

From Scotland to Sydney

By HELEN HULL

Dropping everything and moving to the other side of the world isn't for everyone. But, three years ago, that's just what Louise Barton did, putting life in Scotland behind her and moving to Sydney to advance her career in real estate.

Selling property hasn't always been on Louise Barton's radar. When she left school, she became a dental nurse. A desire to look after people and an interest in nutrition then led her to apply to study full-time for a Health Degree. But a twist of fate saw her accept a temporary role at a real estate agency in her home town of Inverness in Scotland, and a passion for selling property was born.

"I nearly didn't accept the role," Louise remembered. "I was actually looking for a part-time role as a dental nurse, so I could work alongside studying for my degree. The real estate role kept expanding and one night I was asked to step in and show a property – and I sold it!

"I was quickly moved into the sales team in a permanent role and was allowed to work around finishing my degree. I've never looked back."

Looking for more

After three years working for the agency, Louise began to feel trapped due to a lack of career growth.

"I wanted to do more, learn more and take everything to the next level," she said. "I'm not happy idling in the same gear and living for the weekend isn't how I work.

"I embrace every single day and wake up grateful for everything on offer. I never expect someone to simply hand opportunities to me on a platter; it doesn't sit well with me. I like to go after things myself and it feels all the more sweet when it pays off.

"My partner and I decided to move to Australia and felt that Sydney would be the best place, because the real estate market was booming. I wanted to continue to work in sales and he was in construction.

"I literally flew to the other side of the world to do what I love."

Starting from scratch

On moving to Australia, Louise quickly discovered how different things were.

"In Scotland, I was selling homes that were worth about £150,000 to £200,000, and sometimes as much as £500,000," she said. "Other than the difference in values between Scotland and Sydney, I didn't see much difference in what I was doing – except, in Scotland, open homes aren't a thing; it's only private viewings.

"So it was an unpleasant shock to find that my experience didn't count for much. I was going to recruiters and they kept pushing me into entry-level roles.



Louise Barton
Richardson & Wrench

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"I didn't like the thought of starting all over again, but my desire to sell kept drawing me back. There's a feeling that it gives me and it's addictive."

Louise was eventually employed as an Associate at an agency in Sydney's inner city and while it cemented her love of the profession, she really wanted to take her career in a different direction.

"The team were great, but it wasn't a long-term fit," she said. "For me, the city lacked enough emotion to concentrate on the area full time, and I wanted to experience people from different walks of life."

"When I was lucky enough to get my permanent residency, I decided it was time to seek out the role that I was really searching for."

Breaking through

"In Scotland, I worked for a boutique agency, but I really came to Sydney to work for a big brand," Louise said.

"I took my time and interviewed with lots of different brands. I found Richardson & Wrench and it just felt right. The initial role I landed wasn't perfect, as it was working in New Business Development, but I trusted my gut – which I do a lot – and found I quickly moved back into sales."

Mark Smith, Principal at Richardson & Wrench North Sydney, said Louise has great enthusiasm and attitude.

"At 28, she brings youth and a willingness to learn, which is wonderful," he said. "Louise also has a great ability to create relationships with clients and customers."

Mark said training is playing an important role in her development.

"We're pushing Louise out of the office as much as possible and providing her with training from a range of sources, including our own R&W training, as well as REINSW training and working with people like Tom Panos," Mark said.

"We believe that training will, in the long term, benefit her sales. She's come from overseas and is willing to learn our local systems. There's a big difference between Sydney and Scotland, but she's keen to learn and she wants to be the best."

"Louise hit the ground running and has already kicked some amazing goals."

Looking to the future

Louise said that she loves to challenge herself and is always setting goals.

"I have commitment and passion, and I bring something different," she said. "I am my genuine self and that helps to make people comfortable with me; what you see is what you get."

"I don't think I gain listings because I'm from Scotland – but my accent certainly does start a conversation! My passion always shines through and people want to list with me because my passion is contagious."

Looking ahead, Louise is committed to a life in Sydney selling real estate.

"I came to sell million-dollar houses and I'm living my dream," she said. "In the future, I'd really like to have my own Louise Barton team and remain under the Richardson & Wrench brand."

"I love challenging myself – I set goals and, big or small, I make them happen." ■