



“...take your time, understand the organisation and the context of the area you're in...”

Ching Forshaw

Moving to Australia



Ching started her career in China in the banking industry. She continued in this field when she moved to Australia at the age of 25 and held a variety of roles before embarking on a career change by moving to what was then known as Defence Materials Organisation (DMO) in 2007. Ching was seeking a new professional experience and a more secure area of employment.

Joining the APS



Ching's move from the banking industry to the public service did not happen instantly. After deciding on the career move she wanted to make, Ching explored numerous options to join the APS in a way that gave her the best chance of succeeding.

This opportunity came through a nine-month intensive training program in project management offered through the DMO. While taking this opportunity as an APS4 resulted in a pay cut for Ching, it enabled her to progress her career in the direction she wanted.

Why is this role right for me?

Ching feels well respected and satisfied in her role. In her words, "I am able to help people a lot." While the role has its challenges, such as working across so many projects with limited resources, Ching takes things in her stride. Ultimately, Ching believes she has unfinished business and feels a great level of responsibility for the projects under her guidance.



My current role

In Ching's role as Project Controller, she works with project managers to ensure that project planning is done correctly. She works across CASG, across CoEs and is well-known amongst her peers. Ching manages two staff directly and 200-300 people indirectly working on the projects she manages. Although previously moving roles every couple of years, Ching has been in her present role for the last five years and can see herself staying even longer.



My advice to new starters

Ching's advice to other new starters is to take the time to learn about the organisation and the context of the area in which you are working; the time for high productivity will come later, once this strong foundation has been laid.

Value in diversity

Coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, Ching feels that she has an advantage in that she can often provide a different perspective and fresh ideas to her workplace. Ching has always felt included and valued by her CASG colleagues and enjoys tapping into her culture where appropriate – she's even been known to use Chinese philosophy during her career conversations!



Peer support



Ching has always felt supported by her direct supervisors at CASG and her colleagues more broadly. As a result, she understands how important this support is and tries to replicate it with the people she works with, including through career conversations.

My advice to supervisors

According to Ching, supervisors should not be afraid to be open and honest, and should take a whole-of-organisation view when it comes to people development – this includes not being afraid to support team members in seeking opportunities elsewhere, if that's what is right for them and the organisation more broadly! For supervisees, Ching says "have a clear idea of the next few years of what you want to do and then we can talk about how you are going to get there."

