



S2 Ep4 Kate Jeremiah and Louise Wykeham-Martin, joint Head of People Partnering at Lloyds Banking Group

Speaker Key:

FC	Fiona Cannon
MP	Maggie Pagano
KJ	Kate Jeremiah
LWM	Louise Wykeham-Martin

00:00:04

FC Hello, and welcome to the Agility Mindset podcast. I'm Fiona Cannon, Director of Responsible Business, Sustainability and Inclusion for Lloyds Banking Group and Director of the Agile Future forum.

MP And I'm Maggie Pagano.

FC In this series, we explore the practicalities of agile working, its implementation and the implications for business and the economy. Our guests today are Kate Jeremiah and Louise Wykeham-Martin, both blazing a trail when it comes to job sharing. Together, they are the joint Head of People Partnering at Lloyds Banking Group. Maggie sat down with them to discuss why and how they first decided to job share, as well as the benefits and challenges of sharing the workload.

MP I'm joined by Louise Wykeham-Martin and Kate Jeremiah, who have the most extraordinary task – in my mind anyway – is that they job share. And not only do they job share but they are job sharing in a job which actually works with people, and they're both called the Head of People Partnering. And they're going to explain to us how they managed to make this fantastic arrangement and how it works. Who wants to start first?

00:01:13

KJ I can start.

MP Do you want to start?

KJ So I'm Kate Jeremiah. I job share with Louise as the Head of People Partnering for a couple of divisions of Lloyds which basically means that we business partner three direct reports of the CEO. Partnering is quite a relationship-based role and so it's one that typically I think people think wouldn't be that suited to a job share. And I'm delighted to say that we do think it's very well suited to a job share now.

LWM Definitely.

MP Kate, can you just tell me, people partnering – is that basically what we would call



human resources?

KJ Yes.

MP You're looking into employment contracts...

00:01:49

KJ Yes.

KJ So we're generalists, right. So we... So our responsibility is to diagnose and determine what the people strategy for each of divisions should be, according to the overall group strategy of Lloyds. So we design and implement that with our people leaders and typically execute it through those people leaders. So we look at all of it.

LWM The whole thing.

KJ The whole lot.

MP Everything, A to Z.

KJ Yes, leadership is a big part of our role.

LWM Yes.

KJ Working with leaders to be the best that they can be.

MP And training, mentoring.

KJ Yes, coaching.

MP Coaching and so forth.

00:02:23

LWM Yes, all of that. Yes.

KJ Exactly. But in terms of the spectrum of stuff that we do day to day, there is no day that...

MP Is the same?

KJ Is like for like. It's very, very varied. And particularly as we look after three divisions. So...

MP Which are those three divisions, just to have an idea?

KJ So we look after Group Corporate Affairs, Responsible Business and Inclusion, the Chief of Staff for the CEO who also looks after Responsible Business and Inclusion, and Group Strategy, Corporate Development and Investor Relationship.

MP Wow, that's quite a big...

KJ So quite a range.

MP Quite a range, yes. Louise, do you want to explain to us how the job share came



about? Were you both working at Lloyds?

LWM Yes.

MP In different roles?

00:03:04

LWM Yes. So I think it's fair to say me and Kate knew each other. We were colleagues before we started working together as closely as we do now. And we both happened to go on maternity leave at a similar point in time. And actually this isn't needed or mandated for job shares, but we live quite close together in South London and we were both on maternity leave at the same time, and so we saw each other a bit. And...

MP During the after?

LWM Yes. So our focus was not on work; it was on looking after small children. And we both talked about our career and our aspirations and what we wanted to do next. And we talked around the fact that we wanted to progress and it was the perfect alignment of things coming together at the right time.

And we played around with the fact that maybe we could job share. So we started doing some research and looking at roles, and this role came up which was the Head of People Partnering, and thought why not? Why don't we see if we can make this work as a two? So we applied for the role and interviewed like everybody else. And I'm pleased to say we were successful.

MP Wow.

LWM Yes.

MP And how did you set out? Because you obviously didn't know how it would work.

00:04:17

LWM No.

MP How did you set out that you might be appropriate to share? Did you say one will do two days, three days, so and so would do more of this? Was it... How detailed were you?

LWM Very, I would say.

KJ Yes.

LWM We did have to have some really honest conversations in the beginning as well because you have to talk about life and how it would work in practice and what we both wanted. And I think we both knew that we could... Ideally, we would do three days each, which is what we do – so I do the start of the week, I do Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Kate does Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – and just how that would work in practice, I guess.

KJ And we took a plan to our interview.



LWM Yes, we did.

KJ So we said, look, this is how we think we could make it work across those stakeholders. And we were... And we drew from some role models actually. That was a really important...

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KJ Factor for us is that there had been a really senior job share appointment as an HR Director in Lloyds, so doing the equivalent of our job for... A very similar job to our job, basically. And they were external hires. And I remember, when it was announced, thinking that's pretty punchy; doing a partnering role as a job share will be really challenging – I wonder how it will work. And they did a brilliant job of it. And I met up with them whilst I was on maternity leave and said, look, we're going for this – what do you think? And they'd actually moved on to another organisation by then.

But we took a model that we knew could work. We took their learnings for how it worked in Lloyds, and what worked well and what didn't work well, because they had job shared across a number of different organisations and industries, and spoke to a number of people about what do you think the challenges of this would be, how could you overcome them – and we took a plan and we said this is how we'd want to operate it. And actually, we've grown a lot within that plan but I don't think we've deviated massively...

LWM No.

MP Have you not?

KJ From what we proposed in the first place. It's gone... She says, touching wood.

MP Touch...

00:06:02

KJ It's gone quite well to plan. But we were very detailed about how we wanted it to operate according to what we needed personally and what we needed from... How we thought we could be most effective.

LWM Yes.

MP Give me some idea of the sort of detail that you had prepared.

KJ How we would divvy up against stakeholders? So...

LWM Yes. I think the big thing was we were cognisant of the fact that people would probably be quite cynical around actually it's a relationship based role – how were we going to do this with having a relationship with two people? These are senior leaders in the bank and they're busy.

So actually, we talked about how we were going to make that work, how we were going to be seamless in our handovers. So the worst thing for Kate and I would be for one of us to be in a meeting and not have all the information or default to, oh,



Kate was in here. We have to know what's going on...

MP Exactly.

LWM The whole time to make it work.

MP And I guess the reporting between the two of you...

KJ Yes.

00:06:57

LWM Yes.

MP Must be extraordinary.

LWM Difficult, yes.

MP And in such detail. Do you almost do a handover...?

LWM We do.

MP On that Wednesday.

LWM So...

MP What happens on the Wednesday? I would've thought that's an interesting day.

KJ Well, we try not to, actually.

LWM Yes.

KJ We try and be as briefed as possible ahead of Wednesday.

LWM I think, so I work in the office, or wherever I'm working on the Monday and Tuesday. And actually, on a Tuesday night, I will do a voice note to Kate for her to listen to on the Wednesday coming into work on the tube.

KJ And sometimes on a Monday night.

00:07:22

LWM And sometimes on Monday.

KJ When it's really busy.

LWM Yes.

KJ You'll do a lots happened today; I need to give you the evolving picture.

LWM Yes.

KJ So when things have got quite complicated with some of the more knotty issues that we've had going on, we'll talk regularly on the Monday, we'll do a voice note on the Monday night, and then we'll talk on the Tuesday, in order that by Wednesday, we have got the complete richness of what's happened on both of those days. Which would be a compromise in some people's eyes. To me, it's just



in terms of what it affords us, in terms of being able to do our jobs brilliantly, I'd do that all day long. I like talking to Louise. It's not too much of a hardship.

LWM And we're interested. So it's our baby – we want it to work, so...

MP Yes, of course, so your mindset is there.

KJ Yes.

MP You said knotty issues, Kate. And I was just thinking as you were talking, say somebody has been sacked for some sort of outrageous... For whatever it is, and you, Louise, are handling this on the Monday/Tuesday, and then maybe you've got to finish it off at the end of the week...

00:08:21

KJ Yes.

MP That must be quite difficult because, in a sense, you've set the tone, the mood of this person.

KJ Yes.

MP Or maybe it's something that's good, but it's all about emotion, isn't it? How on earth do you then continue that relationship with that person?

KJ It's actually not as difficult as you think. And I think that's because Louise and I, one of the critical things, I think, about why it works is our value set across HR stuff, people stuff, career stuff is very similar. And that was one of the things that we needed to really test before we did the job, is our skill sets can be quite different, our approaches can be quite different, but fundamentally, Louise subscribes to the same school of HR as me.

And that's really important, actually. We know that we're probably not going to be that different in terms of our core beliefs, and that has proved to be really valuable. So it's not as difficult as you'd think in terms of handing that stuff over, as long as we're well briefed. So...

00:09:22

LWM Yes. And also, I think on a Thursday and Friday, I will answer the phone to Kate. I'm not on the hook for it the same because...

MP No, I was going to ask you...

LWM Yes.

KJ Yes.

MP Do you sometimes? Yes.

LWM Yes. So I might be feeding my toddler breakfast and answering the phone to Kate because I know that I can have a quick conversation which will cut through a load of information to get what we need to get done by the end of the week. But actually,



Kate will then take it forward. So we are... It works for us. We're in constant communication. But we do get that break. We do get that balance, which is one of the nice things about doing the job share.

MP You said that it's pretty much worked to plan and you've now done a year of it.

LWM Yes.

KJ Yes.

MP Is that...? That's correct. Have there been any surprises though? Tell us about...

LWM A few.

MP Things that you have had to adapt to. I can see by your faces, look, yes.

00:10:06

LWM Yes.

MP So...

LWM I think probably what we were most surprised at is that, as Kate said, we do come at things most of the time with a similar approach. But we do have differences of opinion. And...

MP I'm sure you do. I can see that.

LWM Yes. And so we have to challenge each other. So often, on a Wednesday, for instance, we might have a conversation and Kate will say, why do you think that? And we battle it out and have to work out what our approach is. Because the worst thing we could do is me going in to see a senior stakeholder with one point of view and Kate going in with another.

MP No, absolutely.

LWM We have to be united. So I think that's probably one of the biggest surprises.

KJ I think what surprised me even more than that was that was something that I was nervous of to start off with – is, god, what if we disagree? And actually, what surprised me even more is how positive that is. Because typically, things that we deploy aren't... They're being deployed to people with a wide range of opinions and experiences.

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So actually having that difference in opinion, I think, makes our outputs much more rounded and effective. And I really appreciate it. I actually think it's a really positive thing when Louise challenges me. I feel like we're going to get to something better as a consequence of this.

LWM Yes.

KJ So...



- MP Because you have a second opinion.
- KJ Totally.
- MP And you can just debate it, your issue.
- KJ Yes, absolutely. It's like having a professional conscience as part of your job. And in what we do, I think that's really valuable and it's something that I used to draw on my boss for and I don't need to anymore because...
- LWM No, because we have each other.
- KJ We have each other to do it. So we get to a much more rounded output. So the surprises for me have generally been very positive.
- MP Any negative? Do you miss out on things? Say you've started something and you finish it off, do you ever think, god, I really wanted to have handled that one or...
- 00:11:53
- KJ No.
- LWM No, I don't think so.
- KJ No, I never feel like that. I do feel like our outputs are representative of the both of us always.
- LWM Yes.
- KJ Louise was brilliant this week and she got praised for something by one of our most critical and senior stakeholders.
- MP Oh, right.
- KJ And told me this morning – she said, I'm not going to be able to take the credit for that. That was all Kate – I just finished it off.
- MP Oh, right. Okay, wow.
- KJ And I do feel like...
- MP So you shared the praise, yes.
- LWM I felt uncomfortable about it yesterday because I thought, yes, I didn't actually contribute to that much, but...
- 00:12:19
- KJ But it feels like, always, our outputs are... I feel like all wins and loses are for us, for our role, never for an individual.
- LWM Yes. No.
- KJ Because it does feel so balanced.
- LWM Yes.



MP Do people...?

LWM And there might be different things we lead on.

KJ Yes.

LWM So if I've got lots of work coming in, it might be, do you know what, I'll take the lead on this, Kate.

KJ Yes.

LWM And you just help.

MP And presumably, you've got different strengths and areas where you're genuinely interested in more than others. So...

LWM Yes, for sure.

MP Yes. What about...? You said a lot of people were cynical at the beginning. How do they respond to the role now? And do they ever use it to divide you?

00:13:00

LWM Do you know what? I was thinking about this on the way. I think one of the nicest things for us is that it feels like, when we're talking to our senior stakeholders, that they'll talk to either of us. And actually, they're not always that sure on what days we work, which I think is proof that actually...

MP Quite good.

LWM This works quite well. Because there would be nothing worse for me than if they hung around till the end of the week to speak to Kate rather than me.

MP Yes, that wouldn't be very nice, would it?

MP A queue at the door on Thursday.

LWM Yes. So I think, yes...

KJ I think that we felt... I don't think any of our stakeholders had worked with a job share at our level before. Is that safe to say?

LWM Yes.

KJ I can't think that they would've done. I can't think they would've done.

LWM No.

00:13:45

KJ And so we felt we had a lot to prove. And so we were very organised in our first couple of months about having some quick significant wins with all of our stakeholders to demonstrate that there wasn't going to be an overhead that they would need to manage. Because that was certainly, I'll be honest, how I felt about job shares a bit when I saw them on people's emails.



- MP Before it.
- LWM Yes.
- KJ I just though, oh goodness me, I'm going to have to remember what days they work and wait to see this person.
- LWM Have this conversation twice.
- KJ Exactly, and have to, exactly, repeat myself and that kind of thing. So I felt very cognisant of the kind of preconceptions that our stakeholders might have. And we proactively felt that we needed to live it, to demonstrate that they didn't need to worry about it. And I think doing that quite proactively paid dividends for us because we were able to get some things, some big things over the line quite quickly that just showed you don't have to worry about this, it's fine.
- MP So you mentioned, Louise, that you often will call Kate on a Thursday morning just for a catch-up.
- 00:14:47
- LWM Yes.
- MP Do you find that or do you think that you're actually working harder by doing this job sharing than perhaps if you were just doing the job by yourself?
- LWM Probably, yes. But I think we both have the appetite and interest to do it. My loyalty definitely is with Kate in terms of I want to set her up to succeed for the rest of the week when I'm not there. And also, I think we both feel really invested in by Lloyds and the fact that they took a punt on us and said, okay, we can – we'll make this work at this level. So we have the commitment to make it successful. And we certainly feel invested in.
- KJ And I agree. And the answer is yes, but what it affords us is much greater than me chatting to Louise whilst my baby throws food all over the kitchen and there's a bit of swearing and all that sort of thing.
- LWM Which did happen yesterday.
- KJ Which did happen yesterday.
- LWM Yes.
- KJ I think it gives me back a lot more. My acid test is I don't have to have childcare on Monday and Tuesday at all. I can multitask. And that's fine with me. I'm okay with that. And I think everybody at senior level, rightly or wrongly, works more than their 35 hours. So I work more than 0.6 of 35 and I'm fine with that and that's...
- 00:16:03
- MP That's part of the deal.
- LWM Yes.



- KJ And I feel I get much more back for it than I have to give in addition.
- MP Have many others tried to follow your example within either from your own friends outside but also within the bank?
- LWM Yes.
- MP Have you found you've set a trend, ladies?
- LWM Do you know what? I feel really lucky. I made a lot of friends when I was on maternity leave and I felt very, very, very lucky and I still feel very lucky now that I got to go back doing a job that I love within three days. Lots of my friends haven't had that opportunity. They were going back trying to multitask, doing full-time work, having childcare issues, all sorts of things. So, yes.
- KJ And within our team, we have... how many job shares now?
- LWM Four.
- KJ Four, yes.
- 00:16:52
- MP Oh, really?
- KJ At the moment, yes.
- MP Subsequent to you two doing it?
- LWM No.
- KJ Similar time. Similar time. So some have been after, some were before. And I really... The example I gave earlier about that very senior HR hire a few years ago, I think that really dispelled a lot of preconceptions about it, and I do think it's got a domino effect. I think that when people prove that it can be done successfully...
- KJ That physical role models thing is just so powerful.
- LWM We have people talk... So we've got a couple of calls actually...
- KJ Yes.
- LWM Next week, where people want to come and actively talk to us about could they do it and how do they make it work.
- MP Yes. What, changing what they're doing now?
- 00:17:29
- LWM Yes.
- MP Yes. Within the bank?
- LWM Yes.



MP Yes. Fantastic.

LWM Which is great, and we love talking about it

KJ I think the only danger is that we have to accept that there is going to be a level of cynicism based on a long history of preconceptions that we can't just unwind immediately. And so being too binary and provocative about it won't be helpful. We have to help people understand that there is another way of doing it.

MP Another way.

KJ And that is going to, in my view, have to be through doing and demonstrating and proving it. And I don't feel like I'm entitled to this. I feel like it's an investment and I think it's going to take a few years. I hope by the time my daughter is going back to work after having children, we'll laugh that it was something that we had to prove.

00:19:19

But it is going to take a long time because my parents were doing things in a completely different way. And that's not something that we can just rewrite; that's just life. So I think it's going to take a few years. But I love the sentiment of we start off from that starting point. But being very binary about it won't work.

MP No, I agree. But in a sense, you were saying the best is showing, isn't it, rather than telling, but a lot of businesses won't have seen your example.

KJ Totally.

MP Would be too small to even think about it. So in a sense, that onus on them to explain is, I would've thought, quite a positive move.

KJ Yes. Definitely positive.

MP Rather like auto-enrolment, use the same sort of approach.

KJ Definitely positive. We have to help them. We have to educate people though. I don't... And I see that as a responsibility that we have.

LWM Yes.

KJ Which is why I feel very strongly that we do talk externally about this. I don't think it happens overnight. I don't think it happens just by changing the rules. I think you have to get endorsement and advocacy from it, otherwise it will be a tick box and it won't work. And I think that there are real nuances about why this works well for us. And so I think if people feel that it's a tick box thing, I think it will be less effective.

00:20:41

MP I think that's appropriate, yes. But at the same time, and this brings us onto the whole notion of agile working rather than flexible or partnering, which is... And particularly now with work changing with social media, emails, forms of technology



that were, as you were saying, in your parent's generation or even our generation, unthought of, means that actually people will have to look at things in a much more radical way. And do you think actually that social media and so forth has helped you both because you can look at emails at 11 o'clock?

LWM Oh, definitely, and actually just the way that we work. So we do have a hard finish at the end of the day because we have to go home and feed our children and put them to bed. But last night, I was logged on at eight o'clock, so it suited me. Not because there was an expectation of me to do it, but yes, I could do that and I have access to technology that allows me to do that.

KJ We can voice note each other.

LWM Yes, we can voice note which really helps in terms of handing over some of the richness of what we do. Where it's very sensitive, we have phone calls obviously. But there has definitely been technology things that have enabled us to do this in a much more effective way than I think we could've done five years ago even. I hope, in five years, it's even easier. There have been some technological challenges.

00:21:59

KJ There has been. When you talk about challenges, there have been some...

LWM Yes.

KJ Technology challenges for us, when we came back actually.

LWM Definitely.

MP What was that in regard to?

KJ Just...

LWM It sounds really minutiae.

KJ I think it does sound minutiae.

LWM But...

KJ But having a joint email address – actually, that didn't work.

LWM It was too difficult.

KJ It was too difficult.

MP Oh, really?

LWM So we said

00:22:19

KJ Not for us. Yes, it...

MP But for everybody else.



- KJ Not for everyone else even.
- LWM It was more for...
- KJ Just the technology didn't support what we needed it to do.
- LWM The platform didn't...
- MP That's interesting.
- KJ We needed to have... This sounds really minutiae but it was so frustrating. We wanted to have a joint email address so that whenever you were emailing us, you didn't have to email two people. We felt like that was a logical thing. However, we couldn't have a shared way of filing emails. That was beyond the
- LWM The realms of IT.
- KJ And we were like, well, that's going to be completely impossible because then we're going to have... We're not going to be able to manage our inbox, which is a key part of how we do business in Lloyds. So that was incredibly frustrating and hopefully won't be an issue in a few years' time. But it was just it took months to get it approved; and then we got it approved and then we were like, oh, it can't do this key thing – well, then we can't have it. Brilliant. So just email
- 00:23:06
- MP It's often the silly things like that, isn't it?
- LWM Yes.
- KJ Yes.
- MP Yes. So go back to within the organisation. Is the demand for job sharing coming from unlikely sources, unlikely people? What are you seeing on the ground?
- LWM I would say typically, if I'm honest, it is people with profiles similar to mine and Kate's at the moment...
- MP Yes. That's women with young children.
- LWM That come and talk to us about it.
- MP Yes, because it's working very well.
- LWM Yes. I'd like to see it across the board more. But I'd say typically it's, yes, people that are similar to us at the moment.
- KJ Yes. And we've had some big names, big visible role models. Again, I can't understate how important I think they are. Our Chief Economist has been in two incumbents, a part-time job which has been a big thing.
- 00:24:01
- LWM Yes.
- KJ And that's been quite powerful. Not a job typically that people considered as a...



- MP No. Part-time or a job share?
- KJ Part-time.
- LWM Part-time.
- MP Part-time, right.
- KJ And I feel like job sharing is a step beyond. So I think a big thing has been that Lloyds has increased its paternity leave offering to be quite industry leading. Again, that will take years. But when you've got enough blokes who are at home, setting up the routines for the babies and setting up the domestic family stuff, that's when you'll get a much more equal demand for flexible, and therefore the less typical flexible working arrangements which, at the moment, is job sharing. But there are some high profile job shares of men and women coming through.
- MP Of men and women?
- LWM Yes.
- MP Men and women sharing?
- LWM Yes.
- 00:24:49
- KJ There is actually one, yes. A couple I think I'm aware of, certainly. But yes, typically, at the moment, it's young mums.
- MP Does it usually come about because people, rather like you two, are good friends and they can see that there is a natural, mutual symbiosis, if you like?
- LWM No.
- KJ No.
- MP No, it's not?
- LWM I haven't seen many, actually. It's more...
- MP The pragmatic.
- LWM Yes.
- KJ The questions that I get are, did you find each other on a directory or a register?
- LWM Yes, did you find on a register?
- MP Oh, really?
- LWM No.
- MP Oh, wow.
- 00:25:19
- KJ Absolutely not.



- MP But that just shows you, in a sense, how little people know.
- LWM Yes. Or did you find the job and then try and find the job share partner? And actually, I think we both feel really strongly about the fact that we had the discussion about what we both wanted.
- MP Wanted.
- LWM And then we found the job. And for us, that is definitely...
- KJ Critical.
- LWM What worked and was critical, yes, because we had to be on the same page. I'm not sure that I would've done it...
- KJ The other way.
- LWM The other way.
- KJ No.
- MP Will there ever come a time when either of you want to go full-time again, do you think?
- LWM We have this conversation. Honestly, we are more honest with each other than we are with our husbands, probably, at times.
- 00:25:53
- KJ Yes. I have to get Louise to sign off all my personal decisions before my husband.
- LWM But we did have to talk about career and aspirations.
- MP Yes, no, of course.
- LWM Because you do. And we take time off actually, or take time away, at various points in the year to talk about how it's working, what we need to look at, what we need to focus on. And we have really honest conversations. We give each other feedback. I've got a coach in Kate and she's got a coach in me, which is great. And we have talked about that. What happens if one of us wants to go full-time again?
- MP And, tell us. Tell us.
- KJ At the moment...
- LWM At the moment...
- KJ No.
- LWM We don't.
- MP No, you don't.
- KJ At the moment, we're both pregnant, so no.



00:26:31

MP What's going...? Well, I can see the difference in timing, I think. Yes?

LWM Yes, just.

MP So how is that going to work? Will you...?

LWM So I will go off before Kate and then Kate will actually... You're going to up your hours actually, aren't you?

MP You didn't plan this pregnancy, by the way, did you? Yes?

KJ Yes. We did. We did.

MP To coincide?

LWM We both knew we wanted a second child.

KJ Yes.

LWM If we're being completely candid about it.

KJ Yes.

LWM And so it...

MP It seemed...

LWM And now we're aligned again which is great.

00:27:02

KJ Our first children are similar ages.

LWM Yes.

KJ So we're both going to have a roughly two year gap which is quite typical. I think it would've been more difficult if we'd been off this...

MP Not aligned in that sense.

KJ Similar timescales on the first. But yes, we talked about it but we weren't quite that...

LWM Explicit.

KJ Whenever anyone goes on maternity leave, there is always this thing about feeling protective of what you're leaving behind. I feel it's slightly more so this time because I feel very protective of Louise as well. It's not just me. It's not just my job I'm leaving behind.

LWM It's both of us.

KJ It's our job. And so yes, I'm more thoughtful about it in some respects, and just making sure that I leave things as well as possible for Louise to come back to. But we've got a really supportive boss and a really supportive organisation behind us



which makes a massive difference. I don't feel like anyone is trying to catch us out. I feel like everyone is very supportive of what we're doing, which is such a key thing for us, I think.

00:28:03

LWM And I think we'll still be interested when we're on maternity leave.

KJ Oh, yes.

LWM I think there'll still be calls being made and tell me what's going on.

MP I think most people...

LWM Yes.

MP To just cut yourself off would be...

LWM Yes.

MP Very difficult anyway, wouldn't it?

LWM Yes, really tricky.

MP Do you think that's the secret, not just of your success, but you couldn't have done it without this fantastic boss and employer behind you?

LWM 100%.

MP Who've really wanted it to work.

LWM Yes, and have supported us from day one to make it work...

00:28:30

KJ Yes.

LWM And have been very understanding. And I think probably in the early days as well, there was... When we were settling our children into nursery or childcare, there were times when we would face some challenges in terms of getting into the office. We have had a couple of those, to be completely honest. And our boss has been really, really supportive and just helping us make it work.

KJ But equally, because we're a job share, those have been a lot less bumpy than for some people that are coming back and they're on their own. We've been able to cover each other and come in on...

LWM The days that we don't necessarily work.

KJ Yes. The chicken box days.

LWM Yes.

KJ We could... We were able to cover each other in a way that other people can't do when there is that inevitable couple of months of chaos and sickness and tears.



LWM Yes.

KJ So actually, the job share made that easier. But fundamentally, the critical success factors for us have been picking each other before the job and having a partnership that we are confident in before finding the job, frankly, but also picking a boss. Our boss is fantastically supportive and just wants the best people doing the job, doesn't care if it's two people or one – just wants the best people doing it and fundamentally believes that we are. And that's made a huge difference for us.

00:29:48

LWM Yes.

MP That's magnificent, ladies. Thank you so much. Thank you.

MP Meeting these two ladies was really an amazing experience. They're almost like twins actually – so compatible. And what they demonstrated most of all, number one, is the trust between them. They were great friends, which I think was probably a very important point, before they did this. It's how they got to the idea. But that doesn't mean that other people can't do it. But that was very special to their relationship.

And what was clear is that this was a question of two plus two makes five; they both wanted to make sure that the other person in the job share was doing as well as them or better. In fact, they wanted to show very much that the two of them are adding more to their role and therefore to Lloyds Bank. I think they're really, really impressive, the way they work together.

FC The thing I took out of this one is the idea that what worked well is that they came as a package. So the losses and the wins were equal to both of them even if one or the other of them was responsible for it. So I thought that was really interesting.

00:31:05

And the other piece for me that's one of the things that's run through all of the interviews that we've been doing is how technology is an enabler and that you can do this if you've got good technology. And it of course can be a barrier if you don't. And the thing I liked most, I guess, was this piece around your starting point is why can't these jobs be done differently.

MP Yes.

FC Rather than people having to make a business case for agile working. If your mindset is these can all be done in an agile way, that seemed to me to be a really interesting way of looking at it.

MP But what was great too was that they came up with the idea, with the package, and then they took it to a senior person at Lloyds Bank who was open to it. So you need bottom up and top down, don't you?

FC Yes.

MP You need open minds at the top



FC That's right. So that whole agility mindset of leaders is really important.

FC What a great episode to wrap up the podcast series. And I think it leaves us in no doubt that organisations, individuals, and society fundamentally need to change if we're going to survive in the modern world.

Thank you for listening to this podcast. And if you're interested in learning more about agile working, please visit the Agile Future Forum website, or follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.