

Championing genuinely flexible employers with Flexa Careers

As part of our quick fire questions series - or QFQs - we spoke to Molly Johnson-Jones, cofounder and CEO of Flexa Careers about flexible working, using your ingenuity and becoming the global source of truth about companies' working environments.

Temps de lecture : minute

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I have an autoimmune disease which causes a variety of symptoms, including pain and discomfort that can stop me from walking. Whilst working in a demanding investment banking role, my flare ups regularly made commuting and working in an office environment unbearable. So I asked my employer at the time if I could work from home roughly once a week. Ten days later, I was sacked.

My subsequent job hunt was fraught with anxiety thanks to the lack of clarity around where companies truly stand on flexible work. It's this lack of transparency which leaves candidates disempowered and in the dark, and which drove me (alongside my co-founders Maurice and Tim) to create a better way of finding genuinely flexible companies.

Tell me about the business - what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

Flexa Careers is a global directory for verified flexible companies. We work with the likes of Mars, Allianz, Depop, Carwow and Elvie, championing genuinely flexible employers so that they can be found

by hundreds of thousands of job seekers whose needs and values align with their specific offering.

We reach prospective customers in the same way that we enable our current customers to be discovered by talent: through brand building and awareness. For us, that means being known as the global source of truth when it comes to companies' working environments.

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

Flexa Careers was launched in 2019, just before the start of the pandemic. The shift to remote work sparked a rapid evolution of ways of working, and the business has grown quickly in-line with increasing demand for more flexibility and more work-life balance ever since. Now, almost half a million users across 70 different countries rely on the platform to find truly flexible opportunities, and there are over 150 verified flexible companies on the platform.

We've also grown to become a team of 13, and invested a great deal in developing our product. Workers' needs and values will continue to evolve, and it's our job to keep up; to understand exactly what talent wants from new roles, and to help them find companies whose offering stands up to this in reality.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=8&v=t_fWd2U6Bcc&feature=emb_title

Tell us about the working culture at Flexa?

Autonomy is at the heart of our working culture. As long as work gets done and to a high standard, we don't mind how, when or where it takes

place. We've known team members to take work calls from beach clubs in Malta, and dogs make regular appearances both in the office, and at our monthly team meet ups for those who prefer to work remotely the rest of the time. As much as we embrace remote work, we embrace opportunities to bring people together to have fun and bond in-person, too.

How are you funded?

We're VC-backed. Our seed funding round, which closed in May of this year raised £2.3M. *Ada Ventures led the round*, joined by Auxxo Ventures, HERmesa, and a wide range of angel investors.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

As a woman with a chronic illness, and as someone who launched a company with their partner, I'm constantly having to overcome people's preconceptions about who I am and what I'm capable of in the business world.

I've learnt that there's no quick fix for these issues - they require systematic change. In the meantime, two of the things which empower me to face those challenges are (ironically) Maurice and (predictably) flexible work. It's a huge help when the person you'd normally offload onto already understands exactly what you've been through that day. And by starting my day a little later, I can fit in the sleep and exercise I need to maintain my mental and physical health first, before working later when I have the most brain power.

How does Flexa Careers answer an unmet need?

There's literally no one else out there doing what we're doing. We've flipped the hiring process on its head: helping employers build brand awareness and showcasing their flexible working benefits so that they can be discovered by tons of talent who value those very same things. This avoids the need for expensive and time consuming reactive hiring, and ensures that hires are able to thrive in their new working environments. And the tens of thousands of job hunters who visit Flexa Careers every month show that there's undeniably a huge need for what we're doing.

What's in store for the future?

Genuine flexibility is here to stay and the demand will only increase. Growing alongside that demand, we want to be the first place that people think to go to when they're looking for a flexible role - whether you're a new parent looking for a company that offers enhanced parental leave, or whether you're looking for a dog-friendly office in New York that lets you fly home to work in London for some of the year. We are on track to have millions of users, and thousands of companies on the platform over the next two years - making us the biggest employer brand platform in the world.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders and new founders?

For those looking to raise fresh capital, the coming months are going to be a tricky time, and it's always important to be somewhat cautious with your runway. I'd suggest cutting burn down to give yourself more time. But tough times also bring out the best in the brightest founders. Use your ingenuity, network, and resilience to find creative solutions to tricky

problems. And ensure you're supporting your team properly throughout - you'll need them to be their best and most empowered selves to survive any market turbulence.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

Exercise is an important part of my daily routine. On the weekends, I love cycling and heading out on long rides from East London around Essex and Hertfordshire. I try to fit in the gym at lunchtime every day, and make sure to walk the dog for a couple of hours each day too. In the startup world, a lot of people perpetuate the "rise and grind" way of life, getting up at 5am and working out for two hours, meditating, all sorts! I'm not about that. I like my sleep, I like cooking, and I think that time to switch off and relax is crucial to success.

Molly Johnson-Jones is the cofounder and CEO of flexible work specialists, *Flexa Careers*.

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