

A day in the life with...

Luula Mohamed

What is your official job title?

Guest service host

How long have you had the position here at LDO?

Nine years! But it doesn't feel like that! Time flies by so quickly.

How did you end up getting the job in the first place?

I previously worked for CSP as a host at the stadiums and was TUPED over. They asked me to come here and do Christmas wrapping just for the winter period. After that, they called me to ask to cover someone who was sick, and then I just ended up staying here permanently! I live just a 20-minute walk away, so I saw the stadium being built, and then LDO opened a number of years after the new stadium was finished.

Did you get any extra training when you came to LDO?

I had specific training on how to deal with the retailers, what to do when giving out mobility scooters and things like that – things that were specific for the site. When I used to host in the stadium it was mostly welcoming and directing people, whereas here we do a lot more with the partners and retailers. I also did first aid and defib training and I'm also a fire marshal. I've nearly have had to defib someone three times! But luckily, every time it has happened there has been a nurse or doctor nearby who has been able to do help.

Tell me about a day in the life – both a normal day and an event day.

Here, there is never a normal day! Today it is a very calm day, but you never know when something might happen. Today, for example, we have a photo shoot happening and models coming in so I am helping them and directing



them to the right place. As guest services, we deal more with the marketing of the LDO as well as the actual guest services. We treat them as though they are guests in our house. Some days it is relaxed, doing emails, answering calls, dealing with car parking. But on event days, we can be dealing with 90,000+ people as well as the shoppers, so we're responsible for everyone who walks through.

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What types of requests do you get in your role?

We say we are here to help, as long as it is legal! If we can help you, we will and we will do anything to help our guests. We used to help a blind man round the centre, explaining to him the types of trousers in the stores and what colours things are, taking him to the bus stop and things like that. We also have to help with so many lost children – in the summer it can be up to five or six children a week!

We had one child who went into the service list back of house and nobody could find him for hours, police took over the guest service office and we had a police helicopter here. CCTV eventually found him walking to the lift and we opened it up to find him just sitting in the lift.

What is your favourite part of your job?

Definitely the team. It is nice working with other teams on event days and sometimes we can have a really good laugh. On event days the team gets really pumped together to get the day done. Sometimes we have a DJ at the weekend and we end up dancing around with them!

Is there anything new you have learnt in the job?

I have learnt how to deal with people, before I started I didn't always know how to help in some situations. Now that I've had training, I feel I can handle people, even when they might be rude or angry. It is usually the car park that causes people to get so annoyed, so now I am better prepared to help calm them down and explain a situation. It is a skill to be able to deal with people when they are upset.

If you could give someone career advice, what would it be?

Sort out your pension! It is the most important thing! This generation don't think they need it, but I wish they would realise how important it is. I like to try and give advice about life, and it is so important for your future. I wasn't raised in this country, I was raised in Holland, and in schools there, they teach you about savings and getting your pension sorted, but here we don't seem to teach that which is such a shame.