

# Legal Secretary

## Karen

Hi everyone! I'm Karen, a Legal Secretary at Cleary Gottlieb in London. Cleary is an international firm of lawyers with offices worldwide. I have worked at several other law firms prior to Cleary and have been a secretary for the whole of my career.

In my final two years at school, I was given the opportunity to take a typing course and to learn secretarial admin skills. I found this very enjoyable and I realised that I wanted to pursue a career where these skills would be utilised. I have also trained in Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint. More recently I obtained a Legal Executive diploma.

At Cleary, I am assigned to a group of lawyers and my role as their secretary revolves around assisting them with their admin tasks. I arrange meetings with clients, set up telephone and video conference calls, make lunch reservations and plan a large amount of worldwide travel (including hotel and taxi bookings).

Cleary's clients expect a high level of service and it is very important to ensure accuracy in my work. When sending correspondence (letters, emails or sometimes even faxes!) I need to ensure the correspondence is addressed correctly, there are no spelling errors, the grammar is accurate and the work is presented in a tidy and professional way. I use the Spelling & Grammar tool within Word to help me check for any errors and I also try to learn as I go along. If there is a word or phrase I am unsure of, I will take the time to find out what it means.

Teamwork is also incredibly important. I am part of a secretarial and office assistant team. We are the 'support staff' and are there not only to assist our lawyers, but also to help each other when we get very busy. Being a great team player is essential and we know that we can rely on each other for help when we need to.

At the end of a client deal where lots of contracts are being signed by our clients, there may be several members of the support staff team all working together to help coordinate the documents (this can sometimes involve arranging couriers to distribute the signed documentation). It is our 'support' which helps to bring the deal to a close.

One thing I really enjoy about my role is helping my lawyers carry out their day-to-day work by dealing with their admin tasks for them. The lawyers are there to give professional advice to our clients and we, as a secretarial team, support them in the background using our coordination skills to ensure everything runs as smoothly as possible.

The thing I enjoy most about my role is doing my job to a very good standard and to the best of my ability. I know I can be proud of myself and my work.

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