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Who are they?

AS A KEEN SKIER who regularly escaped to the slopes, maths graduate Gareth Williams became frustrated with the tedious process of searching through a multitude of airline and travel-agency websites to find the cheapest flights. So he and two university friends set about creating a single website that could collect, collate, and compare prices for every commercial flight in the world. Launched in Edinburgh in 2001, Skyscanner, which also provides instant online comparisons for hotels and car hire, gets more than 60 million visitors a month and now operates worldwide – it also has offices in Singapore, Beijing, Miami, and Barcelona. No organization offers as many opportunities to learn and grow as this one does, say its employees. Skyscanner perks include a paid day off to do a social activity, and home-country working, where people who aren't native to the UK can spend up to three weeks a year working in their country of origin. As the staff represent more than 35 different nationalities, this is a particularly popular benefit.



Lisa works at Skyscanner. Listen to the interview.



Interviewer: Well, today I'm very I'm very pleased to be visiting the Edinburgh offices of Skyscanner, a company which did extremely well in this year's Sunday Times Best Companies to Work for Awards coming 6th overall and winning outright in the categories for most exciting future and best **personal growth**. So, welcome to Lisa Imlanch. Lisa, could you start by telling us a bit about what you do?

Lisa: So, I am the RP, RP manager for the Danish Swedish and Turkish markets, I look after the PR agencies there and what that really means is that I work with them to get Skyscanner messages and stories into the media so that could be anything from a big report on **trends**, on the future of travel to smaller stories about where the Turkish people are going on summer holidays.

Interviewer: And how long have you worked in Skyscanner?

Lisa: I've just celebrated my year anniversary.

Interviewer: OH, well congratulations!

Lisa: Lots has changed in a year but all good changes.

Interviewer: And what was it that attracted you to apply for a job here?

Lisa: I had always wanted to work somewhere that was kind of **travel-focused**, my previous job was in a very dry environment, so much so that I decided I would go traveling and then the day before I flew to South America for a few months I had an interview here and find out when I was in the Bolivian **salt flats** that I got the job, really nice, yeah.

Interviewer: Skyscanner did very well in this year's Sunday Times survey of best companies to work for. Do you agree that it's a good place to work?

Lisa: Yeah, absolutely it's, it's a very funny thing actually, because it very quickly becomes the norm for someone who works here all these amazing benefits we have, so when you talk to someone else, you know, in another company, suddenly think 'Wow, we're so lucky' so, you know, anything from flexible working to small things like free fruit, to people being able to work from their home country, they're all massive benefits that you quite quickly get used to but I think everyone really does appreciate it.

Interviewer: So, I guess it would be difficult to go anywhere else after this?

Lisa: Yes, very much, maybe that's the plan, maybe that's **the ploy** that they've gone with!

Interviewer: Is there one thing that you'd identify for you as a particularly significant benefit?

Lisa: I have to admit what I really love is the flexible working policy, it's quite casual thing there's no formal **procedure**, but it, it very much places the trust with the, the employees so, you know, if I want to leave early on a Friday there is kind of this, relaxed understanding, do you know what? You'll make up the time when you can, you're in charge you're the, you're the one who knows your **workload**, your own role, which is really nice it's quite refreshing 'cause it's quite unusual especially within a large corporate, you know, organization, so I particularly like that.

Interviewer: Is there anything that you might change about, about the company or about its, the way it treats its employees?

Lisa: I think, so we're growing at quite a, kind of **rapid pace** and I think because we have six different offices- you know, Beijing, Miami -I think as we grow it will probably be something that we need to **tackle** in terms of how we all work together across different time zones, so I think at some point that will be something that becomes more of an issue, it's not at the moment, but I'm pretty confident that Skyscanner will be able to tackle that, and tackle that in good time.

Interviewer: Wonderful. OK, well, thank you very much indeed, Lisa thanks for your time

Lisa: Thank you!

