

# My career in brief...

Name: Jennifer McKeever

Job title: Director

Industry:

Company: AIRporter

## 1. Please give a brief overview of your career history – where you started, how you progressed, the companies you have worked for etc

As a child of Northern Irish immigrants my family and I crossed the Atlantic 4 times so I grew up in both Canada and Northern Ireland. I did a degree in English in University in Ottawa, and when I graduated I had little idea of what I wanted to do. Throughout my studies I had worked in several Canadian banks, but wasn't convinced it was what I wanted as a full time career. When my parents decided they were interested in returning to Northern Ireland once again it seemed as good a career choice as any, so we returned and started the AIRporter business in 1996.

## 2. Have you always wanted to work within hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism and why? If not, how did you end up where you are now?

Definitely not! As I say, my background was banking and my degree was English so it wasn't where I thought I would end up at all! AIRporter was a business idea that came about as most should - as a simple solution to a simple problem: we were an Northern Irish family living away (how many of THOSE are there?!) and when we came home for a visit we had a hard time transporting 5 of us home from the airport.

## 3. What sort of qualifications and training have you had and what else would you like to do?

Other than my degree I don't have any other

## 4. What are the top 5 activities you would typically carry out on a daily basis?

Customer service remains my top priority and I am still involved in bookings but I am also Financial Controller, and in charge of all Marketing and PR. My other duties include staff scheduling (20 staff) and HR.

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

Working with customers

*'Put a smile on your customer faces - it's so easy to achieve and means everything.'*

## 6. What would you say is the biggest challenge you face on a daily basis?

Getting as many customers as possible!

## **7. What would you say is your biggest achievement to date?**

We just celebrated our 500,000 customer at the beginning of October and we became the first transport company in Northern Ireland to introduce free Wi-Fi on board our whole fleet this past summer.

## **8. Who has been the greatest influence/role model in your career and why?**

My dad, who sadly died two years ago. He genuinely wanted to improve the whole standard of public transport in Northern Ireland, and even as a private company, AIRporter has gone some way to achieving that.

## **9. Do you have a favourite tale or most memorable moment from your career? If so, please tell us about it!**

As a "successful" woman in business I have been invited in the past to meet Hilary Clinton, Mo Mowlam and the Queen!

## **10. What piece of advice would you offer someone who wants to work within our industries?**

Put a smile on your customer faces - it's so easy to achieve and means everything.

## **11. Why would you encourage someone to work in our industry?**

It's very fun and you are kept busy all the time. We need great people in our Tourism industry - so much of our future depends on it.

## **Further information**

For further information on career opportunities in the hotel or other hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries, please visit [www.uksp.co.uk](http://www.uksp.co.uk).