



Meet Anjali.

***LA*international**

Introduction.

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is transforming industries and empowering individuals to tackle complex challenges through innovation.

For Anjali, a contractor for LA International, this journey into ICT has been fuelled by a passion for technology and a commitment to making a significant impact. In this interview for Girls in ICT Day, Anjali shares her motivations for pursuing a career in ICT, highlights key experiences from her extensive career, and reflects on the dynamic nature of the ICT sector.

She also offers valuable advice for young women considering a similar path.

We hope that Anjali's experience and advice will inspire the next generation of women to pursue careers in ICT, as well as encourage those currently in the field to continue pushing boundaries and driving innovation.

What is your current role and what does a typical day look like for you?

My current role is a Programme Delivery Manager for the CISO function at a Government Client. On a typical day I would work with the SLT team to set priorities for the day at a daily stand up and then work with each of the teams to ensure they are understood, allocated and aligned with the overall strategic direction and objectives.

I would be the focal point to manage escalations, risks and resolve risks. Provide direction and report directly to the Government Client CISO.

How would your team describe you in 3 words?

I actually asked a colleague this ahead of this session and was told;

"Accountable, visionary and decisive"

What inspired you to pursue a career in ICT?

At the time I chose to pursue a career in IT (over 20 years ago now!) there were very few women in the industry. The few who were in the industry, I saw as role models and inspirational. I always had a passion for technology and problem solving and thrived in environments that are dynamic, fast-evolving with constant opportunities to learn and grow.

I wanted to make a difference to key challenges and was able to achieve some amazing things like implementing a secure network across 43 disparate police forces across the UK.

I also wanted to advocate diversity and inclusion through technology.



*"I wanted to
make a
difference"*



What is next for you in your career?

I've been lucky enough to experience tech in so many industries and work with blue chip clients both in the private and public sectors. Having spent a significant chunk of my career working in a Consulting Sector, I've had the opportunity to work with clients both in the UK and abroad.

Working with large organisations as well as small to medium SMEs, I've experienced growth in so many different ways. One of the best decisions I made was to establish Top Point Consulting Ltd as a SME in 2017. Learning the ropes of setting up my own business was a whole new challenge and a daunting one at first but also the most rewarding thing I've ever done.

I love tech design, build and delivery! However, I'd love to do more research based work going forward as well.

How do you interpret this year's Girls in ICT theme 'Girls in ICT for inclusive digital transformation' in the context of your work?

The theme hits the spot of why we as a society should encourage more women and girls to take up careers in technology, the technological world is the fastest evolving industry in our time, one of the unique qualities women can bring is more inclusivity to this evolution!

There is no getting away from technology, no matter which industry or career we look at now, so lets make sure the tech is built for inclusivity by women and girls!

What unique contributions do you believe women bring to the field of ICT?

The ability to design more inclusive and user-friendly technology. Bringing diverse perspectives into all aspects to the design and development of technology as well as to the workplace.

Strong collaboration and communication skills as well as problem solving as women are natural problem solvers.

Women are also strong advocates for ethical tech - bringing the human side to it rather than just for profit or consumerism.



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How can organisations better support women in ICT?

The industry has come a long way during the past 25 years that I've been working in IT, but there is always more that could be done and should be to ensure we attract the best talent, in my view organisations should be prioritising building inclusive workplace cultures where everybody (including women and girls) are seen, heard and valued. Celebrating and amplifying voices, highlight achievements of women in ICT internally and publicly.

Provide more mentorship with structured career development and growth leading to leadership development. Organisations that don't already, should set measurable goals for gender diversity in leadership (let's get more women around the board table!).

One that I didn't benefit from for years but would have made a world of difference is flexible working and support, remote working options and family-friendly policies to help retain talent.

Of course the most obvious one, addressing pay equity and promotion gaps - a lot of organisations still have quite a bit of work to do.

Having said all of that, we should also celebrate the growing number of women and girls who have taken up ICT roles, the picture was very different 20 years ago!



What motivates you to keep pushing forward in your career?

Curiosity. The pace at which technology is advancing (and that has both positives and negatives) means there is never a single day that I'm not learning something new. Everyday is a school day (no matter how many years of experience you have or how old you are) and the excitement of what the tech world will bring next. Being part of that evolution.

What do you wish people knew about working in ICT?

Everyone belongs here!! IT isn't just for one type of person, its for creators, thinkers, problem-solvers amongst a whole heap of other type of people! What matters is that you are curious (and that's true for any career), resilient and believe in yourself.



What advice would you give to young girls aspiring to enter the ICT field?

You don't have to know everything! Nobody starts as an expert and having a curious mindset and a persistent attitude matters way more than level of expertise! Just start and don't give up.

Be bold, ask questions (there is no such thing as a dumb questions). Be yourself and bring yourself to work each day, that's what delivers inclusivity in technology. Just by being your true authentic self, tech NEEDS YOU.

Your ideas, creativity and perspective will shape the future of tech. Diversity makes tech better for EVERYONE.

