

CAREER SPOTLIGHT

Orla Cassin | Ancillary Operative, Saint-Gobain Ireland



Tell us about your career at Saint-Gobain so far

I started working with Saint-Gobain on a temporary part-time contract as an Administrator in January 2017 within the Kingscourt plant. In 2018, they were recruiting for Operatives and I thought 'why not give it a go'. I knew the company was close to home and maybe a change of direction was what I needed.

Tell us about your role

I am currently working as an Ancillary Operative. I am fully trained as a Paper Warehouse Operative on the foiling machine areas and as an Ancillary Operative I cover both roles for holidays and general absences. I also work as part of the team as Operations Administration Assistant working on tracking KPIs, CAPAS, and daily production reports. I'm currently the first full-time female Operative in the plant but this has never been a problem. I have fitted in very well with the guys and have always found that everyone in my team is focused and we all help each other out. I feel that I'm an asset to the group as my computer skills and my new-found forklift skills have made me a versatile employee.

“ I enjoy my work and the versatility of the job. I like coming in every day which is great. The people I work with are top class. ”

What made you want to work in your function and how did you start your career in this?

My career background to date has been in Administrative Management so this role is very new to me. Since my 20s, I have always worked in an office environment as a Customer Service Rep in a call centre to gradually working as a Project Coordinator, to now driving forklifts - it has been a big change in direction. But as I knew the company and its reputation I felt that if any job opportunities were to arise, I would jump at the chance to join.

What advice would you give to someone hoping to start a career in your profession?

Like everything else in life, if you really want to do something, just go for it. Don't let gender, age, or environment hold you back. There are plenty of opportunities in different areas within the group.



What kind of skills and characteristics do you need to succeed in your role?

Being a woman in a male dominated environment can present its challenges but this only makes me stronger to do a better job. I do have limitations and recognising them and being able to say I can't do that is half the battle. I'm capable and hardworking with a good work ethic. I am strong-minded with a willingness to learn new tasks.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Management is my background and I've never been afraid to take on new challenges so we'll see!

How has Saint-Gobain supported you to develop in your role?

Within my new role I have been trained on the forklifts and some machinery. I received training in my role as Paper Warehouse Operative by my colleague Dermot Proudfoot. His persistence and support was top class and helped to ensure I could complete the role on my own in a safe environment.

What challenges have you faced during your career and how have you overcome these?

Being the first female operative was a bit daunting at the start, but I had a few strong women within the group who encouraged me and spurred me on.

What's your favourite thing about working for Saint-Gobain?

I enjoy my work and the versatility of the job, I like coming in every day which is great. The people I work with are top class.

“ Like everything else in life if you really want to do something, just go for it. ”

Who do you find inspirational and why?

My mother who left us too young, she was my rock and supported me no matter what. She was a beautiful woman inside and out and if myself or my daughters could be half the woman she was, we'll be doing ok.