

# Meet the team

Jo Newman

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## What do you do at Outset and how do you support our clients?

I work on the Hub within a small team and we provide employment law advice to our clients. The role is extremely varied and no two days are the same. We have numerous cases open at any one time and it will range from checking a contract to advising on a redundancy consultation to helping with a formal grievance to providing a manager with guidance on how to support staff with health concerns. The world of employment law can be a minefield for some and our clients appreciate having a team like the hub as a “go to” for direction or to sometimes just have someone there as a sounding board. Some of our clients are new to management and having HR as part of their role and our bite size approach when dealing their enquiries helps coach them and develop their own skills.

## Give us a brief timeline of your career so far

Although I’ve been working for 40 years, it has only been for a handful of companies during that time. In terms of the role’s that enable me to draw experience for what I do today I worked for Xerox within an HR and had a training manager role that supported the European operations. After taking redundancy, I started a temporary role within a recruitment agency, where I stayed for two years before being headhunted for a training role within an insurance broker. Eleven years ago, I joined a second insurance broker as the HR Director and ten years later decided to take a career break and change in direction. All of the experiences that I have had in either HR, Training and Recruitment enable me to provide support to our clients in my current role.



## What has been your biggest challenge in your role?

Learning how to use what is quite a complex system and the internal processes whilst working from home. The team have been very supportive and patient when helping me with this. Thank goodness for screen sharing in Zoom! The other challenge has been to get to know the many different clients and to understand the issues that they face so that you feel able to advise and support.

## What do you enjoy most about your job?

The satisfaction of helping the clients through what sometimes to them feels like a mountain of issues. When a client says to you "Thank you so much, I don't know what I'd do if you weren't there to help".

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## What do you think sets Outset apart?

The accountability of the staff. Everyone is always willing either to help me or follow something through for the client – and I think the client sees that we're a cohesive team regardless of which part of the business you support.

## When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A chef until I realised that it was a two-year placement at college after leaving secondary education. So opted for a 1 year Intensive Secretarial college course instead.

## What do you wish someone had told you when you started out? Or what piece of advice were you given early on that has stuck with you?

To be the person you are and not try to be someone you are not. Always strive to do the best that you can in whatever you are doing.

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## What do you enjoy doing when you are not working?

I'm a Saints fan so enjoy my football. Also, car racing so F1 and BTCC keeps me occupied. We are coming to the time when I spend most of my spare time in the garden making it look abundant with flowers. I also have two Shih Tzu's that absorb a lot of my attention as you can imagine.

## Who inspires you most and why?

It's hard to single someone out especially in the current times and the challenges that everyone has faced this year. I admire parents that have had to home school; NHS staff treating patients; people raising money for charities; communities supporting each other.



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## And finally... What is one thing you've learnt during lockdown?

My lockdowns were in two halves. The first was prior to me joining Outset and being in lockdown with my partner 24/7. What I learnt then was to be more accepting that nothing would be perfect and tidy in the house. And if he had a madcap idea and started a "little project" that caused upheaval, at least it kept him occupied.

In the second half I was in my role at Outset and outside of my own bubble. That helped me learn how much Covid had affected not just the day to day aspects of work but how managers had to learn new ways of managing their staff and primarily their health and safety.

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