

My Secondment Experience

James Fox

Position before secondment: Technical Manager, H&Q block lab manager, Biology

Secondment position: Technical Manager, Deputy Operations Manager, Biology

Position after secondment: Senior Technical Manager Deputy Operations Manager, Biology

I was initially cautious about applying for the secondment; I thoroughly enjoyed my job and the people I was working with and I had been in it for just four years. There was still so much that I wanted to explore and achieve in the role and the section was in an exciting expansion phase. Nevertheless I came to realise that secondment opportunities don't come around very often and if I didn't like the role that I could return to my old job after 14 months, or before.

As it is, I found the secondment rewarding and I picked up lots of new skills: fire warden, management of a larger team, management of a service, exposure to the full spectrum of research and teaching within the biology department, management of service contracts and larger projects, interactions with a wider range of staff, stakeholders and external collaborators, to name but a few. The secondment has more easily opened doors and given me the chance to try more complex strategic things. When the position was advertised full-time it was also a career progression opportunity and having been in the role a year I was the most suitable candidate and got the job after a competitive recruitment process!

I would recommend secondments to others to pick up new skills and experiences; they are an opportunity to try a different role and confirm whether it is something you might want to explore further in the future.