



Dawn Holmes

Vice President Corporate Security

Bank of America Merrill Lynch

**Dawn Holmes, Vice President of Corporate Security at Bank of America Merrill Lynch tells us about her career in the Security industry, the opportunities available and how she would like to see the industry advance.**

### Career

After completing a BA Hons degree in fine art, I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I took a job as a warehouse supervisor in Boots, just so I had a job.

I noticed a posting for an investigator advertised on a jobs board and the interesting job title caught my eye. I was interviewed, got the job and I have never looked back since.

After being an investigator for a while, I approached my boss with the idea of running some crime prevention days as I was fed up of telling people to lock stuff away and from there the job changed from investigator to advisor. I think it's easy in this industry to develop your role and take it into new places.

I moved around Boots, gaining security experience in different areas. I was then head-hunted by the Britannia Building Society (which was when I became involved in the Finance industry where I have stayed ever since). Later I moved to Experian, where I gained experience in a global company, and after 8 years, I moved to my current role at the Bank of America.

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### Opportunities

I was really lucky when I first started, my boss sent me on lots of courses (I think he knew it would be a challenge employing a scouse girl with no police/ military experience!)

I lapped up the courses and soon found myself with an amazing CV. Education wise, I have completed many foundation courses (equipping me with the basics) and I have an Advanced Certificate in Environmental Design & Crime Prevention and a MSc in Security & Risk Management.

### The Security Industry

The guard on a gatehouse is how I imagined security before I came to work in the industry.

Now I know differently. The Security industry is so varied and every day is different.

I was really lucky. In my first few years in security I worked in retail, logistics, corporate, manufacturing, I worked with Special branch, dealt with bombs and handled investigations. I really saw just how wide-ranging the industry is and how there would be a facet of the industry that would appeal to many different people.

### Women in Security

As one of the few women in security you do stand out. If you are good, this standing out will help you to achieve promotions and make the most of opportunities. There are also lots of groups: ASIS's Women in Security and the Womens Security Society for example, who will support you and help with networking.

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### The Future of Security

Security is changing and there is strong requirement for new entrants from a range of backgrounds possessing varying experiences and qualifications that will strengthen the team.

We are part of the business mechanism, having to prove our worth, justify our actions and show how we can add value. Women tend to "sell, not tell" which is an approach more fitting to how security has to operate within the business.

In the next few years I would like to see improved industry training, intelligent use of technologies, forward thinking and for the industries reputation to continue improve.