

From home working to the Barclays Global HQ

By Gill Blair

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I'd been self-employed for over 10 years as an HR specialist consultant for SMEs. After my third child, I did a Masters in Employment Law and that has become my specialism. Working from home has pros and cons, but it can become quite isolating. So I decided I wanted to change my working life. I wanted to work with a team of people again, so I started looking around for a women returner programme.

I've actually worked at Barclays before – I originally joined the Management Development Programme. So when a friend pointed me towards the Barclays Welcome Back Programme it sounded perfect.

Right from the very start I really, really loved it. To come in and get such high quality training and development was amazing. One of the biggest advantages of the programme was the unflagging support of your mentor – someone who was really senior in the bank who championed me. These people were so generous with their time. Mine boosted my confidence and gave me encouragement to apply in certain directions.



The training has been exceptional. I was particularly impressed by a presentation course. All six of us were in the same room getting feedback on how we presented ourselves as female leaders in a predominantly male environment. And it was brilliant – I could see my colleagues, and myself, getting transformed in just half a day. It was really fun and highly effective.

Right now, I'm working with the Offshore Banking team until October providing HR support to a big project. At the end of this I want to take all I've learned on to another project – hopefully in the Structural Reform Programme and work with them for the next couple of years. I feel like I have been able to raise my aspirations – I'm no longer looking for just a job. I really believe that I could be a leader in Barclays.

If you're considering applying to the Welcome Back Programme my advice would be: 'Just do it'. When I talk to my friends outside the bank about it they are amazed that an organisation is doing this sort of thing. I know so many people who would benefit from this and have so much to offer.