**Job: Big Data Engineer**

**Company: Jagex Game Studio**

**Was there anything that surprised you, either good or bad about working the game industry?**

Mainly around how much goes into not just building, but maintaining an MMO! In other AAA titles, a lot of time and effort goes into designing and building the game and then after the game’s release it is vastly reduced. With MMOs, they are constantly improving the engine, adding new content, fixing bugs on a weekly basis.

And then on top of this, there are whole chunks of the business that you just don’t even think about that are needed to keep the game going. IT teams maintaining and improving the servers and architecture, customer support for handling account queries and moderating to protect players (particularly younger ones), community management to communicate with the players, gather feedback and inform players about updates and changes… the list goes on.

**What is it like working in a team?**

Working in teams to build games is generally an awesome experience. Within a games company, or any company for that matter, you will be working with genuinely skilled people (they have been hired for these skills!), often with many years experience in the industry. It’s really inspiring for me, to be able to work alongside them.

You must learn to compromise though! When you get really into working on something, be it the art, design, development, your creative side will really get into the flow and you’ll start generating all sorts of great ideas about what you could do next or how you could improve the project in some way. The first thing to remember is, they are just ideas and not everyone will agree with you. Everyone’s vision of the project can be different and they will all have their own ideas too. Finding alternate solutions or compromises is vital to keeping the team together and delivering it on time. Which brings me to the second thing to remember; that you are working for a company (in my case of 300+ people) where some things may simply be out of your control, no matter how vocal you are. Some things have a reason for being the way they are, be it good or bad, and you may have to either accept it or move on.

**How do you feel about the size of your team? Does the work you do feel rewarding?**

I work in a very small team of 2 but also closely with our grander department of 15 people and several others across the company. It’s great to be able to have some freedom and breadth with what I do; as there is only 2 of us and a large domain of work to cover, I get the chance to conceive, plan and produce entire projects myself. It’s a great learning experience for my career and it’s really rewarding to come in every day, see the system I made doing its thing and say, “I built that!”

Working with so many other departments across the company is also pretty cool. I get to see and be involved in a lot more of what goes on than a lot of people normally would.

**How easy was it to adapt and how helpful were people when you started?**

So when I started, there was a lot of domain knowledge, specific to my job, which I just didn’t have (mainly because there were no modules on it at Uni). But as I was joining in a graduate role, they were well prepared for this and helped me patch up some of the gaps in my understanding, as well as introducing me to entirely new pieces of software. I wouldn’t say it was easy, it got pretty technical at times, but I like a challenge and I enjoyed it. I would highly recommend going for graduate positions where available as they are likely to have time and money set aside for training you.

And yes, everyone was helpful ☺

**What was the interview process like?**

My interview started with a tour around the studio! It was amazing to see; for the first time I got a glimpse of what it was like to work in a games company and what my life could be. We did finally get around to a more formal interview, with 2 people, which consisted of a beginning chat about my background and then led into some technical coding and planning tasks, and ending with some discussion on conflict resolution and team working.

The feeling throughout was fairly informal though, with a lot of back and forth discussion rather than just question and answer. I think their first question was, “So what games have you been playing recently?” which led us into a conversation about games we played as kids.

**How did you first hear about the job vacancy?**

I found it on their website. Jobs at games companies seem to be highly sort after and they are looking for people with a “go do it” attitude. I think you’ll rarely find them using agencies for hiring; they are looking for people to come to them.

**Do you feel you are given the chance to progress within the company?**

Yes, they even have an entire department dedicated to it (Learning & Development)! They provide ample resources, from online training courses to knowledge sharing seminars and funding to go to events that will help you achieve your goals. Along with opportunities for promotion, there is also an internal job vacancy board which jobs will often appear on first to give you the chance to move about/up if you ever feel like your interests are changing or that you may be better suited in another role.