

Denise Hasircioglu – Managing Consultant, Legal – Michael Page Middle East

What sparked your interest in recruitment?

Denise: I never really planned to work in recruitment, it was something I found myself move into organically – it was a natural progression from other sales roles. For me it was the result of a suggestion from a recruiter I happened to interview with for an unrelated position. And six years later... here I am!

What would you consider as your professional achievements?

Denise: The fact that I've been able to establish myself as a successful legal recruiter without having any formal legal qualification certainly ranks pretty high! I believe recruitment allows you to set the bar high for yourself and the goals you set are reachable. It is one of those professions in which you have the most control, and it is entirely up to you what objectives you'd want to focus on. I chose to spend more time upskilling myself in a market I knew little of, and it has paid off in the long term

Do you think luck has played a role in your professional journey?

Denise: My definition of luck is "preparation meets opportunity". If you know your trade, and you have built a foundation that can not only withstand multiple failures but is propped up by your successes, then there is no such thing as luck. When things start to go your way, it will be a result of the resilience and hard work you put in, and your ability to learn from your mistakes and plan for better outcomes when the next opportunity comes along.

What does it mean to be a South African professional working in a diverse and multicultural place like Dubai?

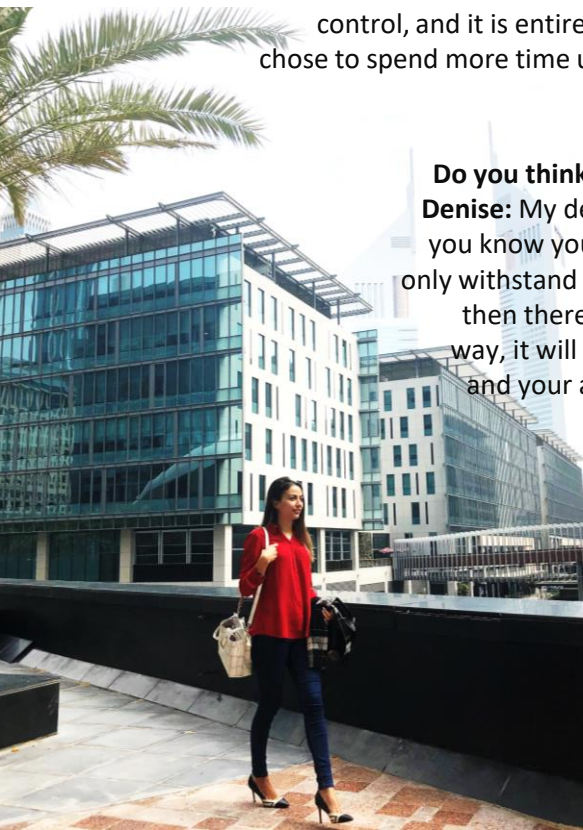
Denise: Coming from South Africa (the Rainbow Nation!) I already had a pretty good grasp on how to do business in a multicultural environment. I found the transition to be seamless in many ways. Firstly, although there are so many nationalities in Dubai, there is no language barrier; English being the most widely spoken language in both countries. Secondly the South African population in Dubai is huge, so it didn't take a lot for me to feel right at home. And thirdly, our intrinsic South African inclination, to be accepting of all traditions, cultures, ethnic and religious groups, has allowed me to relate to the community here better, and has ultimately opened many doors from a business perspective.

What would be your advice to young female graduates looking to explore recruitment as a career?

Denise: Young female graduates looking for an eventual role in leadership can accomplish this at an early age working in recruitment. Within the second year of my recruitment career I was already mentoring newcomers in the business, and by my third year I was a Team Leader. You don't need an MBA to know how to guide an individual/business to success, the key is to keep learning as much as you can on the job. As a female recruiter I have always looked to more senior female leaders in recruitment for mentorship. Understanding their journey has helped me shape mine. Young recruiters today are incredibly lucky to have access to a massive community of professionals who are more than willing to share their ideas and experiences.

Given you recruit in the legal sector, what are the initiatives some law firms have undertaken to attract more female professionals?

Denise: I've seen a great deal of agile working initiatives that have been implemented in law firms with the intent to enable female lawyers to continue their practicing careers long after they have had children. A technological change has definitely taken place there. However, a cultural change is still ongoing. A transformation from the archaic "traditional law firm culture" can only start at the very top.



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