

Marieke Tiesinga (28)

STUDY YEAR: 2010-2011

IS: Strat. Consultant Corp. Banking ABN AMRO

HOME: Apartment in Utrecht

HOUSEHOLD: In a relationship

DREAM JOB AS KID: Retirement

RIDE: Gazelle (for non-Dutch: bike brand)



After graduating in Strategy and Innovation, with a Bachelor in Business Administration (Groningen) and a Master in Arts Administration (St Andrews) I had quite a broad profile. This made finding a job both difficult and easy. Difficult, because many companies had starters jobs dedicated to more specialised fields such as finance or marketing, rather than to strategy or innovation. Easy because my broad profile left me with plenty of options. My first job was rather broad as well: I started off as a management consultant at a small consulting firm. Since the company culture did not feel right to me I did not stay there for long. I learned that culture and colleagues are very determining factors in liking your job.

I was approached to apply for the Risk Management traineeship of [ABN AMRO](#) because of a student job I had done at the [Gasunie](#) that involved risk models. I had never really considered working at a bank, but became interested because I like thinking in terms of risk-return. The 15-month traineeship consisted of projects of three months at different departments. Changing departments every three months was very helpful in finding out what I like and what environments suit me. For example, I thought that the Asset & Liability Management (ALM) department would be way too technical for me, but after a rotation there I found out that it's a great department to work for. So after the traineeship I worked there for three years. I wrote proposals for senior management on topics such as the amount and type of funding the bank should attract from the wholesale funding market, the optimal size of capital buffers and the amount of dividend to pay out.

Now I work as a Strategy Consultant for Corporate Banking. This means that I work on different strategic projects for the business-to-business side of ABN AMRO. The work involves strategic questions such as: where would we like to expand (geographically or sector-wise)? How can we optimise the way we do business (by cutting costs and/or increasing revenues)? Should we continue to offer this product and if so, in what way? I am very happy that my work involves such a high degree of strategic thinking.

My advice to current SIM students is: do not despair if your first job may not yet involve as much strategy or innovation as you would like. These are topics that you sometimes have to work your way into. I got there by first getting a thorough understanding of how a bank works by working as an ALM analyst. Furthermore, I believe in lifelong learning (within your job, but also by activities outside your job). Especially when you are working as a specialist, it is important to make sure you are employable in other fields as well, as the degree to which there are opportunities in a field may change over time (e.g. due to technological developments or disruptive innovations).

If you have any questions feel free to contact me via [LinkedIn](#).

Xander Visser (27)

STUDY YEAR: 2012-2014

IS: Market Analyst Graduate @ Red Bull

HOME: Apartment in Salzburg, Austria

HOUSEHOLD: In a relationship

DREAM JOB: Professional footballer

RIDE: VW Polo



After completing my Bachelor at the University of Applied Sciences, I realized that I wasn't ready for work life. I was ready for another challenge, and decided to follow my passion for innovation and management consulting. For this reason I decided to apply for the pre-master Strategic Innovation Management (SIM). During the pre-master and the first SIM semester I realized that this master was the right choice. I particularly enjoyed the different aspects of managing innovation and how to organize for innovation. When I was halfway the master I decided to participate in the International Business Research (IBR) program, where I conducted market research in Vietnam for an innovative Dutch company [Ruiten-berg](#). It was a great opportunity to translate theory into practice and to conduct market research, supporting the company to find creative, innovative solutions in the food industry. After this great IBR project, I continued with SIM and the courses didn't disappoint me at all – I learned more about how to capture value from innovations and about brand & product management.

After graduation it was time for me to look for a job. I wanted to “spread my wings” and did not want to limit myself to jobs in the Netherlands. I found a job in Vienna, where I started working as a business developer for a technology startup company, [MyFly](#), being responsible for sales & marketing activities. I learned a lot by working together with different stakeholders such as telephone operating companies, app developers, investors and the technical university of Vienna. I had a good time in Vienna, but wasn't convinced that this was the right job for me as I wanted to have more opportunities to develop myself. Therefore, I decided to look for other job opportunities.

In August 2015 I started as a Sales & Marketing trainee at [Red Bull's](#) Global HQ. In this role I'm responsible to report about the general market performance, trends and challenges of European markets. Also I get the opportunity to think strategically about the future of European Red Bull markets by being involved in the process of consulting and supporting countries for the planning and implementation of Trade Marketing, Field Sales and Cross-Marketing initiatives. Working in the European commercial team allows me to see the approach of Red Bull in different European markets. I really enjoy this role as it provides me with a lot of freedom and responsibility, and helps me to develop a proactive attitude towards embracing big opportunities. From an innovative perspective, Red Bull is constantly concerned with developing new products (e.g. new Editions) and introducing new marketing concepts in Sports, Music and Culture.

To current SIM students I would like to say that I am confident that SIM is a great start. My advice to you is to work hard, be curious, proactive and to stay authentic.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me via [LinkedIn](#).