

Owl Financial **Inspiring** Interview

Kristine Krisjane, **Executive Sales Manager**



Kristine's story is one of a range of inspiring interviews.

Find out more>

My Journey, **Kristine Krisjane**

We've collated a series of motivational case studies that show the journey of some of our most ambitious Advisers and Managers. It's fascinating to hear about their background, why they joined Owl, what motivates them and tips for others building their careers in the business.

Before joining Owl I worked in the factory of a company that specialised in making fabrics - I did this for around six years. The pay at the time wasn't bad but the hours were long and I knew I could be doing more. I felt like the job was holding me back and didn't reflect me or where I wanted to be.

In spite of repeated attempts to progress to a managerial position, I wasn't given the opportunity. I was disheartened but refused to give up on the prospect of moving on from where I was. I got to hear about the job with Owl from a friend who worked with the company. She asked if I would be interested in doing what she does. No need to ask twice - I was definitely interested!

Persistence and Patience

Things were looking up. I had an initial interview which seemed to go well, but then there was a set back. Soon after, I was informed that recruitment had been put on hold. I was really disappointed as it sounded like such a great opportunity.

I decided to be patient. I kept in contact and about a year later received the good news that my application could be progressed. The next challenge was passing the necessary exams - insurance was new to me. It took real focus to get my head around the terminology. This combined with me still mastering English (my natural language is Latvian), meant I really had to put the work in. However, I was determined and committed. I remember, even my family were unsure whether I could do this and whether it was right for me.

It took days and nights of study - but I did it! I was so pleased when four months later, I passed and my journey with the company began in March 2016.

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Sometimes I have to pinch myself. So much has changed. This career move has been one of the best things to happen to me and my family. Best of all, I'm able to help others too.

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Suited and Ready

I was optimistic and excited. It was good to be in a role where I could meet and help people. I loved the fact that I could put a business suit on - gone were those days of the factory. Fashion was something which has always interested me (I have a diploma in fashion design) and it was great to have a job which gave me a reason to get new clothes!

So, I was ready to start my new career and knew there was still a lot to learn. I spent a lot of time reading about sales techniques and also made sure I attended the meetings run by my manager and the company. It definitely helped - I learned a lot from him as well as other advisers.

I progressed fast, building a client base and referrals. What helped in particular was community events. I worked with marketing to get a nice well branded stand, with added features like prize draws that I'd get approved in advance, to help attract people. I was able to get a steady stream of warm leads.

My Top Tips

- Give it 100%. This is a great opportunity to build a career with excellent earning potential and flexible hours - make the most of it.
- Remember you're in control - you have choices in terms of how you wish to progress your career.
- Network with others - not only for advice, but also for motivation. You never know, you may create some new friends, as I've done.

Combining managing with being a mum

A year after joining, I applied for the Potential Area Sales Manager (PASM) programme. I clearly remember when I passed; it was a week after attending the final stage of the course that my daughter was born.

The beauty of this job is not just the customers I've been able to help, but also being able to work hours that fit round my family. I'm able to manage my team, plus sell myself, whilst looking after / spending quality time with my son and daughter. Being organised helps as there's lots of multi-tasking. I must say, my husband's been really supportive - like me, he's very happy I made the change from my old job. Since then, we've had a lovely wedding and moved into a new house - the extra income has made a real difference.

I'm delighted that working with Owl has helped me pay off my mortgage! It's great to be able to do a job I love, whilst earning a good income. As I remind my team - anything is possible if you have the right mindset, work hard and give this job your all. It's also important to be adaptable; with lockdown, online meetings have been held, which suits me. I've adapted how I work and can see the benefits. With less travelling, I'm able to arrange more customers appointments and support more members of my team.

What an inspiring example of someone who has come from a non-insurance background, has worked hard and now has an exciting career ahead.

Thank you Kristine for sharing your inspiring journey.