

# CAREER SPOTLIGHT

Jag Sharma | Promotions Manager



## Tell us about your career at Saint-Gobain so far

I've been with Saint-Gobain for almost two years and have been working as the Promotions Manager at Artex in Nottingham. I came across the role through an agency and thought it sounded perfect. I liked that it was focused on both B2B and B2C communications with a variety of customer segments. The job has been great as it's allowed me to work with different departments while managing a range of projects from brand refreshes to the development of promotional tools that help our sales team understand and sell our proposition.

## Tell us about your role

I work within the Marketing function which is part of the Commercial department. Tasks include managing external contractors such as creative agencies, designing campaigns, planning promotions, budgeting and measuring the success of activities, both online and offline. I also manage internal communications. The work is a real mix of strategic and tactical marketing, ensuring plans are put in place for the year ahead.

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

I studied towards a Masters in Marketing and then also completed my Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Postgraduate Diploma. After university, I started out on a graduate scheme at the telecoms company Marconi. I have since held roles in marketing and communications across a variety of industries including retail, biotech, energy and medical devices. Within these roles I managed small and large scale projects so undertook the Prince2 project management qualification to help deliver projects more efficiently. Projects included major events, product launches and brand development in the UK and globally. In my role prior to starting at Saint-Gobain, I set up a Marketing function for a UK medical device company, recruiting and managing a Marketing and Events team.



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

Try to gain some practical experience through apprenticeships and speak to people who work in the industry for advice. There are often government backed schemes to help graduates and school leavers get into work. Speak to careers advisors or visit company websites to see if they offer graduate schemes. Also think about taking a specific course to help build your knowledge and CV. Furthermore, subscribe to marketing networks on LinkedIn and the CIM.

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

Good communication skills are required to work in Marketing as you'll often have to collaborate with others from different departments and job levels. The ability to think creatively and to write content is a bonus but these skills can be taught so don't worry if you need to brush up on them. There are many short courses out there that offer training in communications and creative writing, for example.

## Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

I see myself as a Director or Head of Marketing, where I can help to set the strategic direction from a marketing perspective and develop a strong marketing function.

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

Saint-Gobain has helped me to develop in my role through training courses. I am currently undertaking a Leadership and Development course to refresh my skills. The training company is excellent and offers coaching to support me with the course. This is just one area of training that Saint-Gobain offers. The company has an excellent online portal called Boost which allows employees to sign up to training courses that range from competition law right through to those that help you to improve delegation or time management skills for example.

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

I have faced a number of challenges in my career prior to joining Saint-Gobain from plate spinning projects with similar deadlines to challenges where I have experienced my own knowledge gaps, for example due to a lack of training. In my previous roles, I have worked with people who have held different opinions or management styles to myself and this has required strong communication and negotiation skills.

There are always challenges, whether these are around budget, timescales or any of the other factors I have mentioned. Over time, I have learned to overcome these by understanding different working styles, becoming better at prioritisation, undertaking relevant training courses but mainly by communicating effectively. Often, just picking up the phone and having a conversation to explain why you have decided on a course of action works well.



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

Saint-Gobain has a great organisational culture, along with strong values and attitudes. It's an attractive place to work as there are so many companies and opportunities to develop and grow. The training is fantastic and I was so surprised to discover that many colleagues have been with the company for over 15 years.

## How does Saint-Gobain support your work/life balance, health and wellbeing?

One of the attractions when applying for my role was that Saint-Gobain offered flexible working and this was a real perk for me as I have children at primary school. Although I still work full-time hours, it is comforting to know that if I need to get to the school for any reason (e.g. if a child is ill), this will not be frowned upon and there is an understanding and trust that the work will still be completed. In terms of health and wellbeing, Saint-Gobain offers an excellent occupational health service. I have used this a couple of times and the team is fantastic. You don't often have on-site flu jabs or health checks at other companies so this is a real bonus. From my experience at Saint-Gobain I have found that I can make suggestions and recommendations and my manager will listen and often let me put my ideas into practice. I have seen this reflected through Saint-Gobain and believe that the company is really open to ideas from its employees.

## How does your role fit into Saint-Gobain's purpose of Making the World a Better Home?

As a company Artex is working hard to Make the World a Better Home. So far, we have saved 16 tonnes of CO2 which equates to 9 return flights from London to New York and we have also saved 4 tonnes of plastic. We have taken steps to change the way we do things and this has made a positive difference. For example, we now use sugar cane pallet wrap and have changed our heating from diesel to gas. It doesn't stop there though. We know there is a lot more to do and we are constantly reviewing how we can become more energy efficient across our whole business. My role is to help embed the Purpose into our working practices by communicating what we are doing and why we are doing things to help Make the World a Better Home. This includes bringing the purpose to life both visually and through stories or case studies at Artex.



**MAKING  
THE  
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