | HONG KONG

75%

OF THE GRADUATES WE HAVE HIRED IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS REMAIN WITH THE COMPANY

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF



DEBORAH FRANCHINI

Private practice - Italy

Graduate 2019

The one thing that our graduates agree on is, in recruitment, every day is different. The job can very often be unpredictable, but it is none the less, always exciting! Here one of our recent graduates, Deborah Franchini, outlines how a typical day would generally pan out.

8.30am: *My day usually begins with going through my emails and checking through my LinkedIn applications and messages. I'll spend some time looking through the CVs I have received and checking through what interviews my candidates have coming up. I'll make a general to do list as well as a list of candidates I need to chase up or organise interview prep calls.*

Mid-morning: *We might have a team meeting where we all discuss our live processes and often make predictions around where our next placement might be. We will discuss and outline top candidates we are working with, in order to share information on the current active talent in the market. We might also share marketing ideas and discuss how we might target certain candidates.*

Lunchtime: *I like to make time to step outside; get some fresh air and go for a walk. We have so many great food outlets near the office and it's great to have the opportunity to sample these! One of the great things about recruitment is that it is also a very sociable profession. We spend so much time talking to people and this also means we are able to celebrate success with our clients and candidates. Therefore, sometimes, I am lucky enough to also be able to attend client and candidate lunches and experience some of the top restaurants around the City!*

Afternoon: *My afternoons are usually dedicated to search. I often have a few candidates that I still need to chase up whom I haven't been able to speak to, but I like to block out a good period of time to move my searches forward. This entails using various platforms to find*

candidates that match the skills for my roles and then contacting them to sell the opportunity to them. Like the mornings, I will spend a great deal of time on the phone. I might also have some briefing calls with clients to talk through any new roles coming to the market and to gain an understanding of the kind of candidates they are looking for.

6pm: *My day usually ends around 6pm. Sometimes I may have later calls scheduled with candidates who have not been able to talk during the day. In the evening I like to take advantage of working in such an amazing location. There is great night-life in the City; a huge variety of bars and restaurants and it is exciting to be based right in the middle of it all and take the opportunity to explore.*

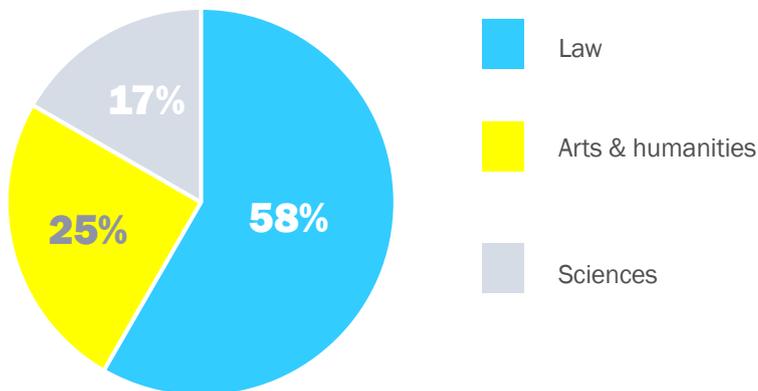
OUR GRADUATES

Our graduates come from a variety of academic backgrounds and experiences. While a legal background can be helpful, it is by no means a requirement; we hire graduates with all kinds of qualifications. These range from languages to sciences to humanities.

What we are most looking for in our graduates is an enthusiasm to learn, a passionate drive to succeed and a strong commitment to being part of a team. Recruitment can be gruelling, with highs and lows on a regular basis, but it can be very rewarding. It is the kind of career which truly allows you to be in control of your own success. From the very early days you will see that what you get out of it, both in terms of professional satisfaction and financial reward, is reflective of what you put in.

At MRA you will have the opportunity to learn from some of the best in the market and be quickly rewarded for your hard work and dedication.

Degree backgrounds taken by our current & past graduates



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“What attracted you to recruitment in the first place?”

I joined MRA after meeting Warren and Paul. I was immediately impressed by their vision for the company, their work ethic and how humble they both were. They had clear goals for the company and for me as an individual. After 11 years at MRA, I am glad to say these goals have been reached and surpassed. From day one I received high levels of attention and exceptional training. The platform is one where you always feel comfortable asking questions and where your personal and professional development are prioritised. Over the years, I have grown not only as a recruitment professional, but I am continuously learning to manage others and I have a say in the running of a growing and exciting company. I was made a shareholder in the company after five years, something I don't think would happen at any other recruitment business. Whilst MRA is much bigger now, its ethos hasn't changed since I joined 11 years ago. Every graduate who joins MRA receives the same level of attention and has the same opportunity to progress as I was given over a decade ago.

“What skills did you learn as a graduate that have helped you now that you are further along in your career?”

Perseverance. I learned from the very start of my time in recruitment that you need to put in a huge amount of effort every day to get one active candidate that you might place in a new role. I learned to keep striving to make more calls, to send out more messages. Even if you feel like all you are getting is rejection, tomorrow is a new day and your bad luck can only go so far. If you keep trying every day, you will make placements, but it starts with picking up the phone. This hasn't changed since my first day as a graduate.



KATE SPILLANE
Private practice - US firms
London
Graduate 2010



**“ WE HAVE THE BEST TEAM EVENTS!
IT’S GREAT TO REGULARLY BE ABLE TO
CELEBRATE EVERYONE’S SUCCESSES. ”**

NICK SMETANA

Private practice - Partners, London

A portrait of Tariq Ali, a Black man with short dark hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a dark polo shirt over a light blue collared shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be the interior of a train or bus with overhead lights and windows.

TARIQ ALI

Private practice - UK firms

London

Graduate 2014

“What attracted you to recruitment in the first place?”

I started my career as a lawyer, and while I enjoyed the sector, I realised I wanted a career that would allow me the opportunity to be more in control of my own destiny. I could see recruitment rewards the most ambitious and I felt I had this drive to succeed. After speaking to others in the sector, I knew legal recruitment would give me the chance to develop my entrepreneurial spirit while at the same time continuing to work with a clientele that I was familiar with and admired.

What skills did you learn as a graduate that have helped you now that you are further along in your career?

The sheer tenacity required and the ability to be an active listener. These are skills that will set you apart in this industry and have allowed me to be a stronger recruiter. These are fantastic transferable skills in general and have also helped me to be a real team player and mentor as I have further developed my career at MRA.



ALEXANDRA SIDEBOTTOM
Private practice - Offshore
Graduate 2019

“Why did you choose MRA Search?”

Firstly, I wanted to work at a successful recruitment firm with high-end clients. I felt this would give me good exposure to the market, excellent training and strong earning potential. Secondly, I wanted to work somewhere with a clear and proven career progression and development for those who join as graduates. Finally, and most importantly, I wanted to work somewhere where I could be myself. I have definitely found all of these, and am lucky to work in a supportive, hard-working environment, with friendly colleagues.

“What was the highlight of your time as a graduate?”

As a graduate researcher I rotated through the MRA teams, spending several months at a time working with the international, private practice in London, and in-house teams. This meant I got to know lots of people around the business and learnt a huge amount about very different sectors. This system allowed me to find out what team suited me best before becoming a consultant.

“What advice would you give a graduate considering a role in recruitment?”

As with any graduate role, you have to be willing to put in the time and effort to learn a new skill set and potentially a whole new sector, depending on your background. Hard work, patience and commitment are essential to success in a junior recruitment position, but it does pay off. A role in recruitment will help you build resilience and communication skills, and it provides a solid foundation for many future career paths.

THOUGHTS OF OUR CONSULTANTS

What longer term career plan do you generally try to carve out for graduates?

We want to give graduates every chance of success in building a long-term and rewarding career in legal recruitment. This starts through detailed training in how to conduct the role itself (from headhunting to closing), where trainee consultants can see the full life cycle of the recruitment process. By giving trainees excellent responsibility and exposure to the process, where the work has been directly generated by them, they gain a wealth of experience very quickly. This epitomises our long-term investment in graduates and their careers, as our structure enables them to grow and develop within the business. Additionally, in our training, we offer both insights into the commerciality of law firms and their operations across several jurisdictions, as well as a comprehensive understanding of the various practice areas.

This provides trainee consultants with the foundational knowledge and experience to establish themselves in a particular legal market. Our longer-term career plan is based around what areas our trainees are most interested in and in what way we can best support them. In what is a meritocratic career in a leading global business, covering various aspects of legal recruitment, it is up to our trainees to decide what type of future they would like to build with us at MRA and for us to support them.

KAY KHAN, private practice, Europe

What do you look for in your graduates?

Energy and desire! Honesty, being well-organised, tenacity, respect, the ability to listen and being a team-player, are also credentials that are very important. There is no such thing as a “perfect graduate” for me. Quite simply we are looking for someone with the drive to succeed. We will help you grow and develop but you have to come here with passion, enthusiasm and the willingness to learn.

BEN MYERS, private practice, Hong Kong

What is the toughest part about being a legal recruiter?

Handing out a rejection. The legal market is fast-paced and always shifting, which means positions can be filled quickly or the criteria for the role can change, so some lawyers who are very interested may not meet the firm’s hiring criteria or expectations in timings. It is never a fun part of the job and tougher when the candidate has gone through a long interview process. However, as recruiters we have a pragmatic approach and understand what our candidates are looking for, so we do our best to coach them on a range of alternative options in their market. Despite it being an uncomfortable moment, you build a good relationship with your candidate and eventually find them the next step up in their career.

KAY KHAN, private practice, Europe

A photograph of three men smiling and looking towards the camera. They are in a professional setting, possibly an office or a conference. The man on the left has light brown hair and is wearing a light blue shirt. The man in the middle has light brown hair and is wearing a light blue shirt. The man on the right has dark hair and is wearing a light blue shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and office equipment.

What is the first thing you try to instil in a graduate joining your team?

A strong work ethic. Graduates come in with all different mindsets and experiences from their time at university but the one key denominator about becoming a successful legal recruiter is hard work in the short, medium and long term. Legal recruitment is not rocket science but it's not a free ride to making quick money either. Developing graduates and instilling a 'can do more attitude' puts them in the best position possible for a long, successful career.

BEN MYERS

Private practice, Hong Kong



“

*I LOVE BEING ABLE
TO COME INTO THE
OFFICE EVERYDAY
AND WORK WITH
SUCH AN AMAZING,
TALENTED, GROUP
OF PEOPLE. ”*

TOM ALLISON

Private practice - US firms, London

CONTACT US

For more information on our graduate programme or to apply and start your career with us please contact:

PAUL ROXBURGH

+44 (0) 7809 436581

paul.roxburgh@mrsearch.co.uk

KATE SPILLANE

+44 (0)20 7618 9085

kate.spillane@mrsearch.co.uk

KAY KHAN

+44 (0)20 7029 3605

kay.khan@mrsearch.co.uk

WARREN LEFTON

+44 (0)20 7618 9083

warren.lefton@mrsearch.co.uk