



Employer Profiles – Joanna Wilks



Name: Joanna Wilks
Employer: Simple Netball League Ltd
Job Title: Company Director

What is the story of your career to date?

I worked as a Sports Development Officer at a football club in London and for Youth Sport Trust after I graduated from University. This gave me a really good understanding of sports development and I gained several sports coaching qualifications along the way.

I decided to re-train as a Physiotherapist and moved back to Manchester to study at MMU. I established Simple Netball League, a social netball league for women, in the first year of my Physio degree. I continued to run it alongside my studies and eventually graduated and worked as Physio for 4 years whilst also running the business.

The business grew to a size where I could no longer do both jobs as there just weren't enough hours in the day! I decided to leave my job as a Physio and concentrate on the business full time.

It has since doubled in size and as well as Manchester, we run netball leagues in St Helens, Chester and Liverpool too. We are aiming to expand the business across the UK using a franchise model.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I'm in the office for around 9.30am until around 4.30pm. A typical day might include doing the accounts, answering queries from teams and players, developing a new website, updating our social media and organizing the match night ahead.

I tend to visit the match venues in the evening to catch up with teams or a staff member or sometimes to umpire too.

What skills do you think are important in your role?

Being able to multi task! As a small business, I need to wear lots of different hats and have had to learn a variety of skills in order to grow the business.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to do your job?

Try and get some experience in your chosen field (it might be sports development or coaching, for example) to get a foot in the door.

If you would like to own your own business, be open to learning new skills both in areas that you enjoy and also those that you don't enjoy so much! You don't need to be an expert in every area of business. You can always learn more...

**Does your employer offer volunteering/apprenticeship opportunities?**

We would welcome volunteers to help at our netball coaching sessions and on our match nights.

What is the best thing about your job?

I like being a master of my own destiny! My days are busy and I work really hard but it's a rewarding job. I enjoy the match nights – seeing it all come together and people enjoying playing netball again. I have long term goals for the business that I'm working towards and it's good to see that coming together.

Where can I find out more?

www.simplenetball.co.uk

www.englandnetball.co.uk