

MATRIC SURVIVAL KIT

Edition 2

MATCHMAKER IN THE WORKPLACE

Bonnie Currin, director of leading recruitment firm Professional Assignments Group (PAG) in East London, says time management and hard work are necessary to achieve success.

Bonnie enjoys mentoring young businesswomen and relaxes by tending her vegetable garden. She speaks to Nicolette Scrooby about her job and hobbies.

What does your job entail?

My director portfolio includes heading the marketing department, which is responsible for advertising, public relations, social media, community investment and tendering. I head the disability recruitment strategy and I manage the operations of the coastal region overseeing the PAG branches in East London, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Durban.

Describe your typical working day.

I spend at least five hours every day on telecoms because I manage people around the country. I get my creative buzz by focusing on my marketing portfolio and challenge myself with deriving innovative staffing solutions for our clients.

Tell us a bit about your business background.

I was born and bred in East London and could not wait to go travelling after studying. I spent five years overseas either slaving in the hotel industry or travelling to interesting countries. On my return to South Africa it was time to settle into a career and I booked an interview with PAG to assist me in achieving my career aspirations. They must have seen potential, as they offered me a job on the spot within their group and the rest, as they say, is history.

What hurdles did you overcome to get to where you are today?

Finding the balance to succeed in both my business and personal life has been my biggest hurdle. You don't become successful by working 8 to 5, which becomes a challenge when you become a parent. So instead of sacrificing time with my family for my job I have had to

make personal sacrifices. You have to realise that success is not achieved without hard work so time management remains important to me.

What and where did you study?

When I left school I didn't want to continue studying, so I opted for the easy way out and attended the East London College for two years to achieve a Marketing Management National N5 Certificate. Since then I have realised how important a qualification and continuous professional development are, so I have obtained a National Diploma: Customer Management and a Further Education and Training Certificate: Labour Recruitment. I am studying a BA: Communication Science degree through UNISA which is proving challenging with all my other commitments – how I wish I'd rather gone to university straight after school!

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I like the variety, the satisfaction of helping people find their dream job, the people, and the pressure!

How can learners who are interested in similar careers start preparing themselves at school?

Start gaining some work experience even if it is by volunteering your time at NGOs. Waiting on tables, assisting in shops and many other jobs available to high school students teach skills such as customer service and all-round work ethic.

What was your first job?

I worked for my dad at his successful real estate business during my early high school days, giving up my Saturday mornings to earn a small wage as pocket money. The intention was for me to take this business over one day, but I soon realised that I would never live up to my dad's legacy and I would have to create my own success story.



What do you think about the business opportunities in the Eastern Cape?

The Eastern Cape is an entrepreneurial environment because many of our corporate head offices reside in the bigger metropolitan areas. This encourages an entrepreneurial spirit, and there are multiple ways that entrepreneurs can access business start-up finance and support.

What organisations are you involved in?

I am a committee member of the Business Women's Association and enjoy mentoring young, eager businesswomen.

Any advice for Grade 12s?

In a competitive job market it is advisable, if at all possible, to further your studies. We have various scarce

skills in South Africa, so if you want to become successful and wealthy follow one of these careers!

What is your favourite food?

I love the traditional food from many of the countries I travelled to such as Indian, Mexican and Thai food. I also have a passion for cooking all these dishes!

Where is the best place to go to in East London?

We have a family holiday home at Cintsu West where we spend many of our weekends. My husband takes our kids surfing and swimming to some of the most stunning beaches along the east coast. I cook up a storm for all our visitors and we spend quality time with our friends and family.

Be the best that you can BEE.

As a black empowered company Mondi Shanduka Newsprint is the proud partner and supplier for this publication.

