**Workshop 1 – Ask a Senior Management Panel**

RH - Rebecca Hollington, University of Wolverhampton, Director of UK Recruitment & Partnerships

AC - Ali Clark, University of Stirling, Head of Student Recruitment

SJ - Simon Jenkins, Edge Hill University, Head of Student Recruitment

RJ - Rebecca Joyce, Aston University, Head of Student Recruitment and Outreach

DC - Dylan Cozens, Coventry University, Student Recruitment Manager

Questions

How do you do your day job and voluntary roles such as HELOA?

* AC – invest in a cleaner, keeping work life balance, thrive on being busy. If you don’t have the time or opportunity to do external things like HELOA, find the internal opportunities.
* DC – scheduling HELOA activities in the diary. As a parent you learn what is valuable in life and give up the things that aren’t as important anymore such as dedicating the time to HELOA, enjoying your job. Let go of your inbox being overloaded, things will be done, but spending 9-5 on your emails isn’t getting things done. Spend time on projects and be realistic with people on your response times.
* RH – being honest with HELOA, your team, your employer, and with yourself about your workload. Ensure that you are being supported by your employer, HELOA (any organisation you support), communicating clearly with both so you keep your work life balance, be honest with yourself about where your limits are and tell people about them
* SJ – balancing extra roles such as HELOA, weighing up the benefits (will this help your day job, how can it help you), what’s the time commitment, learning that you can’t know and do everything and reconciling with this and learning how to prioritise
* RJ – if you’re not getting new opportunities within your institution then roles like HELOA are great. My priorities changed so I had a conversation with my manager to figure out a more balanced work life split. Have the conversations with your managers and come with a plan of how HELOA etc will benefit you and the institution

How do you keep your team motivated in the particularly busy months in HE e.g. June/March

* SJ – throughout the year people feel appreciated for the work they do, understanding of how they fit in to the wider perspective, needs to be give and take, allow flexibility with people’s time
* AC – I don’t expect my team to do something I would not do myself, still doing some travelling every week, keep an open line of communication and keep the team abreast of any changes especially on the road builds trust
* RJ – keeping in touch using a whatsapp group during the busy months on the road, phone calls and touch points, putting in socials
* DC – giving the team the autonomy and freedom to want to be out on the road, making sure they know what needs to be achieved/what the targets are, give them the freedom to work from home and work more flexibly, controlling their own diaries, trust is very important
* RH – clarity on objectives, sitting down and explaining where their work fits in, and letting people figure out how to achieve their objectives themselves, helps with parity across the team (everyone achieves them in different ways), goodwill goes a long way in our sector

What do you look for when recruiting for people to make the jump from officer to manager level?

* AC – initiative – someone who can see the bigger picture as you’ll have to think much more strategically
* SJ – not looking for previous manager experience (if you see that on a job description don’t let it put you off, apply anyway, the majority of people you are competing against are in a similar position) – looking for someone with potential and management attributes
* DC – understanding that it’s a different type of role from an officer – the day-to-day is different, you are held to account more, the consequences could be bigger, people come to you for advice. Echo Simon (SJ), if you want the management experience you can talk about managing junior staff in the office, managing Ambassadors, one-day events. If applying for internal jobs – be aware of how you conduct yourself in the office, don’t let your standards slip
* RH – showing ability to progress – natural fear that you may not have much on the job description but it’s really breaking it down, always want to know what else people can bring to the institution, taking the opportunity, if you have been in a role for a while show that you have been developing (by taking on a role within HELOA etc.)
* RJ – increased sector knowledge and ability to implement strategy, leadership skills – being good at your job does not always mean you’re are going to be a good manager, have the confidence and leadership of the team

What do you think makes a good manager?

* DC – being supportive
* RJ – excellent communication skills – conveying priorities to your team as a manager, listen to your team
* SJ – autonomy, give people the space to do their jobs in their own ways
* AC – playing to individual strengths, working out what type of people you have and what motivates them
* RH – empowering people to make decisions, leading and supporting people to make their own decisions

How did you cope with going from operational work to back-to-back meetings? Do you enjoy it?

* AC – be careful what you wish for, as head of the department you are bit more removed –you have to maintain boundaries. Always make sure you find things you enjoy within your role.
* RH – unpicking the role and finding out if I would genuinely enjoy the role, be honest with yourself about what you enjoy, don’t progress just for the sake of it, make sure you progress for the right reasons (job satisfaction rather than money), you don’t have to progress if you don’t want to. Different universities have different areas mixed in so you can find new experiences in different unis. It’s about prioritising. Looking at the role and seeing what parts you can become passionate about.
* SJ – agree with point about progression – progression for the sake of it or salary, doesn’t work. Find out what you’re interested in and make sure you have that in all of your roles.
* RJ – block things out in your diary far in advance so people have to put meetings around you, be very organised and manage your time well. Finding where your passion lies and what challenges you.
* DC – accepting that the role has changed, it’s not the same as being an officer (not going to have the course knowledge, the relationships change)

How do you deal with changing relationships with colleagues as you progress?

* AC – it’s difficult, but it’s realising that you have allies at the same stage as you, HELOA is great. Better to confide in someone outside the institution and use your networks. People can like you or hate you, but it’s far harder to gain people’s respect. It’s how you handle that transition. You’re their boss at the end of the day.
* RH – accepting that these relationships are going to change, focusing on the here and now rather than worrying about it. Accepting where your limits are, what do I want right at this moment and what works for me. Continuing to still be yourself.
* SJ – try to make sure you have a relationship with everyone in the team, respecting the structures that are there e.g. managers
* DC – giving them the time and freedom to let loose, not connecting with them on social media, leaving socials early or not coming at all, giving them the space
* AC - important to be seen at social events, that you can relax and want to be around the team
* RH – it’s important to know your team, there might be people who don’t want to socialise or get involved in that way, and that’s ok. Sitting down and explaining your management style and adapting that to your team as everyone is motivated differently

How to develop your career – 1 tip

* AC – get a mentor – helped work out a plan and figure out what I wanted, would recommend someone outside your institution
* RH – use your network and use HELOA – take opportunities
* SJ – don’t look for progression for progressions sake, if you find your dream role go for it, even if you don’t feel ready
* RJ – take risks, apply for roles even if you don’t have everything in the job description
* DC – take control of your career journey, your manager can help but you need to take control, don’t be disheartened if you don’t get roles or missed out on opportunities.