



Around the World and Back Again

Interviews and Profiles





Rosamund Browne

One of the best views of London is from a plane as it circles Heathrow International airport, preparing to land. This is particularly true on an early, sunny summer morning when sights like Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, the River Thames, and the London Eye are all beautifully illuminated in the bird's-eye view. It's a sight Rosamund Browne, principal international employment and labour counsel at Rockwell Collins Inc., can vouch for. She's seen it many, many times throughout her life, from traveling around the world both professionally and personally.

"Make sure you get a window seat, if you're on a flight to Heathrow that lands early morning," Browne says. "Apart from maybe being in a helicopter, that view before landing is spectacular." Browne credits much of her wanderlust and love for legal work to her adventurous parents. British by birth, she spent much of her childhood in Fiji where she remembers mixing with people from different

cultures and backgrounds. By the time she was five years old, her parents had taken her around the world three and a half times including traveling through India, Nepal, and Southeast Asia. She also spent a lot of time outdoors playing on remote island beaches in the South Pacific, learning to swim and sail. “My parents were mad keen sailors,” Browne says. “Instead of playing in a park in the UK as a kid, I would be in a boat, on the way to a weekend of sailing. The travel and experiences my parents exposed me to really shaped my life as an adult.”

Although Browne says she’s probably spent half of her life living outside of the United Kingdom, she did go back to attend the University of Manchester where she completed an undergraduate degree in Economic and Social Studies. After that she attended law school at the College of Law in London and her legal profession shaped up from there. After, that is, a few months stint of backpacking around the world.

She says she didn’t necessarily give a huge amount of thought to law as a profession, but always knew instinctively that she loved it. “I didn’t really have any kind of light bulb moment, but I just took to law during work experience. I loved the detail, I loved going to court, I loved the human element of it,” Browne says. “In hindsight it was a massive decision, but as I look back on my life some of the best decisions I’ve made were taken really fast.” Before coming to the Wokingham, UK offices of Rockwell Collins Inc. — a global aerospace information management services company headquartered in the United States — she served in private practice and in-house roles and lived and worked in Hong Kong.



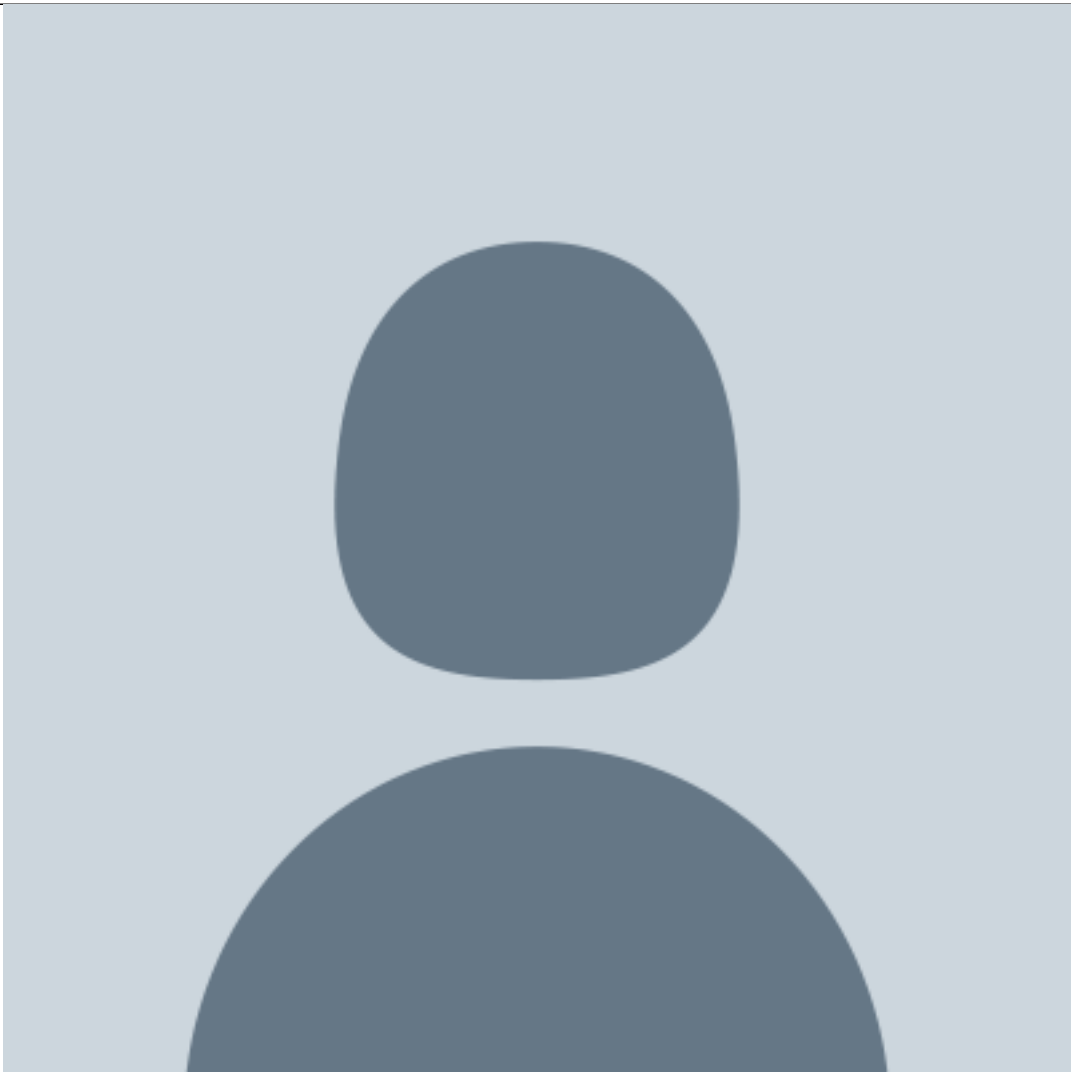
Admitted to practice law in both Hong Kong and England, she says she’s accumulated some great cross border employment law and litigation experience and this allows her to see key patterns and bigger issues from a high level international perspective that could affect any company.

Her days are fast paced and always different. Because of her broad understanding of international employment law and litigation, she handles calls from all over the world while simultaneously analyzing the in depth issues that are important within UK’s borders. Other days she may be on a

flight, preparing to meet with clients in person, and in between she tries to find a balance for her family.

She doesn't think of it so much as work life balance per se, but managing the merger of the two. "It's a trade off. If you want to work, you trade off time with the kids, and if you want to spend time with the kids, you have to trade off time with work. And you have to find some time to sleep too, or you'll get ill. It's a tough and competitive, profession and you have to be very committed. People may not quite appreciate in law school what the hours will be like when you get into the system. If you want a low stress job where you can go home on time, it's definitely not the right career." But she says it's possible to have a really interesting legal career and a family if you make good decisions, have a realistic approach, and have the determination to really want it. "It's important to have a support network in terms of friends and colleagues," Browne says. "Anyone who says starting out in law is an easy road isn't telling the truth. It's challenging and you need a good support network and positive people who will encourage you through the difficult times. You'll always be much stronger with a team on your side than on your own."

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