



Q&A WITH JOANNE KELLEHER

MARKETING EXECUTIVE WITH GTSS, IRELAND

Born: 1984 in Cork, Ireland

Family: Youngest of a family of ten.

Before GAC: Joined the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) as Programme Executive for the Commercial Division, after graduating from University with a BSc Degree in **Government & Public Policy**.

Joined GAC: In 2010, when GAC Training & Service Solutions was formed as a joint venture between GAC and the NMCI. Now the Marketing Executive for GTSS responsible for marketing and promoting training courses for the maritime, transport and commodity sectors.

What do you consider the three most important aspects of marine training?

Three fundamental aspects run throughout all the GTSS courses, namely:

- Enabling safe operation for the benefit of the crew, the environment and the bottom line
- Providing the understanding and expertise to adhere to all applicable legislation and regulations
- High quality training for sea-going and shore-based staff. GTSS aims to bridge the knowledge gap between ship and shore-based staff by providing training courses that give insight into the skills and knowledge required by colleagues performing different roles.

What impact has the global economic downturn had on the vocational training sector?

It's true that training budgets can be one of the first casualties in some organisations during a downturn. However, training is always a priority for leading companies who understand the importance and

commercial benefits of empowering staff to work to the best of their abilities. These are the companies that GTSS considers first and foremost in the design of its courses.

It seems like every month brings new and ever-more stringent regulations governing the maritime industry. How can shipping professionals stay up-to-date and informed?

Safety regulations in the maritime industry are constantly being improved. This is imperative and a great reflection of how the industry views the importance of safety training for the modern-day maritime professional. At GTSS, we keep ourselves informed of these industry changes and tailor our courses accordingly.

What's involved in developing courses for GTSS?

We offer a broad range of courses including LNG, Oil Tanker Operations, Dry Cargo & Chartering, Ship to Ship (STS) Transfer Simulation, Seismic Replenishment-At-Sea (RAS) Simulation, Bunkers, Oil & Shipping Operations. Each course is designed by experts so that it resonates with the needs of participants working in that area. Courses are also tailored to reflect the requirements and specifications of individual companies.

Who are the experts you mention?

Our course designers and lecturers have firstly a deep knowledge of their industry sector and secondly great skill in passing on that knowledge. They include:

- **Howard Candelet**, with more than 40 years experience at the top of the LNG industry.
- **Capt. Stephen Gyi**, another with 40 years of experience in the oil and gas sectors, most recently at LNG import and export terminals.
- **Jeffrey Blum**, former Chairman of the London Branch of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and Visiting Professor at the World Maritime University.
- **David Atkins**, a 30-year industry veteran with wide-ranging experience in procurement, logistics, operations, pricing, demurrage and claims.
- **Clive Hotham**, a seafarer of 31 years, with 15 years as Master of many vessels ranging in size and type.

- **Robin Meech**, a renowned lecturer in bunkering issues and co-author of "Outlook for Marine Bunkers and Fuel Oil to 2025".

How good are the facilities at NMCI?

The NMCI was built during the boom in Ireland so no expense was spared when equipping the college with the most advanced facilities. We deliver practical, innovative and technologically advanced training through new teaching methods such as workshops, graphics and our world-class marine simulator suite.

Also we're located in Cork which is just an hour from London Heathrow. This means these outstanding facilities are easily reached and a stay in Cork itself is an experience to be treasured.

So NMCI brings the facilities to the partnership. What does GAC bring?

The extensive knowledge and the worldwide appeal of the GAC brand is a valuable asset for the NMCI. We can leverage that expertise and wealth of contacts that GAC has in over 1,000 locations around the globe, to open doors. It is the combination of GAC's global presence with world leading facilities that sets GTSS apart.

What is your professional mantra, the phrase you say to yourself over and over when times get tough?

During tough economic times like this, I constantly encourage myself to stay positive. I believe that positive things happen to positive people.

I have full confidence in what I am marketing; peace of mind for the employer and career advancement opportunities for the employee.

As a woman in a male-dominated industry, what personal and professional qualities do you bring to your role?

I'm fully aware that being a female within the maritime industry has its challenges, but this is the 21st century and year-on-year the industry is changing and progressing. Ireland, where I am based, is a very progressive country where for the past 21 years we have had strong female presidents and it's not unusual for women to lead large organisations. **GW**