

Client Facing job share pioneers

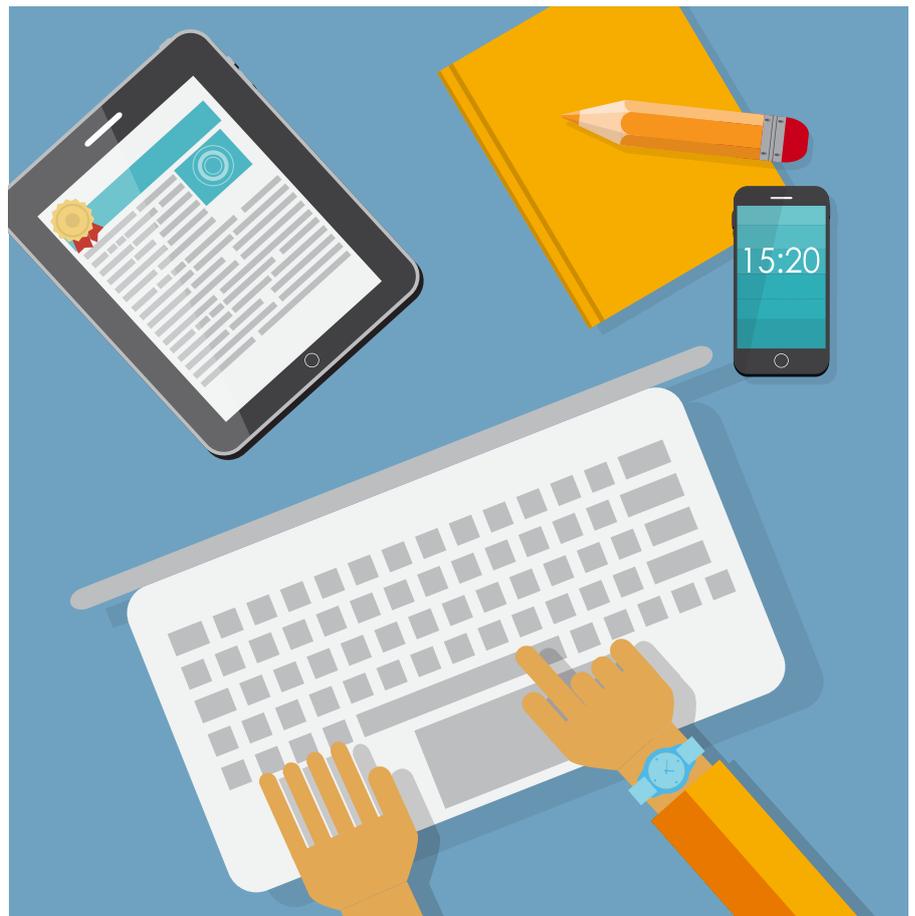


Interview with Kirstin Hunter and Nicole Kuepper-Russell – job share Case Team Leaders at Bain & Company.

WHAT IS THE ROLE AND HOW DO YOU SPLIT IT?

Kirstin We are Case Team Leaders at Bain & Company. We lead a team of 3-4 consultants on cases of around 3 months where we work closely with clients (usually in their offices) to ***solve particular problems facing their business.***

We both work three days a week, I work Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Nicole works Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, so Wednesday is our handover day where ***we transition ownership of the work, team, process and client relationships.*** We do the same thing in reverse with a quick phone call on Friday afternoon.



HOW DO YOU MAKE THE JOB SHARE ARRANGEMENT WORK?

Kirstin We make sure that our team and the client copies both of us in on all email correspondence and invites both of us to all meetings so ***the burden of managing the job share falls on us, not on our team or the client.***

We transition who the lead consultant is on our cross over day. For instance in the mornings I'll lead the meetings, and by the afternoon Nicole takes over and becomes the lead consultant.

Nicole Since we're client facing, the partners or manager

communicate to the client that there will be two people filling the one role, and explain how to communicate with us. We've not had any problems so far; ***in fact they are generally excited that they get two brains for the price of one!***

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOB SHARE TO YOUR EMPLOYER?

Kirstin One major benefit is that it creates a viable pathway for people to do **challenging, interesting work 3 days a week which boosts retention, particularly for people who've recently become parents.**

Being client-facing and with a team to manage, I think my role would be much more difficult if I was working 3 days a week by myself and not in job share. **Knowing that my employer supports flexible working and was willing to experiment with us** to make the model work was a big factor in my decision to come back after maternity leave.

Nicole Another benefit is that **we actually cover for each other – if one of us is going on holiday or to training, the other one will increase to full-time** work for that period. It makes things much easier for staffing and client / team management that we can guarantee that consistency and coverage for each other.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK FOR IN A JOB SHARE PARTNER?

Kirstin Nicole and I have very different personality types, management styles and problem solving styles, but the feedback we've had from our managers and our teams is that it actually **adds to our individual performance.** Our supervisors feel like they are getting **the benefit of two different approaches and two different brains for the price of one.**

Nicole I think I could job share with a lot of people. It's important to be honest and open and **accept that you're in it together. We were a bit concerned at the beginning because we're so different,** but it has been a lot easier than I had anticipated.

WHAT ARE YOUR TIPS FOR PEOPLE LOOKING TO JOB SHARE?

Kirstin

- 1 Set up clear norms, for example at the start of a case, we make sure our team know that we are the only ones allowed to call each other on our days off.
- 2 Have clear communication so everyone knows who's in the office that day and trust that your partner is across it when you're not there. **Stepping in on your day off can confuse people and double up when it's not necessary.**
- 3 We always ask that we're both invited to every meeting so we know what's happened on our days off.

Nicole

- 1 Be ruthless with your time and focus on top priority tasks.
- 2 Enforce consistency with your team; our teams send us an email each morning on what they will deliver that day and before we leave we'll always check in.



THE BEST BITS ABOUT JOB SHARING?

Kirstin Having the opportunity to work closely with someone else at your level as a peer on the same case. It's been great for both of us to have access to someone else's problem solving. I can call Nicole and test my thinking and move forward with more confidence.

Nicole Knowing that Kirstin can respond to any email and manage our team on my days off. Which means my days out of the office are entirely work free. It's very relaxing being offline two days a week.

KIRSTIN AND NICOLE'S JOB SHARE ARRANGEMENT



Their working week

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Kirstin	Kirstin	Both	Nicole	Nicole

The Key to making it work?

- ✓ **Joint ownership of work-stream and deliverables**
- ✓ **Shared responsibility for supervision of junior team members**

“Our goal is to complete, seamless coverage across the week from the perspective of the client and team. The onus of communication is on us, not the team or the client.”



How do you make this happen?

Our team and clients cc both of us on all emails and meeting invites so they don't need to remember our schedule. We look after the rest.