

WOMEN

IN SECURITY

Name

Sanah Iqbal

Briefly explain your role

I am KST's Business Process and Operations Executive.

I support all departments by working on process improvements. I review how each team's systems or processes work and then implement new techniques that should benefit the team in terms of accuracy, timing and profitability.

I have also been heavily involved in launching the abode smart home security system to the UK market, as well as integrating our recent acquisitions; Cougar Monitoring, Silver Group and Quidvis into the KST Group.

What do you love about your job?

The variety of the role! - I love that I have a list of tasks to work through every day, but every day they are completely different. It makes me look forward to finding out what my next projects are going to be.

The autonomy of the role is great - I am trusted with projects from their inception to delivery. I also get to work with the many different departments at KST as well as other companies within the group.

How does KST empower you in your role?

Reviewing individual teams' processes can be difficult - different opinions can cause tension and stress, especially as I am implementing changes to systems that have been used for many years.

Because of this, I believe my Manager empowers me by supporting my decisions for change. I know that I can go to them with any problem for support and to get their agreement when it's needed.



What made you move into the security sector?

I started at the company in their first ever Graduate Scheme.

I chose to apply for the scheme as I liked that it gave the option to work in every department (on rotation) at the company. As I wasn't sure what career path to take after university, this really benefitted me as I got to learn about the company completely and decide at the end of the scheme.

I was worried about moving into this sector due to it being male dominated. I was expecting that the Assessment Centre for the scheme was going to be mainly men (both attendees and interviewers). However, once I realised that wasn't the case, it settled my thoughts.

It also helped that KST wanted to employ women to break the stigma, which filled me with ease.

The flexibility of the Graduate Scheme and KST's forward thinking was what really brought me into the sector.

Has there been any significant barriers to progression in your career within the security profession?

No, I have never felt that I have been held back in regards to progression within the sector.

I started in a training role and I have worked my way up to where I am now. I have been supported with all my decisions up to this point and believe I will continue to have this support whilst working for KST.

How does KST help support your sense of purpose in your career?

KST support my sense of purpose in my career in many ways.

I believe the main support would be that I have been provided a mentor who is on hand for chats about my career goals and future prospects. My mentor isn't an actual employee of KST either, which I think also helps as I have an external observant who can help with progression outside of the company, if this is something I would like in the future.

I also achieved my Prince 2 Practitioner qualification whilst at Kings which was fully funded after I requested some project management training.



What's your most memorable moment in your career so far?

My most memorable moment has been when working with abode.

Our Chief Operating Officer had planned to launch a home security product with a partner company a few years ago. Unfortunately, the company pulled out of the partnership and therefore, he tasked me with finding a new company to partner with. I had a criteria to stick to when finding the home security company: they had to not be owned by anyone else in the UK, not based in the UK and have a video doorbell (or one soon to launch) within their packages.

After researching many companies, I found the US company abode. When we contacted them, they were very eager to partner as they had been looking for a UK company to launch their equipment overseas. To launch in the UK, they needed a monitoring system that was based in the area and, therefore, with Cougar Monitoring, we were the perfect candidate.

I believe that my research really benefitted our company and it's something I am proud of.

What opportunities does the security profession offer?

For me, the Graduate Scheme provided me with the opportunity to work in the sector. However, I do think there are a lot of chances to train and progress via apprenticeships and training programmes which would benefit any career-driven individuals.

What would you say to any women who have reservations about how male-dominated the industry is, in order to put their minds at ease?

The perception of the sector being 'male dominated' is wrong. It is very different when you are a part of it!

At KST, there actually seems to be more women than men when you look around the office. This could be because KST is very forward thinking and therefore, don't mind if you are a man or a woman, as long as you are capable and dependable in your role.

From my experience, the stereotype is false and I have felt no disadvantage as a female working in the sector. If you have a strong sense of what you want to do, then it shouldn't limit you in any way!

How do you balance work and home responsibilities?

I have been very busy in my work life and my home life recently.

I recently bought a house which I am renovating with my Fiancé. We are also getting married in 2022 and therefore, in the middle of wedding plans.

Because of this, I have started to set priorities (a daily schedule) so that I can manage my time effectively and to prevent me getting too overwhelmed.

I set goals and make sure that I work towards them – whether this is for work or for home.

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