



Q&A PROFILE

KATE MITCHELL | SENIOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

After 30 years as an event planner, **Kate Mitchell** imagined she would complete her career in the hospitality industry, but she hadn't reckoned on a pandemic. Her group was sent home on March 20, 2020 — and by August they were formally dismissed. But Lument recruiters saw something in Kate's LinkedIn profile. In November, Lument hired Kate as a senior business development coordinator, supporting originators in Seniors Housing and Healthcare. Three months later, she received a second life-changing shock. She was diagnosed with breast cancer. Although her prognosis today is excellent, it has been a harrowing journey, relieved by the kindness and empathy of her colleagues at Lument.

Q&A

What was it like having your career derailed by the pandemic?

I loved being an event planner because it is very fast-paced, and you never know what's coming at you. And I took pride in being the person behind the scenes, making sure that everything ran smoothly for attendees whatever happened. It was hard when this all stopped. Pivoting to a new industry was not the challenge I expected to have, but I ran with it.

You made the switch from event planning to business development. That sounds like a pretty big jump. How did you manage?

It's not as big a leap as you might think. As a business development coordinator, I'm constantly looking through trade publications, news articles, databases, and other sources to see if there's anything originators can use to build relationships with current or prospective customers. To succeed,

you have to be organized, thorough, and willing to explore new ideas and information.

These are the same skills required of an event planner, where you're always looking for new resources, new experiences, and new people for your conferences and where you have to be meticulous about detail. And, of course, event planning is all about knowing how to build relationships.

Nonetheless, there's no manual for this position, but my three colleagues really helped out. They have been here from seven to 20 years, and they were happy to share their knowledge. They made sure I was up to speed.

Their assistance was the first inkling I had that people at Lument really treat each other like family. This would make an enormous difference when I learned I had breast cancer.

What was that like? You were just getting settled in when you had your diagnosis.

As you can imagine, it was quite a shock — and I was so concerned about losing my job again. I had only been with Lument three months, and I was going to take all this time off. I knew my conversation with my manager,

It was such a relief knowing that my job was secure — and that when I recovered, I would have a future with Lument.



Aaron Becker, would be life-changing, so I made sure I could present the situation to him clearly. I laid out the facts, let him know about the decisions my family and I had made, and how they might potentially impact my role.

How did he respond?

Aaron made it clear immediately that I was going to have a job, no ifs, ands, or buts about it. And he and the company rallied around me. I went through four surgeries, and Aaron and my colleagues not only filled in for me but were constantly texting, calling, sending food and flowers. And HR was uniformly supportive. It was such a relief to know that my job was secure — and that when I recovered, I would have a future with Lument.

How are you doing now?

I am cancer-free and very much looking forward to 2022 and celebrating my first anniversary as a cancer survivor with those people who loved and supported me.