

The Training Post Special Edition – Fall 2024 QC Responses

What career decision did you make that unlocked a great opportunity?

1. I previously worked for 3 insurance companies before working for Division of Law in the Banking & Insurance Section and I now work for Division of Criminal Justice in the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. I am grateful for being an insurance professional.

Kristine Chichester

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2. I was afforded the opportunity to work as an Administrative Assistant to the Director of Human Resources at my previous job which inadvertently segued into this opportunity to work for the State.

K Black

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3. After working for a bakery for 2 years. I decided to work in a Law Office, and I am ever so grateful to **Mr. Joseph Asir**, who was the attorney that gave me a chance and believed in my potential. After working in that law office for about 2 years. I applied to work at the DCF, and my career flourished. I have been working at DCF, Child Care Licensing since 2015. I feel proud and successful with the work that I do.

Yarnires Martinez

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4. Choosing to say yes to to projects/opportunities that were outside my comfort zone.

Kathleen Burkhard

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5. Early in my career as a grad student in Health Policy and Management, I knocked on the doors of the COO of a large health system and asked if they would like to have a masters candidate volunteer with the leadership team. They did not have a structured internship program and I offered to help build it as we went. They agreed and my most rewarding career began spanning over 20+ years from intern to a senior executive in the health network. I learned in depth tremendously about healthcare operations, patient safety and quality, clinical education, workforce development, HR and more that has offered me a vast range of knowledge, skills and abilities to take on any healthcare challenge. Learning comes with taking risks, allowing oneself to get uncomfortable with learning, unlearning and relearning throughout our careers. Experiential learning opportunities are always around us. We need to recognize them as they often look like impossible tasks, unwanted projects and stretching beyond our job descriptions.

Medha Havnurkar

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6. I decided to look for a new position when it became apparent that I would never be able to advance my career as one of the very few women in my organization. I applied for one job in another company but turned it down because it was too far to commute. The company called me back for a different job a few months later and I took the position. It was the best choice I made. The new company did not worry about whether or not I was a woman, they respected my work, and I was promoted several times over the 8 years I worked there. Took a chance and it worked out really well.

Kathleen DeZottis

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7. I got my MPA using the DOL's tuition reimbursement policy. If not for the reimbursement option, it would have been out of reach financially.

Janet Dunigan

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8. As a COBOL programmer, I had the chance to participate in Disaster Recovery (DR) exercises, which I found incredibly fascinating. Fourteen years ago, while working for the State, I was given the opportunity to join the DR Team. This decision led to me becoming Team Lead and strengthening the team by bringing in talented and amazing individuals. I've had the opportunity to share my knowledge with executive branch agencies and have developed lasting relationships with many individuals.

Karen Krenzel

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9. In 2016 I decided to join the public sector workforce. It has been the best career decision I've ever made! I kind of re-invented myself and bridged my private sector IT systems experience with the public sector audit and compliance niche. In a short time I have obtained several audit and security related IT Certifications and gained a great deal of knowledge and experience in a field that I love. Working for the State of NJ has been the best experience of my working life, by far. I now have the combination of job security, great benefits and growth opportunities that were lacking in my previous positions. I am so appreciative and honored to be a public servant.

Marilyn Walter

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10. I decided to go back to school to complete my Masters Degree (MBA). I needed to prove to myself that I could do it 20 years after receiving my Bachelor Degree. Opportunities have opened up to advance and move my career forward that may not have been available had I not made that educational decision.

Donna Shanders

Treasury

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11. I went back to school to change careers from medical billing to Human Resources. It was a great decision that led me to be able to obtain a position within the Department of Children and Families Services.

Rhonda Lewis

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12. After years of being in the classroom in both private and public schools, I sought an opportunity for change. I needed change to apply an existing skillset, develop new skills, and work to continue making a positive impact. In 2019 I made the move to the MVC where I became an Education Program Development Specialist. This was the first of its title in the MVC. Acclimating to an office environment was a learning curve, yet the possibilities were endless when combining my educational training and classroom management. I was able to continue developing dynamic lessons, create meaningful and pertinent curriculum, and move to an adult learning for professional development content. I have an opportunity to engage a wide array of teams, be a team player, take the lead in several committees and special programs, meet wonderful people all across New Jersey, all the while modeling best practices in and out of the classroom. I once told several Managers and even sent a message to an internal, quarterly periodical the following statement, "Have I ever told you how much I love my job?" That spawned an article describing the collaboration and work I was associated with in our then-COVID Response Team. The folks who worked on that team were E-X-C-E-L-L-E-N-Tat everything they did when processing documentation, providing updates, and following guidance as per guidelines. Sometimes we need to become the beginner again, to learn, acclimate with any change, then working toward mastery and being an example for others. A learner is not only the cost of entry. It is the key to success.

Karl Miller

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13. I learned Spanish and became fluent. That has opened many, many doors for me throughout my career.

Ann Pushkal

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14. MS in Accounting

Alona Ross

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