

# Mini-profile:

## a day in the life of a business development executive



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I became aware at a young age that I was not a one-thing-at-a-time person, although the yoga student in me now may strive in that direction. No, I am more of a several-balls-in-the-air type, and that is why my position at CrossRef as Director of Business Development suits me so well. There is really no typical day, no typical hour even. I have had to accept that the inbox is never going to be cleared out or, in my case, even perfectly organized. Where would I be without desktop search?

Among my varied responsibilities are member recruitment and communications, strategic planning of new services, business model design, programming member meetings, running a library advisory board, marketing and PR activities, functional prototyping, strategic partnerships, hiring new staff as needed, signing checks and contracts,

writing articles, attending and speaking at industry conferences, responding to press inquiries, managing website design and content, producing an annual report, supervising an assistant, doing serials-related research, analyzing system reports, managing external consultants, negotiating legal agreements with libraries and vendors, facilitating Board committee teleconferences, and assisting the executive director in a whole host of ways. But that is not all, oh no, that is not all – to borrow a stanza from Dr Seuss's *The Cat in the Hat*.

Scholarly communications today is a lively, fast-paced field. At CrossRef we are right in the middle of it. Yet when a friendly neighbor asks what I do professionally, I find it difficult to explain. I might answer: "business development in the non-profit sector"; on another day I reply: "electronic publishing"; on yet a third occasion: "I work in the field of

research information.” If I feel the need to explain why this is important work I add: “We work with the publishing community building tools to ease and speed the research process and grow the potential for discovery”.

CrossRef is run by a Board of Directors elected from among its member publishers. Representatives from 15 companies dictate policy and strategy at our quarterly Board meetings. The tempo of my job is thus defined by four meetings each year: preparing in the weeks and months leading up to each Board meeting with intense committee work and the resulting proposals and reports, and then implementing the decisions that were made at the meeting in the weeks and months after. There you have the best part – the consensus-building process. How do you get several large, diverse companies who would otherwise be competitively inclined toward one another to sit down at a table and collaborate on technical platforms for linking and search? The delicate way in which proposals are developed and presented is key. Although this can sometimes be a frustratingly slow process for a results-oriented person like me, in the end it is also what makes this job so rewarding.

So, then, what exactly is it that I do every day in this job? E-mail, e-mail, e-mail – e-mails with

potential new members, e-mails with existing members, e-mails with fellow CrossRef staff and Board members, e-mails with strategic partners. CrossRef staff also tends to Skype a lot these days to bring ‘voice’ back into it; personally, I cannot get used to sitting at my desk with a headset. I am such a compulsive e-mailer that I keep my laptop near my bed and respond to e-mail first thing when I wake up and last thing before I go to sleep. When will they develop the device that allows me to respond in an REM state too? And to think that one of my reasons for leaving academia 13 years ago was the hope that a 9-to-5 job would improve my chances of attaining that elusive family/work/mind/body/soul balance ...

When I am not e-mailing, I am still keyboarding away – writing proposals, reports, surveys, minutes, press releases, marketing copy, articles. When I am not writing, I am talking on the phone (just today one search provider wanted our advice on how to index more scholarly content, and also wanted the inside scoop on another search provider), listening, in the air, in a meeting, but very rarely out to lunch. I also happen to be fond of thinking and reading and do a fair amount of both in this job too – yes, even reading online.



Amy (centre) at a Harvard Business School Executive Education course in the summer of 2004 – a rare moment away from her keyboard!