



Debra (Sacks) Moss

Binghamton University Class of 1999

What degree did you earn?

B.S. in Management with a concentration in MIS and Marketing.

Where are you working right now? How did you choose your career path after graduation?

I started my career after Binghamton with Arthur Andersen in their Business Consulting Group. I had interned with them the summer before my senior year and felt the type of work and cultural fit was a great place to start a career. I stayed with Andersen until the Enron scandal caused the unlikely demise of the company in 2002 and what was remaining of the practice was group-hired by KPMG Consulting.

It was a crazy time - the Global Business Consulting practice all resigned on a Friday, our laptops were re-imaged over the weekend, and we had our orientation to the new firm Monday morning. I left KPMG Consulting (later renamed BearingPoint) in 2004 as a Senior Consultant in order to join my current firm: Acquis Consulting Group.

At the time Acquis was only 20 people, so it was a major change from the Big 6 firms I had come from - but it had the type of work and cultural fit that drew me to Andersen in the first place, so I took a leap of faith. I've now been with Acquis for 12 years and I am a Principal in the company leading their Corporate Travel practice.

What are some obstacles that you have had to overcome during your career?

A consultant progresses in their career from doing the work, to managing the work, and then selling the work. It's like having two careers in one - while some people focus on sales or management, in consulting you need to be able to do it all. Though my father was a salesman before he retired, it's not a skill innate with me and something I've really had to work on. The first time I led a sales meeting and realized, "I've got this" was an empowering feeling.

What about your job motivates you?

Getting to work with intelligent, passionate, and highly motivated people every day and getting to have a hand in helping to grow a business and shape its direction is both motivating and inspiring!

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How have your experiences at Binghamton helped you in your career?

It is hard to have the perspective when you are in college about how all your activities will eventually support your career. For me looking back, I can see that everything had a hand in how my career progressed - whether it was gaining confidence and public speaking skills as part of the PwC Scholars Toastmasters group, gaining management and organizational skills while leading Binghamton's Sorority rush, or learning how to deal gracefully with different types of people (even the difficult kind!) - each providing a skill that would be important in my consulting career.

It also doesn't hurt that I met my husband at Binghamton - I definitely wouldn't have been able to pursue my career the same way without him.



Would you please be able to provide some insight into the projects you are working on?

Acquis is a small consulting firm in NYC - we currently have about 85 consultants. Acquis has always had an entrepreneurial outlook on consulting - looking for different ways to expand and grow the business. Many of our employees wear many hats which is a necessity in a fast growing organization. My role is split into four main areas - new business development, account management, practice development, and project management. I lead Acquis's Corporate Travel practice and support the business development and account management of our Technology Solutions practice which focuses on the firm's technology partnerships. Getting to play different roles helps keep the job fresh even after 12 years!



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What community service opportunities does your firm provide?

Acquis has a social responsibility team - Acquis Social Responsibility (ASR) - that last year founded a partnership with the non-profit Streetwise Partners. Streetwise pairs professional mentors with an individual from a low income background trying to break into the professional world. Additionally, the founder and CEO of Acquis is the Chairman of the Manhattan Board for the American Cancer Society and we recently sponsored ACS's Manhattan Relay for Life.

Do you have any advice for current students or new professionals?

If you are looking to get started in the consulting industry, there is no replacement for real-life work experience – having an internship or job in a corporate environment on your resume speaks volumes. Once you are in consulting, find a good mentor or manager you admire and start to follow their career path. Especially at larger organizations, it helps to have someone who can guide your career and looking out for your best interest.

What do you consider to be your most important accomplishments post-graduation?

Consulting is a career that is known to be unfriendly to working parents due to the demanding travel requirements and fluid nature of client projects. Balancing my family with my professional goals has been a focus of mine for the past 7+ years. For me it's about propagating the balance that makes me happy. I am lucky to work for a consulting firm who values its employees and understands the ingredients for a long-term working relationship. The fact that I have been able to grow within my career in consulting while enjoying a family has been my biggest accomplishment after Binghamton.

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This Alumni Spotlight was created by VPMR Louis Clements.

