

## Taking the People Track

**This Boston College MBA switched her focus from technology to HR strategy. Here's a typical busy day**

by Gina Marisca Striffler  
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I am a senior manager with Deloitte in New York City. On the HR Markets and Services Team, I lead several projects that aim to deliver on the professional development of our people. We design and deliver solutions for career enhancement, critical talent management, increased flexibility/choice, satisfaction, and retention. My projects are closely tied to the firm-wide People Strategy—the "people" aspects of Deloitte's 2010 strategy to be the standard of excellence.

Working on strategic projects has given me exposure to several leadership teams, including the CEO Sounding Board, comprised of 15 select managers or senior managers. Here, I realized that my ideas matter and can make a difference. The CEO Sounding Board meets with Jim Quigley, CEO of Deloitte & Touche, on a quarterly basis to help him think through the challenges and opportunities that he faces as a leader of roughly 35,000 U.S. professionals.

The fact that our CEO takes time to engage our hearts and minds, and values our input and recommendations speaks volumes of the kind of organization I work for (see BusinessWeek.com, 3/16/06, "[Deloitte & Touche: More Than Auditing](#)").

My experience at the Boston College [Carroll School of Management](#), where I graduated in May, 2004, was a true two-year expedition of self-discovery. At BC, I changed my focus from technology to an area of my utmost passion: people.

With a concentration in organizational studies, I traveled abroad to analyze the work-life integration challenges of European companies such as Disneyland Paris ([DIS](#)), Daimler Chrysler ([DCX](#)), Bosch, and others.

After writing a paper comparing Europe and the U.S., I realized that there are unique challenges to the people of these regions. For this, I received an award of distinction in Organization Studies at our commencement ceremony (see BusinessWeek.com, 10/26/06, "[Dig This: Talking To Gen Y](#)").

Here's how I put my MBA to good use in a typical day at work:

**7:30 a.m.**—Deloitte's virtual workplace allows us to work anywhere, anytime. So, while sometimes I can work in jeans and flip flops from my New York apartment, today I am fully suited (still with flip flops but my heels are in tow) and headed to the office in midtown Manhattan.

**8:10 a.m.:**—NYC subway entertainment never ceases to amaze me, but is great background as I respond to the e-mails I received overnight.

**8:20 a.m.**—I toss my *amNewYork* newspaper as I approach my coffee stand on 50th Street and Broadway. As usual, my large French vanilla already awaits me at the stand when I arrive with \$1.25...

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