



<b>Profiles</b>	Finance
<b>Name</b>	Marcia Jones
<b>Age</b>	27
<b>Job</b>	Investor relations manager

I work in a very close team, who are all great to work with and willing to teach. I have whole areas of responsibility, which I am expected to develop in the way I think is best with minimal guidance from my boss.

### Career path and qualifications so far

I studied Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics and General Studies at A Level then went to the University of Leeds to do a Masters degree in Chemistry (MChem).

After finishing my degree I took a year out to go travelling and then joined the Unilever Companies Management Development Scheme as a Financial Management Trainee. The training involved six-month placements doing different kinds of finance-related work on brands ranging from Birds Eye to Walls Ice Cream. At the end of the training I took up my first management position as a customer management finance manager within Unilever. Three years later I moved to my current job: investor relations manager in the Unilever Corporate Strategic Centre.

### Has anything you've done been especially useful in your career?

The fact that I conducted independent research in my final year at university definitely prepared me for working in an environment where I am responsible for delivering results without my boss constantly checking up on me.

When I was applying for jobs, I also found that employers looked on my involvement with the student Chemistry Society very favourably because it allowed me to gain experience of organising, budgeting and teamwork.

### What is an Investor relations manager?

Investor relations managers communicate the company's results, strategy and plans to everyone with an interest in its development – not only the company's shareholders, but also its employees and management, as well as external market analysts. We are responsible for ensuring that the information shared with people outside the company is relevant, factually correct, timely and understandable. We also have a duty to ensure that our stocks are marketed in the right way to the right investors and potential investors, and that our internal management know what effects their actions are having on the business.

### Day to day activities

No day is the same – cheesy but true. I am responsible for (amongst other things):

- being the 'market watchman' – keeping an eye on our share price, the competition and the market; finding out the reasons behind any big movements
- tracking competitor behaviour in the market place – any product launches that we may need to be aware of, or statements from competitors that may have an impact on our company
- developing the style of our communication, both internal and external.

### Does your job involve travel or activities outside the office/laboratory?

Yes – I often visit investment banks in London for meetings. We also have a 'road show' programme, which has an international element; in the past couple of years, our team has been to South Africa, the US, France, Germany, Holland and Italy.

### Why did you choose your current job?

I was looking to broaden my experience of business, which had all been financial until I moved to my current position. This role has both financial and non-financial elements; it is a balance of analytical work and creativity and gives someone of my level of management a unique opportunity to see how the highest level of strategic decision making works.

### What do you most enjoy about your job?

I work in a very close team, who are all great to work with and willing to teach. I have whole areas of responsibility, which I am expected to develop in the way I think is best with minimal guidance from my boss.

### What skills do you need, other than your scientific knowledge?

Communication skills are essential and so is the ability to think beyond what has gone before. You need to be able to work independently but also stick to standard procedures. Plenty of patience is a must as well!

### Have you got any advice for people wishing to enter your career area?

It isn't easy, the hours can be really draining at times and you will get frustrated. However, it is ultimately very satisfying. If you want to get into this area, you will have to start at the bottom, but career paths vary between companies; some people start off in communications or PR, some people come via a business role as I did, and some start in investment banking. This is not a job you can just walk into.

### Why is it useful to study a science subject at university?

It's not essential to have a science degree but half my team does! The way you are taught to think (logically and progressively) when learning chemistry is very helpful. The problem-solving skills I developed in the laboratory (working out why an experiment had gone wrong and how to correct the mistake) have really helped.

### Examples of other career opportunities in this area

Some other job opportunities in finance include: accountant, auditor, investment banker, stockbroker, financial adviser and actuary (actuaries assess and manage risk; most work in the insurance industry but they might also work as consultants, in banking, for universities, for the government or for large corporations).

### Further information/contacts

The Investor Relations Society, Bedford House, 3 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9HD  
Tel: 020 7379 1763 [www.ir-soc.org.uk](http://www.ir-soc.org.uk)

The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales, Chartered Accountants' Hall, PO Box 433, London EC2P 2BJ  
Tel 020 7920 8100 [www.icaew.co.uk](http://www.icaew.co.uk)

Be an actuary website - [www.beanactuary.org](http://www.beanactuary.org)

### For further information on careers in the chemical sciences contact:

Education Department, Royal Society of Chemistry, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BA

Tel: 020 7440 3344 Email: [education@rsc.org](mailto:education@rsc.org)

[www.rsc.org](http://www.rsc.org) [www.rsc.org/chemsoc](http://www.rsc.org/chemsoc)

For further profiles visit the profiles web pages at [www.rsc.org/profiles](http://www.rsc.org/profiles)