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Recruitment Graduate Programme



Decipher Group is leading an innovative programme to grow tomorrow's recruitment leaders through the introduction of its Recruitment Graduate Programme.

Decipher Group's ability to solve our client's recruitment and human resource challenges is fundamentally linked to our talented and highly capable team of specialists who provide an exceptional service, that is outcome driven and built on long-lasting relationships.

We're on a continuous journey of learning and development within our team and realise that we also have a social obligation to contribute to building and enhancing capability within our wider community. Making a positive impact and effecting change is something that is very important to us.

Delivering on our 'doing good' commitment, Decipher Group have been longtime supporters of not-for-profits and charitable groups by way of sponsorship, fundraising and volunteer support. We've also enabled our team to share their expertise and strengthen the nation's workforce by investing time in providing a range of pro bono services including career development advice, leadership coaching and recruitment support to graduates and senior professionals who are looking to enhance their career prospects.

The global experience of a pandemic, while incredibly disrupting and challenging, has also accelerated change at an exponential rate, transforming the workplace and workforce in ways previously thought unimaginable. Alongside a steady increase in the next generation entering the workforce, who bring with them different skills and behaviours, it is without a doubt a lively and exciting time to be in the people business.

Bringing all of these ideas together, we felt that the time was right to introduce a distinctive and highly targeted graduate programme that nurtured tomorrow's recruitment leaders.

Introducing the Decipher Group Recruitment Graduate Programme.

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Nina's story



Nina Sales, Recruitment and Talent Search Coordinator

Nina Sales joined Decipher Group in 2021, becoming our very first graduate programme participant. Nina has been a true pioneer of our programme. Read more about her story below.

Nina, firstly congratulations on being the first grad to join the programme. Are you feeling like the spotlight is firmly on you?

Look it is super exciting, but I am by no means the first graduate to be employed by Decipher Group. Also, the way I joined the team and the experience I've had has in fact shaped the creation and development of the Graduate Programme. So, in that sense, I feel we've both been learning, refining and adapting!

Take us back to that final year of university when you are approaching the completion of your degree and pondering "What next?"

I got to a point in my degree where I had to make some decisions around entering the workforce or pursuing additional qualifications. My degree was quite broad and generalist without an obvious career path at its conclusion, so I started reaching out to my networks (who were recent grads) to hear their experiences and really gauge what it is I wanted to do. This also coincided with the pandemic and lockdowns which in some ways reduced my options; travel, even domestically wasn't a possibility in the short to long term. It's a really confusing time for a grad but long story short, I found myself in the fortunate position of taking on a part-time admin role at Decipher Group while finishing my degree, which was a major steppingstone to where I am now.

So, you chose work over further qualifications?

Well, yes and no. I was accepted into the Master of Science in Industrial and Organisational Psychology programme and had intended on completing it part-time while working. But what I very quickly realised was that while completing a Masters was great from a theoretical learning perspective, I was in effect gaining both learning and real life "work" experience at Decipher Group. Learning while working means there are tangible outputs and outcomes. It just made sense that for me, pursuing full-time employment was the right move. I shared my thinking with my manager at Decipher with absolutely no expectation of a permanent position and their response was quite the opposite. Not only did Decipher Group offer me a full-time role, but they also asked me to contribute to building their Graduate Programme as the first participant.

Tell us more about the Decipher Group Recruitment Graduate Programme?

It's a programme tailored for graduates with an interest in pursuing a career in recruitment and more broadly, human resources. Over a 12-month period, participants work their way through a structured learning programme while completing on-the-job training.

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The really exciting part is that you have an established position in the company. This isn't the type of graduate programme where you are essentially moved from placement to placement throughout various departments – you have a “paid job” and all of the expectations that come with it but also some flexibility because there is a clear emphasis on learning and development. As a grad, this type of approach is “music to your ears!”.

Do you get the feeling that you are not being “employed”, rather you are being “nurtured”?

Totally. I've benefited from exposure to different parts of the business and working alongside some really talented people who are as committed to my success in this programme as I am. But there's also a lot of autonomy in my role, where I'm given the opportunity to take a lead on certain things. It's the perfect balance of guidance, support and independency.

What's been an unexpected learning for you during your programme experience?

I've been so focused on gaining all of those really important competencies that come from further education that I hadn't actually thought about the cultural transition between uni and the professional world. For starters, there's a different level of accountability and you're developing working relationships which are quite different from those formed at uni. That's what makes this grad programme so beneficial. It's that experience of interacting with all types of people including clients and candidates, gaining exposure to different businesses and markets, and just overall learning the mechanics of working in a corporate environment. It has been huge exposure for my development, I truly feel like I have grown so much both professionally and personally.

Any highpoints?

I think this really speaks to the culture at Decipher Group, but I honestly feel supported and confident to put my hand up and contribute to decision-making. There's a real feeling of equity amongst the team at Decipher. You're sitting next to one of the co-founders and they are listening intently to your thinking or point of view on an issue. I'm adding value, my opinion matters, and my voice is heard. It creates this feeling where you come to work each day knowing you can have an immediate and direct impact. I really can't speak highly enough about the cohesive and supportive team environment at Decipher. It makes so much sense from a business perspective, there's a fantastic energy that is reflected in the quality of work that the team produces. It inspires me to do more, be more.

There are a lot of grad programmes out there, what do you think makes Decipher's unique?

When I was exploring my options in my final year of uni, I did look at some of the more traditional grad programmes with the big corporates, but it didn't really appeal to me to be gaining experience that was so broad and not directly related to the career path I was starting to envision for myself. I think that focus on recruitment and human resources really sets the Decipher programme apart.

Having an established role within the business means I also have responsibility for delivering work. I'm gaining a really deep view of how the business operates and shadowing people with different specialist skills and personalities.

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This has also led me to being given the title of Wellness Champion, which I share with another member of the team. Together, we have created an annual wellness calendar and are tasked with coordinating monthly wellness initiatives for the wider business.

Also, thinking back to the culture and equity piece, I feel like I'm being valued for who I am and what makes me unique. I don't have to adopt this persona of knowing all the answers and being at the same level as the rest of the team. I'm appreciated and respected for my youth and the fresh perspective I bring to the table. I think it has really encouraged me to find my feet, find my passion and my place in the world.

What does programme success look like from your perspective?

The programme has a clear structure that includes assessment on relative capability so there is an expectation that participants will reach a certain level of capability at its conclusion. Obviously, I'm determined to attain that level of competency.

More holistically, I feel like success for me is reflected in the experience and what I've gained. I never perceived my first role out of uni to be such a seamless transition into the workforce. It's a good shock though!

What advice would you give a recent, or soon to be, graduate?

It's important to really understand yourself, your interests, your working style, what gets you up in the morning. When you start looking for job opportunities it can be too easy to fall into the trap of tailoring "you" to a role, so much so that you kind of lose yourself in the process. Just remember that our generation are coming through fast, we work and learn differently, and it will be the workplaces of the future that will need to adapt to reflect our style. We have a place, back yourself, be true to yourself – you will add value to the right organisation. Plus, in the long term if you are happy and motivated this translates into an enthusiastic employee.

Also, you'll hear this a lot, but networks and connections are really important. Build your contacts, do your research, and don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Networking is massive, approach it with confidence and purpose.

What's next for Nina Sales?

I'm determined to continue my professional development. The idea of completing a Masters is still lingering but right now, the timing doesn't feel right. So, I'm exploring other options like online training and technical courses etc. I'm also motivated to contribute back to the community in some way and am looking at governance opportunities with organisations that have a need for a youthful, fresh perspective.

I'm excited to continue my time with Decipher Group, as the inaugural Graduate Programme participant, and more broadly find my field of interest. It's exhilarating to think of the change that will happen in the next 12 months.

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And finally, some last words from our team on Nina's development:



"Nina has stepped in ready and willing, her energy and approach to her mahi is contagious. She brings with her real drive and a dedication for recruitment and has been instrumental in supporting the team in connecting the right people to the right roles. Nina has made a real impact to both the team at Decipher Group and to our clients, she has flourished over the course of a year and is a truly valued member of our team."

Sarah Dixon, Senior Business Partner



"Nina brings creative and innovative ideas through a different way of thinking which has been invaluable to us when problem-solving and uncovering continuous improvements within our business. As a graduate, Nina's ability to work efficiently and independently has been vital to the success of the project she's worked on. Her collaboration and communication have meant she has been an active contributor to both our candidates and clients."

Libby Brazier, Senior Business Partner



"Nina's fresh approach, energy and thought diversity adds a great deal to the overall team's ability to make a positive impact on our clients, candidates, colleagues and communities. It's been an absolute pleasure to watch her find her feet and develop into a very talented part of our growing team."

Hannah Doney, General Manager