



## QUESTIONS FOR MARCO BERTOZZI

### **1. What is your morning routine?**

Well I think my morning routine can be described as a pre and post Covid situation. Before COVID I would aim to be in the office for 830 so everything works back from there. Normally I will try and grab a few minutes with my son as he prepares to go to school, but after that quickly down to the station, so unfortunately not a good example as I don't eat breakfast! I will try and grab something before I get to work, or when I arrive if I have time. The one rule I do have is that I don't look at my email until I consider that work has started. As I have American bosses, I normally have a lot of emails landing in my inbox overnight, I consider the start of work to be when I am ready. It was a piece of advice I once received that if you roll over and check your email while still waking up and you see some bad news, it can spike adrenaline that is bad for the mind and body, just like sprinting before you have warmed up. The train is basically the start of my work so I'll grab myself a coffee at the station and sit down and start to go through what has arrived through the night, I think about the day ahead, check my calendar and see what meetings I have planned, and hope I am ready for them. And that's my routine!

### **2. At what age would you say was a good age to start at you first Saturday or holiday job?**

I don't think there's any rules around how young you start your first job. All work is work so if you're helping your parents clean the car, or helping out around the house that is the start of life's work ethic. I think if you want to have lots of experience on your CV by the time you're getting ready to leave Secondary School then you should have attempted to do some simple jobs we discussed; paper rounds, working in a shop perhaps some basic office work. Work experience is not always so much about the actual act of work but it's what it says about you as a person and what you are learning to do. So when you're thinking about your CV and you are thinking about what to do you should be thinking about what someone reading your CV would read into it. I gave the example of a paper round. The fact one has to do it every day, has to get up early before school shows a lot of commitment and energy and strength that tells someone about you. In the long run if you are thinking of working in an office then try and get experience in an office environment, but working in bars, restaurants is all important. What does working in a restaurant teach you? It teaches you customer Service, teaches you how to deal with people, it's all life skills.

### **3. What is the hardest part of applying for a job and what was the atmosphere like when you first entered the interview?**

The hardest part about applying for jobs is the actual work you have to put into it, it is very tempting to write one letter, send it to 100 people, one email, send to hundred people, and hope that some of them will stick. Getting your first job is one of the most important things you will do in your life, so you have to treat it like that, and you have to put the work in to do it successfully. My suggestion is to start narrow and work out, so pick your top 10/20 companies that you want to work for and really do your research on them. Then and only then, should you send an email because that email should be full of insights and highlights you've understood from your research. Don't take this work lightly, it's a job in itself but if you do it well you are more likely to succeed. As far as research is concerned, follow the Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram accounts and read through them, as you will understand what is on their minds and what's important to these companies in real time. Make sure you know when their internship program starts, make sure you understand if they have work placements, do all the suitable research you can and then, finally, don't be afraid to track a few people down,



it is absolutely fine to contact someone directly on LinkedIn with a well written note and express your interest. It's important that you start with that kind of communication.

#### **4. What are good interview tips? and what can you do to stop yourself sounding nervous in an interview?**

Those are two very big questions! I'll start with the interview tips, they're not going to sound very interesting because some are very basic, but I can assure you a lot of people get them wrong but if indeed you do get them right you will put yourself in the top 30% of all the people who interview. So first of all make sure you do the basics; turn up well before the interview time, don't take chances, don't plan for 15 minutes before because that can be eaten up very quickly with delays. Turn up an hour before, and go and have a coffee, then you stake the place out and you're ready to go. Secondly, it's important to dress smartly - now a jacket and tie may seem an overkill nowadays, and probably is, but it is a sign that you care and that you really want the job, I personally don't believe it will be taken as a negative, I think it shows that you're trying to be as smart as you can which can never be a bad thing. That said if it's not a shirt and tie I think it's fine to have more casual clothing, just be smart casual and well turned out. Lastly, and most importantly, do your research, don't be afraid to ask who is interviewing, try and get the name of the person because perhaps you can search them online. My favourite is if they have presented at an event and it is on YouTube, you really get a feeling for them. Maybe they put stuff on LinkedIn etc, this is a window for you to understand something about the interviewer, and what happens is when you enter the interview you feel like you know them a little bit better and you will naturally feel relaxed. Don't over use the information; I suggest not repeating back to them things are set on Twitter or on LinkedIn, just use it as background information and try to combine with your answers so it sounds a bit more organic. Lastly, do your research on the company as we said before in terms of writing the letter don't answer obvious questions with obvious answer if Sam says 'Why do you want to work at Spotify' don't say because you 'love music', say it's because you've been reading about the sustainability policy, and that is something you care about deeply and you only want work for companies that have that kind of policy. Make sure you know everything about the job you're doing as much as you can. I would also suggest trying to find out if there are people you know in the industry that you're trying to get into, that could be distant relatives friends or friends of friends, ask around, because a single conversation could give some tips and insight into what actually happens in these companies, and it will make you sound much better than the candidate who hasn't been able to get that inside information.

The question about nervousness is a really good one, there are good tips and techniques about this, but without sounding repetitive one of the best things that will make you feel less nervous if you are well prepared. If you know your topic, if you're prepared, if you've written notes, if you thought about it, I promise you you're going to feel more confident when you walk into that room. Always make sure that you have prepared for the easiest questions, what I often see and hear when people are practising for interviews is, take a question like 'why should I hire you' for instance and in your head you may have a really great plan for that answer, yeah I know I'm going to talk about this I'm going to talk about that. This is where nerves kick in and if you have not practiced, you can fluff your lines! Make sure to have a proper answer to *why* should I hire you and *why* do you want to work at this company, that needs just as much effort as working at the balance sheet of a company or whatever else you might prepare for. The other small tip for the interview is people often ask you about your life, tell me about the things you've done, tell me about the job you've done, what you don't need to do is go through those jobs one by one and explain each one of them. Have a story ready, in business they often talk about the elevator pitch; it basically means how could you describe yourself or your company in 2 minutes, so what you have to do is script an overall story that people can follow, that will describe your journey and highlight the most important aspects that say the most about you.



### **5. How does good communication skills play a role in an interview?**

There are two things to take into account in an interview; good communication and good knowledge, we talked a lot about good knowledge so I won't go over that again, so good communication becomes the next biggest thing. Body language is an incredibly important aspect, it may sound a little bit daunting but in actual fact people judge you very quickly in the first 10 seconds so you have the potential to lose an interview. As you wait to be seen, don't slouch around on a couch staring at your phone. Be upright and attentive, always be polite to receptionists, look around you, read any materials lying around about the company. When you're being welcomed stand up straight and confident, be confident and don't be afraid to ask questions about how they are, shake their hands firmly (if we are still shaking hands), and don't have too much clutter, bags and jackets, keep it simple, keep it clean. When you come into the room if they ask if you want a coffee, my suggestion is to probably say no, I am just always one for keeping it simple, you can sit down at the same time, and get on with the meeting. In the interview, sit up straight, lean into the conversation, that is then giving signals that you're keen and enthusiastic and you want the job. My last piece of advice on this that I was given, which I wish I had remembered back in the day, if halfway through or at the start of an interview you don't like the feel of the person or you don't like the sound of the job keep going like it's the most important job you're ever going to get. What happens is because there is an interviewer will pick up on your disinterest and write you off but maybe by the end of the interview, you change your mind and have warmed into the sound of the role, but by then it will be too late. You only should only worry about whether you want the job or not when it's offered to you, before then you have to impress. My final tip on the interviews is that you may be interviewing in three or four different categories of industries like finance, advertising and travel. Treat every interview as if it is the only job you have ever wanted. It is totally fine to be interviewing with different companies within finance but an interviewer does not want to hear you say you would happily work in travel or finance or whatever - that shows indecisiveness and not enough desire, so keep that to yourself!

### **6. On a scale from 1-10 how determined do you think you were in getting the job you applied for?**

It is funny you should ask that question because my very first boss will tell you, and this is very old sounding, that the fax machine was ringing nonstop on their desk with me repetitively sending my application letter. I didn't actually do that to pester them, I just wasn't sure if it was getting through so I kept sending it! If I see that person now today 25 years later they still remember it and I still talk about it, so I think it's fair to say that I was pretty determined and then I think if you really want the job it's the only way to be

### **7. What advice would you give to current year 12s who are writing their personal statements who as a result of Covid-19 restrictions are unable to fulfil their work experience?**

That is a really good question, and I know it is incredibly difficult for people today in this situation. The only thing I can say is always be honest, honesty will always come first, but start to think about how you could frame your experience. Think in terms of what you wanted to achieve or perhaps what you missed out on doing, but at least set out what your plans were during this period of time with complete honesty. I would say don't waste time when you come out of the situation start to think about what you can do in advance and, depending on your age, perhaps it's something you can do now to volunteer through this difficult times, which I know would always look make future employers look favourably upon your work ethic and show how you care about the community around you.

### **8. How can you write a CV if you have not had a job or work experience before?**



I think for your early CV, if you don't have work experience, focus on your school career, perhaps think about anything that you have contributed during your school career. If you haven't done that, then think creatively about what you could say your interests have been, what your interests are and so on. I will say though that not having work experience is something that you should probably start to sort out.

**9. Do you normally have to rely on a person's CV to know about his/her skills?**

The later into your career you go, the less we rely on the CV, whether it is LinkedIn or contacts in the industry, or just searching the industry news, we can find out a lot. LinkedIn will tell them a lot about where you've worked how long you've worked there and so on. As you start your career I think yes the CV is an important starting point. I would suggest that you consider how to make it is as good as possible because we will go there first. Perhaps you have been in the local newspaper or had some kind of recognition so please make sure to mention in cover note. Your cover note is very important, it tells the story of your CV, it allows you to shine outside of just the CV.

**11. What would you recommend for those of us who do not have the opportunity for work experience? (I live in a rural area with few local jobs)**

Obviously I can't suggest without knowing exactly where you live or what is this happening there but I would check to make sure that you're not being too picky about what jobs are available. Would you wash up in a pub, would you deliver newspapers, what would you do or not do because if you are being selective about what you would do, you are making life tough for yourself. If none of those things work then perhaps you can find a way to be a little entrepreneurial and create your own little business, perhaps a car washing enterprise, perhaps you can help people in the community, perhaps you can volunteer, volunteering is incredibly important and we have not touched on that; if you don't have work experience, volunteering is the perfect way to show that you care both about the community around you, that you've got a work ethic and a drive to do something even in your local area for free, especially in a period like now.

**12. What is the difference between the access to jobs in your time and now?**

I can only talk about my industry, but I would say that what we have seen over the last few years a big increase in realisation that we have to not be fishing in the same ponds. So in the white collar marketplace the default has always been to hire graduates. Now there is a much greater need for diversity and inclusion, which is incredibly important in the workplace and people are looking to scholarships and work placements and internships that are more inclusive than ever before. There is a much greater focus on the creation of opportunities that don't rely on graduate degrees, and a willingness to see beyond the obvious set of benchmarks. So I'm encouraged that opportunities have opened up for school leavers and others which has to be a good thing. That said, it is a slow process and the BAME community is still not represented well because of hiring as much as anything, it has to accelerate.

**13. Did you think that you would be in your current position when you were Young?**

I always like to put that question back into context of if I was 18 and you offered me my current job role and company at this age, I would absolutely take it now. I would never have imagined that I could have ended up being at such a great company in a really interesting job at 48! At school, I would have been described as an average student for the type of school it was, yet here I am. So I didn't think back then that I would be in any specific job, the only thing that I would say, I had self-confidence and determination to keep working hard. I mentioned on the Q&A that my parents are an inspiration for hard work and determination





and I definitely had that built in, and always felt that if I kept pushing, kept trying and didn't let defeats set me back that I could achieve something.

**14. What sort of things does your job entail? And what experience did you have before you joined the company?**

My role is about leadership, now there are lots of definitions, but the way I would describe leadership is you have to be a good communicator, both in the company and externally, you have to set a direction and a goal for people to be able to get behind and understand. Everyone likes to know where they are heading and why they're heading there. It is also a role that is not always pleasant, you have to make tough decisions about people and structures. You don't do it lightly, but if you have a plan and you understand what the end benefits of this will be it is important to stick to your plan. Although this job was very different from previous roles, there were some needs that required what we called transferable skills. That means that some things you do are very specific, others can carry from one job to another in a different industry, leadership skills are very much an example. That is why it is important to understand your skills and grow them in any role you may be in, because you don't know what the next job may be.

**15. Have u been through challenges? How did you overcome them?**

Great question! Careers are long, careers often have ups and downs, the part of it where things go great and accelerate very quickly, but there are points where your career may plateau slightly and become a bit uneventful. The key to your career is to recognise the different stages and when to make the right decisions. I was fortunate enough to make a couple of decisions in my career that took me into parts of my industry when they were very early on and most people were not interested in them, but then turned out to be huge. That put me in growth sectors and exciting times. That always takes a little bit of stubbornness, and not listening to everyone around you. But as I say careers are long and you have to not panic when you do have a difficult patch. Equally if you are happy at work, my advice is hang on to it, careers are long and it is important to try and be happy at work. I had a period of my career in a company that I really didn't enjoy and ultimately I had to take leave from that company and I was out of work for a few months. During that time I never once thought that I wouldn't get back to where I wanted to be, in fact the 18 months experience taught me exactly what I did not want out of a job and after I wrote my tick list I worked hard and I chased companies that fitted my ideal job. The next seven years of my career were possibly some of the happiest and most successful, it just shows, a setback does not have to be the end. Just dig in and keep trying.

**16. Do you need to be able to work well with other people to work for Spotify? and is there any way in which disabled people can get employed by big companies?**

I think any company has a requirement to work well with other people, how we communicate with each other, collaborate with each other, and work with often quite complex matrix of teams to deliver on projects is all part of working office life. So yes, I would assume that that has to be part of the equation for my industry. Every industry is different however and of course there are more jobs that are more insular and don't require a lot of team interaction. There is absolutely no reason why a disabled person should not be able to find employment and whether it's Spotify or elsewhere, it's an area that is Incredibly important, There is so much further to go in terms of making that a reality at scale though. But I know there's a lot of good people and a lot of great companies that want to make sure that they create opportunities for everyone in an equal and fair way.

**17. Do you think music can change someone's life who has Cerebral palsy?**



That is such an interesting question, I don't have a specific response to that but I do know that we have worked with Parkinson's as an example, and we teamed up with a Parkinson's charity where they studied how the repetitive beat of certain music could help people judge the steps as they walk and time the steps with the music. So I absolutely think music is important. It's also important to mental health as well as physical and wellness issues. It's one of the reasons why I love working in the Music industry, and work at a company like Spotify because we have various examples of where we have used music to help others and it is incredibly inspiring.

**18. What is the best way to make your music stand out on Spotify i.e be selected for Editorial playlists?**

We talk a lot about this topic and I think everyone wishes there was a magic wand that you could wave to achieve that. The truth of it is that everyone who wants to be registered on the scene has to get out and has to play and has to do the hard yards to be able to get noticed. In effect playlists are a combination of data and human editors, but data is actually probably one of the most important factors early on where we can see if artists are popping. Those spikes in listening often come from an artist being out on the road and growing their fan base. There have never been more ways for an artist to be seen and heard. All the social media channels can be used to grow an artist's visibility, then they get listened to, streams grow on the platform and then perhaps you get noticed by our editors. It is a complex business but as with everything we have said in this Q&A, hard work first!