

From the classroom to the office – what I have learned so far



Kick-starting my legal career at the age of eighteen was undoubtedly the most exciting and challenging thing I had ever done. As well as abandoning an unconditional university offer to study law, and venturing into the unknown of a full-time job, I had to learn quickly and establish myself as a young professional fresh from school, and one of the youngest employees the firm had ever hired.

Now just turned 21, I have three tips to offer any school leaver about to enter the world of work:

1. Use your inexperience to your advantage

Being a blank slate is both an opportunity to learn and a chance to bring fresh ideas. Sometimes, the best ideas come from the people who have the courage to ask questions and challenge the old ways of working. If this is done with tact and respect, people will quickly recognise that inexperience and fresh thinking go hand in hand.

2. Confidence goes a long way

In order to be taken seriously, you need to take yourself seriously. Even though you may be young and relatively inexperienced, you still have skills and talents, things that interest and motivate you and things you have done well in your life to date. Let those things give you faith and confidence in yourself and your abilities. Take small steps to build your confidence. Accept you have much to learn but build on what you already know.

3. You don't have all the answers

Ask the right questions at the right time and show an active interest in the business, your co-workers and your future. This will demonstrate that you are a quality employee and that, despite your age, you have maturity. It is also an opportunity for you to gain valuable insight and show people that you want to grow and move forward in your chosen career.

Recognise your value

Whatever your age, you will bring different experiences to the workplace and diversity is hugely important not just in terms of gender, ethnicity or religion but also in age. Having a multi-generational workforce brings strength to a business and ensuring all voices are heard is vital to develop in an ever-changing environment.

Being a young professional is both exciting and challenging. You DO have something to offer so work well with others and be open to opportunities. You also have A LOT to learn so be open, humble, and teachable. I have learnt an incredible amount over the last two years. Not only about the firm and the law, but also about myself, my aspirations and my potential. Let age be your asset and not a label.



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