



Victoria Presa



Regulatory
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Lawyers

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In our latest series we are catching up with those who work in the world of conveyancing to see why they joined the profession, the route that they took, and what words of wisdom they have for those looking to join or who have recently joined.

In this latest installation we speak to Victoria Presa, Legal Director at Simply Conveyancing who tells us about using Alexa to provide case updates and the lure of the smell of an old deed pack!

"I knew from a young age that I wanted to study law. I'm from Newcastle and went to Northumbria University where I studied for my law degree, my Legal Practice Course and also, at a later date, my Masters degree – I love studying and learning. However, despite a real passion for the law I wasn't entirely sure which direction I wanted to go in. I landed my first job in the remortgage department of a large commercial firm in Newcastle – and even though I'd sort of fallen into this area of law – I loved it!

"I worked there for a year, before I moved to the conveyancing department in a high street firm, and it was there that I studied for and took my CLC qualification. I hadn't heard of the qualification while I was at university, it was down to my own interest in the field that I researched and came across the diploma. I spoke to my firm and I was fortunate that they were happy to support me through it. I had already embarked on my Masters degree during this time as well, so I ended up with a one year period where I was working, and studying part-time for both my Masters and my CLC diploma. In hindsight, it was a probably a bit much to take on, but I love learning. Some people don't enjoy the pressure of studying alongside working but it worked for me, and I really enjoyed it. Part of that was due to the fact the course was so relevant to my day to day work in the office. I was practising during the day, what I was studying in the evenings.

"After I qualified I ended up taking voluntary redundancy and I moved to the Midlands, where I started working for Simply Conveyancing. I joined in 2011 and over the last 12 years I have worked my way up through a variety of roles, to my current position of Legal Director.

"In my current role I am responsible for our conveyancing teams in our Daventry and Cardiff offices, as well as our holiday cover team and one home working team. My job is to ensure everyone, teams and individuals, are hitting their targets and maintaining our high quality standards. I also work alongside those in other departments to ensure that the end to end conveyancing process runs smoothly. I am so happy in this role as it combines my love of conveyancing and my passion for the development of people.

"All the lawyers in our firm have their own individualised career pathway. We have set levels that people can progress through

depending on knowledge and practical experience. Everyone has a development plan to get them from one level to the next. In fact, three years ago, I jointly set up our internal learning academy, which is a training academy for anyone who wants to make progress through the levels. It started out as a way of guiding administrative staff who wanted to make the jump to the legal side of the business, but has subsequently expanded to encompass all members of staff.

"I find there are few things as rewarding as watching people progress. Some of our best lawyers started in admin or in the post room. Given the right level of support, they have progressed, and qualified. Now eight or nine years down the line some of them are our top lawyers.

"As you might be able to tell we feel strongly about widening access to the law. All our trainee lawyers are offered the CLC diploma as part of our programme.

"The business of conveyancing is hugely rewarding. When dealing with clients, the feeling you get when they can move into their dream home is unlike any other, you have played a positive part in their lives. I also happen to love the smell of an old deed pack, and I enjoy hunting down unregistered titles, all the unusual aspects of the job.

"In terms of industry change we've seen huge progress in digitalisation. I welcome anything that takes away some of the admin and provides a smoother process for us and clients. Clients do demand more from us now and expect us to move things along a lot faster, and so we've needed to adapt. We now offer electronic ID checks, a client portal, client app and integration with Alexa. Clients can ask Alexa for updates on their property purchase, and Alexa will update them according to the milestones on their portal.

"I would recommend conveyancing as a career. It can be tough at times but it's worth it. I really enjoy my role, and I don't know what I'd do if I didn't do this. I love that you can never know everything and regularly come across things you've never seen before. For anyone starting out or thinking about a conveyancing career I would say take every opportunity that you're given to learn, a seminar, a webinar, work shadowing – just take it. Believe in yourself, ask questions and use your colleagues – most people love knowledge sharing and are happy to help others progress."