

# MAJOR IRISH BANK PLACEMENT.

## *Record of Practical Work Experience*

From January the 7<sup>th</sup> 2008 until August 29<sup>th</sup> 2008, I undertook work placement with [REDACTED]. During my time there, I was part of the Personal Lending Print & Book team which is part of [REDACTED] credit operations. The function and objectives of the team was to process loan applications for customers and also to process overdrafts. There were a total of 15 people on the team and each day tasks were delegated to each team member by the supervisor and team leader. The tasks varied each day and these are outlined below under the relevant headings.

### **Daily Tasks**

- **Check Documents:** - Each morning, I checked loan documents which were received from customers in the post. I checked the loan documents to make sure each necessary section was signed by the applicant in order for the loan to be processed by the team later in the day. I divided the documents into two separate piles, documents which were signed correctly and in the right places and documents which were not signed or not signed correctly. Once I had the documents checked and separated I passed them to my supervisor, who then delegated the loan applications to all the team.
- **Printing Documents:** - Each day, sometimes for the whole day, I would monitor the print documents tray and print out successful loan and overdraft applications for customers. Once these were printed out, I would put the documents together accordingly and divide the documents into Dublin and rest of the country for collection by the postmen. As well as printing out the overdraft applications, I would also book the overdraft limit for the client at the same time as printing the facility letter. The loan documents weren't processed until they were returned fully signed.


- **Taking Calls:** - Another part of my daily tasks was to assist another team in taking calls from customers. I would do this by logging into the personal lending phone line and taking calls related to loan applications and any other queries related to personal lending. This task was usually done to assist the inbound team during breaks and lunches, to ease the pressure on the team. Taking these calls also helped me get a better understanding of personal lending, as well as improving my communication skills and customer relations skills at the same time.

### **Weekly Tasks**

- **Process Loans:** At least twice a week during my time working in personal lending p&l, I processed loan applications sent back by customers. After the loan documents received in the morning were checked and divided accordingly, the supervisor would hand me a number of loan documents to process. This involved checking repayment dates and that information on the system was the same as on the documents. Following this I proceeded to book the loan for the client by setting up a loan account to transfer the funds into. The funds would then go into the customers account over night.
- **Wrongs:** Once a week, I was given the task of telephoning customers who did not sign the loan document correctly. I had to explain to the customer that they did not sign a particular part of the document, or that they signed the document incorrectly, and that we could not process the application unless they sign it in the correct manner correctly. I generally had to send the document back to the customers and indicate to them where to sign, or alternatively I would print off a brand new application and send it to the customer instead.
- **Call Offs:** Each week, I carried out a call off which involved crossing off customers on a list to ensure their overdrafts were booked and printed correctly. This was done by matching the customers' reference number on the list to the reference number on the bank copy of the customers' overdraft facility letter. This

task was delegated to one person each day to ensure the overdrafts were booked and processed correctly.

### Monthly Tasks

- **Team Meetings:-** Every month, the team would gather for a meeting in which all the team members could discuss if they had any problems or issues relating to personal lending with the team leader and fellow team members. These meetings were also used to inform us of any changes or activities in the organisation as a whole. These meetings gave the team a chance to get their opinions and suggestions across to the group. These were very open and relaxed meetings, the type of atmosphere which enabled people to get their views across with comfort and ease. These team meetings made me feel like a valued employee of the personal lending team and  as a whole. It highlighted the importance of taking on board the views and opinions of all staff.
- **Assessments: -** On a monthly basis either the team leader or supervisor carried out an assessment on each team member. This involved one of the two sitting in with me while I carried out my daily tasks to ensure I fulfilled my duties correctly and efficiently. The assessment also included ensuring I printed and booked overdraft applications correctly and that I booked loan applications accordingly. The team leader then put the assessment on record for future reference. These monthly assessments are a necessary part of the team as it ensures that the goals of the team are being met and that each member is working to the best of their ability.
- **One-to-ones: -** Once a month, the team leader meets with each member of the team to inform them of their individual progress. These one to ones involved a face to face chat with the team leader, where he would tell the individual what areas they may need to improve on and what areas they were doing well on

and provide encouragement to each person to achieve goals set out for them. I found these one to one meetings very helpful as it allowed me to see what I could do to improve my overall performance in the team and what I could do to help the team in general. These meetings also gave me a chance to tell the team leader of any issues I may have had or where I felt I could improve on my training.

### One off Tasks

- **Customer service training:** - On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July, I attended a customer service training day held by the [REDACTED] along with other staff members. There was 8 of us who attended the course altogether from different areas of the bank. The training day was designed to be a fun, helpful and informative day highlighting how we all play a part in keeping high standards of customer service for [REDACTED] to demonstrate what ways we could improve our way of dealing with customers. The day included a lot of activities including games and presentations which I found informative and definitely of benefit to me, especially in relation to my college work. The day also allowed me to meet fellow employees in different areas of credit operations and find out what task they do and how they carry out their tasks on a daily basis. At the end of the day each of us was asked what we had learned from the day in relation to customer service. The biggest thing I learned and took away from the training day was how vital it is to keep customers happy and satisfied in business and how each individual in the organisation contributes to the overall standards of customer service. If customers are kept happy and treated with respect and courtesy, that in turn helps the organisation succeed and stay ahead of competing banks and gives the [REDACTED] that extra edge.
- **Presentations:** - During the course of my placement in [REDACTED] I attended a number of different presentations on various topics and issues. These presentations mainly involved informing all staff about any changes that may be coming up in the organisation such as changes in the software the company was

using or new products being introduced to [REDACTED]. One of the major presentations I attended during my time there was a presentation about the organisation centralising its credit operations into one area in the [REDACTED] Bank Centre in [REDACTED]. When I started out on placement, I was originally in the [REDACTED] Credit Centre where it consisted of a total of 5 teams sharing one building, but the [REDACTED] wanted to centralise the whole credit operations on to one floor to make the running of it smoother and cost efficient. I spent a total of 5 out of my 8 months on placement in the [REDACTED] Credit Centre and the last 3 months in the [REDACTED] Bank Centre in [REDACTED]. I found moving from [REDACTED] to a new state of the art building in [REDACTED] added a new dimension to my experience in [REDACTED]. I went from working in a relatively small building to a much larger building consisting of over 4,000 people. There was a variety of different departments located in the building in [REDACTED]. Moving to the [REDACTED] Bank Centre allowed me to get a great insight into what working in a big organisation is actually like.

- **On-line Training Modules:** - At different times during my placement, I had to complete once off training modules on the [REDACTED] internal web site. These training modules were designed to enhance employees' awareness in different areas such areas as fraud prevention, data protection, information security and ethics in business. These modules highlighted the importance of each of the above areas. It also gave examples in day to day business of when events relating to these areas may occur. At the end of these on-line modules, there was a short question and answers section to test out what the person had just read previously to make sure everything is taken on board. These modules were very up to date and current in the banking environment and I feel it definitely made workers more aware and vigilant when carrying out daily tasks, especially in such areas as fraud prevention, which if employees are not aware of could have detrimental consequences for the [REDACTED].

### Summary of Work Experience

My 8 months spent working in [redacted] was definitely the most beneficial time I have spent working so far in my life. During my time there I learned the values of working as part of a team and how important it is to complete of tasks even when working under pressure. In relation to my team leader, [redacted], I learned what it takes to be an effective and good leader in a working environment by treating everyone as equals and applying good man management skills to achieve the best out of every person. He was also very approachable and helpful in any situation. I feel my communication skills have greatly improved as well. This improved due to being in contact with customers over the phone on many occasions as well as being in constant interaction with fellow staff and team members. I found the whole experience undoubtedly beneficial and relative to my college course and I know that all the skills I've learned and experiences I have had will stand to me as I enter my final year in college and also throughout my working life, wherever that may lead to.

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<i>Signatures:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<b>Student</b>	
<b>Work Supervisor</b>	
<b>Employer Name</b>	
<b>WIT Mentor</b>	