

Population Services International

Information interview was conducted with Lars Volz at PSI.

Could you briefly describe the work your organization carries out? Focus on providing choice within healthcare systems. Work by themselves and with local government partners through a defined framework. Varying frameworks with some needing to be generated, which can be strict within the local guidelines.

What does the average day look like in that job role? Everybody here is an innovative thinker. Large organisation with 9,000 staff globally, with an organic culture. Focus on openness, sharing ideas, not program driven; organisation which aims to maintain the standard of levels of communication.

What kind of skills do you consider are most relevant in your current job?

1. Exposure to technical areas through internships or course of study.
2. Personality component takes level of priority, require people who are passionate about the process and new techniques.
3. "Professional sense of humour" as have to cooperate with others' ideas

What pieces of advice would you give a current Masters/PhD student when applying for jobs within global health? Amplify technical exposure i.e reproduction health programs and internships. In cover letters highlight skills in personal communication, focus on why the person wants to do the work. Help the communicator make the choice about you by demonstrating clear communication skills, which can be as important as previous experience in related technical fields. What do you like about PSI specifically (not the job title).

Do you have a graduate scheme or specific recruitment rounds, or do you have job opportunities on a rolling basis? If not, when are job opportunities usually available: Keep CV's on file for short term jobs and a pipeline process for applicants. Hiring managers travelling across the world and talk with students about specific roles. If not right fit for one role can suggest another. Bids coming up need additional resources so do not discard anyone. Programs run 3-5 years so may be supporting that program and may be extended and not so program focused so may have spin-off, majority offer long time and short term.

What previous experience do you recommend for students at LSHTM, in particular for those who have limited work experience? Internship in a related field with varying lengths valued. Ideal length of internship is 6-12 months with preferable to have similar subject area to the job role.

General Advice: Reach out to organisation directly through LinkedIn to actual people. Global health specifically a rather closed industry and very competitive but in health there is a push to innovate so need to keep an open mind. Reach out to a director and make a connection "I'm you 10 years ago" and open dialogue, get a mentor. Ask director to forward your CV internally.