Diana Rusu (26)

STUDY YEAR: 2015–2018
WAS: Service Account Manager @ ASUS
HOME: Groningen
HOUSEHOLD: In a relationship
DREAM JOB AS KID: Cashier
RIDE: Citroen DS3

Erwin Reimert (33)

STUDY YEAR: 2014–2015
IS: RPA Delivery Team Lead @ IBM CIC
HOME: Groningen
HOUSEHOLD: In a relationship
DREAM JOB AS KID: Wrecker (demolisher!)
RIDE: Kia Rio

When I first decided to study a Master program in The Netherlands I had not yet planned the idea of living and working here. In Romania, I studied Business Administration and I always thought I would become an entrepreneur; however, my plans changed during my first hands-on experiences on the labor market.

The SIM master was very challenging for me, experiencing that the Dutch learning system differs strongly from the Romanian one. After finishing my master, I quit my call center job and started to apply to a more 'grown-up' type of job. I wasn't speaking any Dutch at the time but I was determined to live in Groningen. It was not very easy to find an English-speaking job, and everyone advised me to move to the South. Luckily, one of my SIM friends was working at ASUS and advised me to apply. Settled and done! Two weeks later I drove to ASUS in Emmen for an interview. The job interview was very well structured. I got introduced to several people with different roles and ended up with a skills and aptitudes test. After four-and-a-half-hours I was driving back to Groningen, being very happy with my performance. The HR team contacted me later that week to inform me that I got the job.

In my first three months at ASUS I received several trainings and small tasks to determine my management qualities. As a Service Account Manager, I was responsible for a region or country within EMEA. Per region, several Asus Service Partners are assigned to repair Asus products. As a single point of contact, I worked closely with the local Service Team from the countries I had been assigned. Towards Service Partners and occasionally customers, I had to make sure the accounts reach their contracted KPIs and if not to develop and deliver a detailed analysis on how the KPIs could be reached and what support they could expect from my side. I needed to learn a lot about the local market, economy, legislation, language and the cultural differences in my regions to ensure high customer satisfaction levels.

I continuously looked for ways to improve and innovate the processes and procedures in the local service centers. I negotiated the contracts with partners for optimal service levels and made action plans to improve customer satisfaction to its finest. During my time at ASUS, I also had the chance to travel to many countries. This experience greatly enhanced my knowledge of cultural differences. It was very interesting to see how similar companies that have to deliver exactly the same service are managed so differently in each country!

As every story has an end, also my ASUS experience has ended. The daily two hour drive to Emmen and back to Groningen plus the 40+ hours at work have become more difficult than I thought. It was very difficult for me to leave because I loved my work, but sometimes it's just better to put yourself first.

Overall, I have learned a lot of things during my experience at ASUS that made me a stronger, more organized and confident person. Feel free to contact me on LinkedIn if you need more details about my experience of working in a multinational company.

In my traineeship at IBM CIC in Groningen I could combine my interest for Strategic decision making and Innovation. This traineeship offered me the opportunity to familiarize myself with Big Data & Analytics tools and techniques. I learned all about structured and unstructured data, how to handle data, and naturally also how to get value out of analyzing these large volumes of (unstructured) data.

The IBM CIC office started in Groningen 6 years ago. Currently, we have around 230 service employees who are fully focused on client delivery. We deliver services to clients across Europe – from the early start to the end of project lifecycle. Work here is being done in an agile way, in areas like creative software engineering, IX studio, cognitive and enterprise solutions. We develop new things for our clients in our DevOps Garage, design in our IBM Studio, and work in Project Management; we are what we do, a Client Innovation Center.

After my first assignment at a large Dutch bank, I started a long-term project at Jumbo Supermarkets as a BI consultant, being responsible for the development of data flows within a data warehouse. These dataflows were used as input for the management reports that steer Jumbo's strategy. I really enjoyed working in the demanding, and fast-paced environment. I learned a lot in my roles as Business analyst and Team lead of a multi-functional development team.

Last December, my journey at Jumbo came to an end. After three years, it was time for something else. But before starting on a new assignment, I decided to travel for two months - with my girlfriend - across South-East Asia, visiting Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Vietnam...which was awesome!

After returning to Groningen, I started to work as Project Manager at our Robotic Process Automation (RPA) practice. In essence, we create "digital users" who perform repetitive, well-defined tasks. You can think of a ticketing system that analyzes and responds to incoming emails from customers. Based on the email's content, a robot can forward requests towards service employees who can fulfill this request. The robot reads keywords like 'new password' or 'expired password' it "knows" what to do and sends a ticket to the password resolver group. It lists the name, location, email address, etc. of the customer, such that the requests can be quickly resolved. The automation helps to reduce costs and increase service quality. Service employees spend less time on repetitive, mostly boring, tasks and the time savings can be used to solve more difficult tasks that require human thinking and interaction.

As Delivery Team Lead I'm responsible for the output of three scrum teams involved in the quarterly project delivery, planning, finance and staffing of all projects handled by our Groningen office. I have some advice for you students: Try to find an appealing company where you have the opportunity and freedom to grow into different roles. Your first job will almost never be your dream job, but you can consider your first job as the start of a journey towards it.

Feel free to contact me via my LinkedIn, if you would like to know more about RPA, IBM or anything else.