



RELAUNCH STATS

Length of Career Break  6 years

Nature of Career Break  Spouse health issue, eldercare

Time to Relaunch  1 year

CAREER TRAJECTORY

Pre-Break Employer and Job Title

Ernst and Young
Tax Manager

Employer and Job Title at Point of Relaunch

Wine and Spirits Education Trust (WSET London)
Quality Assurance Advisor

Current Employer and Job Title

WSET
Global Head of Quality Assurance

MARILYN FRIDDLE

MARILYN FRIDDLE'S SUCCESS STORY

ABOUT

Early in her career, Marilyn Friddle traveled through Germany, France, Italy, and Austria while on a long-term assignment as manager of the US tax practice for Deloitte in Dusseldorf Germany. While working on language skills talking with area winemakers, she developed an appreciation for wines and curiosity about the industry.

Returning to the US, Marilyn managed a full-time tax career while raising three boys, encouraging a husband traveling five days a week starting his own firm, and developing a small business for herself. She took a break in her career to care for her elderly parents and hold her family together through her husband's recovery from a devastating accident. When the time came to consider returning to work, Marilyn had two options: follow the path that she had been on or take a turn toward her passion.

HOW WOULD YOU COUNSEL OTHER RELAUNCHERS WHO ARE CONSIDERING MAKING A CAREER PIVOT?

I wanted something different, I had gotten so much out of my CPA career and really enjoyed running a small business. I had also taken time to take care of my parents and husband when they needed me. This move was about me. My life has been enriched by my WSET education. I believed in the WSET mission of empowering the trade and consumers through education and I wanted the opportunity to help shape the new Americas subsidiary. Now that I am in a global role, I see that every day I have the opportunity to shape policy and direction based on bringing the right people together to evaluate opportunities and solve problems. The chance to make a difference keeps me going across all 24 time zones.

HOW CAN RELAUNCHERS "HONOR" THEIR WORK EXPERIENCE THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER BREAK AND AFTER?

I was fortunate, I was not being hired based on a set of testable technical skills, but rather an unusual combination of my wine education, business background, and a leap of faith on both sides. I hire based on these same criteria and have a several CPAs, MBAs, an attorney, and former educators on my team currently - almost all have done a career pivot from more traditional roles. They bring unique skills and mindsets along with enthusiasm and determined engagement.

When I was hired, I quickly realized to succeed I needed to hit the ground running, build a team from scratch, make decisions and then live with the consequences, build bridges and relationships with people I had never met in person, and radiate confidence even when I had none. I don't see anything in that list that cannot be practiced daily in our lives outside of a full-time job. When I am interviewing, I look for opportunities to speak to candidates with unusual paths or career gaps and refer them often to iRelaunch for the fantastic resources. My life is so much richer for being on this journey with many so interesting people.

To read Marilyn's full success story, visit [iRelaunch's Success Story Archive!](#)