

TIME FOR A COFFEE BREAK WITH...

Working at Bechtle means working together with your colleagues and that is standard practice for the Corporate team. Every Corporate Account team comprises a key account manager and an inside sales employee. We thought it was a good idea to sit down for a chat with one of these teams. It's time to talk to Toon Hendrikx and An Rosseau!



Let's start at the beginning: who are An and Toon?

Toon tells us, 'I'm a really driven person who is always multitasking: my many hobbies, my friends, and my family.... I just can't sit still! Around five years ago, I began my adventure at Bechtle as a hunter. A few months later, Bechtle moved to its new premises and I gained more clients and, with them, more responsibilities. After that, there were a few more switches within the teams and the SMB, Mid-Market, and Corporate segments were created. I was assigned to the Mid-Market team as an account manager. In 2019, I also started working as an international customer coordinator, together with my colleague Dennis. In the summer of 2022, I joined the Corporate team as a key account manager and it is then that I started working with An. This was a huge change for me at first as I like to stay in control of everything myself. Fortunately, I learned to let go. It has been a great experience so far and we've been working together now for six months.'

An tells us, 'I've been working for Bechtle direct BV as an inside sales employee for around 2.5 years now. Actually, my job is identical to that of the other account managers, apart from the fact that I don't visit clients or help oversee projects. Toon is in charge of that. I'm in charge of transactional matters such as the running business and the contract agreements with customers.'

Toon has obviously experienced quite a few changes already. What about you, An?

An tells us, 'I can say that my career has been full of ups and downs. I had barely been working here for six months when the key account manager that I was paired up with at the time left. A new key account manager was taken on around a month later. We had a good relationship, but after a while he was absent for a few months. During that time, I was on my own and it was tough. I was also going through a difficult period on a personal level because of problems in having children and the associated treatments. On top of that, I had a heavy workload, although that might just be what kept me emotionally strong, as I was able to throw myself into my work. In the end, that key account manager left us too and the position became vacant. Toon sprang to mind immediately.'

Why did you think of Toon straight away?

An explains, 'When I joined Bechtle, there was no division between the segments yet, but there were different sales teams. Toon and I belonged to the same team at the time and he sat diagonally behind me.'

The first key account manager I formed a team with was hardly in the office. This made things difficult for me, as I was new to the position and had no experience. Toon gave me a great deal of help and we also worked together a lot. So that's why I encouraged Toon to apply for the position of key account manager. I could totally see him doing it!

Toon tells us, 'That's right. I had to think about it at first because I had already applied for that position in the past, but it hadn't been the right time for me back then. This time, I took the chance anyway and was successful!'

An adds, 'There is quite a lot involved in the job, of course. We see each other more than we see our own partners, so it's important that we get on well. We really do have fun together and that makes our working relationship an enjoyable one.'

Toon tells us, 'When we're coming back from visiting a customer, we listen to Samson and Gert together for example.'

Toon, you said that you found it difficult to hand over work to others. Was that the biggest change for you?

Toon says, 'That changed quite quickly actually, but I did find it difficult, particularly at the start.'

An explains, 'When a new customer request came in, he had already processed it before I had even read the e-mail. I'm the inside sales person and he is supposed to leave that type of stuff to me, but he was sometimes too quick to respond to them.'

Toon tells us, 'The change has mainly been positive though. By working together with An, I have learned to let go. When I go on holiday, I really can leave everything behind because I know that An will deal with it. Although I had a back-up person in my previous jobs, my inbox was just as full when I came back from holiday. When I was on holiday, I used to keep my phone nearby because there would sometimes be questions that I could resolve quickly as an account manager, but which would take other people hours of searching. I no longer have to do this because I know that An can resolve any problems that might occur. In addition, I now have more time and scope to look into projects and big contracts in more detail.'

An tells us, 'Ultimately, they are our customers, so we both have the responsibility of ensuring that our customers remain satisfied. You know that you can count on the other person, because it is just as important for th

TIME FOR A COFFEE BREAK WITH...

Did your customer portfolio change significantly when you switched to the position of key account manager?

Toon says, 'I already had a couple of bigger customers, but a few more were added and I also transferred a couple of customers to my colleagues. I now have customers that I have to visit more often, but I now have the time and opportunity to do so.'

What about you, An?

An says, 'Toon left behind a number of customers because I already had a portfolio together with the previous account managers. These customers had had three different key account managers within the space of two years, and I was also on my own during that time. We couldn't pass on those customers to yet another account manager, as it isn't conducive to a good relationship.'

Toon tells us, 'It's great that An has already known these customers for so long, since I am still trying to find things out. I want to win back our customers' trust because I am the umpteenth account manager that they have had in a short space of time.'

Could you briefly outline an average working day for me?

An says, 'I start off my day with the everyday stuff: checking my inbox, checking quotes for things that are due to expire or which need to be followed up, and following up on orders. When tracking orders, I look to see whether any stock might be available anywhere where we have not placed our order. If that's the case, I try to convert the order if this means providing a faster service to our customer. This may cost us money at times, but it does often benefit the customer relationship; you need to weigh things up. In addition, ad hoc matters come in during the day which I need to respond to quickly, such as a customer calling with an urgent question. I personally try to call one or two customers every day to ask them how things are going or to see if there's anything else going on.'

Toon adds, 'We are trying to schedule more and more QBR meetings with customers and to set them up for a whole year. I can easily do so in terms of planning and administration as I prepare reports for them. My days are filled with customer meetings or with internal meetings with our project manager, the contract manager, our legal department, etc. Meetings with customers are more often online nowadays than in person. The set-up is usually done in person, but most of the meetings continue online afterwards as they are recurrent and this makes it easier for both parties.'

What do you enjoy most about working at Bechtle?

An explains, 'There is a great team spirit here. You give a lot, but you also get a lot back in return.'

Toon tells us, 'I also like the freedom that you are given here. You can't just do anything you want, of course, but if you come up with ideas, you are given the chance to develop them. There is also a fantastic atmosphere here at work.'

What does your future at Bechtle look like?

An says, 'I feel at home here and enjoy the work I do. I think the tandems within the Corporate team are ideal. I'm still growing every day and continuing to learn new things in my job. The conversations I now have with customers will not be the same in two years' time, just like they are different now compared with two years ago. I don't have to know everything straightaway, as I have my colleagues and we can all assist one another.'

Toon tells us, 'I can always expand my knowledge and specialise in specific areas, but I'm fine where I am for now.'

One more question to round off: how would you describe your working relationship?

An says, 'We call ourselves "Antoon". We also use this nickname in the office, for example when booking meetings. We're riding the tandem together as Antoon. We both pedal just as fast as each other, but Toon sits at the front and steers a bit more.'



We call ourselves "Antoon". We also use this nickname in the office, for example when booking meetings. We're riding the tandem together as Antoon. We both pedal just as fast as each other, but Toon sits at the front and steers a bit more.

