

Waterloo & **City**: Corporate information in **London**



Naomi Doessel
(nomesd@yahoo.com.au)

Six months ago I couldn't have explained to you the difference between a public and private company, let alone competently access the available documents for either. I didn't know what an IPO was, ADR could have been something I'd heard on a medical show, and my understanding of M&A was limited to Richard Gere's character in *Pretty Woman*. Now that I've worked as a researcher for a major investment bank in London for six months, I could tell you more about all of those acronyms than either of us would care to know – but I think we'd all prefer to talk about how I got here.

I have an academic library background, but when I moved to London I quickly found that it's difficult to get temp work in that area. Due to my visa I was unlikely to find a permanent job, and temping is a lot easier – you only need a two-page resumé rather than filling out pages of application forms, and you can generally start within a week or two. I recommend getting some UK experience and a reference as quickly as possible – even working for a month as a library assistant can put you in good stead to then move onwards and upwards. UK experience counts for a lot, you may not be taken too seriously until you get some.

As for me, I started as an information assistant in a law firm, and then I was a public librarian. After a few months of regularly scanning the temp websites I found that 'researchers' got paid significantly more than librarians. I decided I'd give myself a month to try to get that kind of job, even though I didn't have any corporate experience, or knowledge of many of the databases. I made my resumé very skills based, a technique that seems to work very well here. I listed both my key skills (information retrieval, customer service etc) and my technical skills (database knowledge, resource selection etc) and streamlined it to contain no extraneous information. I investigated the main agencies that work in corporate information, and registered with three of them, which is a manageable number. Within a week I had an interview, and within two weeks I'd started my new job.

It's been an incredibly steep learning curve, but I've enjoyed every minute. It's quite pressured, as we work to constant deadlines, and the bankers can be quite... forceful, but part of the skill of the job is managing their expectations

as to what can be achieved, and in what time period. I highly recommend to anyone thinking of coming to London to work to consider gaining some corporate experience here: for entry-level jobs you don't necessarily require a qualification, though database experience is favourably looked on. My best advice in terms of agencies is to share the love – different agencies will work for you differently, and everyone has mixed experiences. Signing up with more than three could become unmanageable, but you can always move to another one if someone isn't working for you.

Here are some of the best websites to get you started.

TFPL

<http://www.tfpl.com/>

One of the major temp (and permanent) agencies for information work. Their daily job e-mails are a great (and easy) way to find out what's available. Lots of information on the site about the industry, pay, registering with them, interview and CV advice etc.

Glen Recruitment

<http://www.glenrecruitment.co.uk/>

Specialised corporate information agency, primarily for investment banking and law. Their job search is quite simple, organised by salary band or just search in temporary.

Sue Hill

<http://www.suehill.com/>

Probably the best known in Australia as it's partnered with One Umbrella, and you can register before you come over here, which I would recommend just to get you kick-started.

Intelligent Resources

<http://www.intelligentresources.com/>

Specialises in business intelligence, apparently a lot of corporate jobs go through them. There isn't a job search function on the website, so no good for environmental scanning.

No rundown of the library job market in the UK would be complete without pointing out LisJobNet www.lisjobnet.com/, the CILIP job site. The fortnightly e-mail is a great way to get a feel for the industry before you come – I got it for a year before I arrived. However it's primarily permanent traditional library jobs, and doesn't have as much corporate coverage.

If you're thinking of coming over, feel free to contact me and best of luck!

