

Meet Claudine de Vogel, Senior Perfumer in the CPL Aromas GmbH office in Bielefeld, Germany.



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What does your job involve?

I work on creating a variety of different fragrances for different applications, mainly in the personal care and laundry sectors, but also for air care and fine fragrances. Here I not only have to be creative but I also have to take into consideration the tastes and regulatory aspects for the regions I work for. (All German speaking countries, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and Russia)

I also manage the compounding and application laboratories where our fragrances are mixed and added to products and sent to our customers.

Finally, I am involved in our Raw Material palette management group, where we discuss the removal and addition of materials to our palette. We also discuss current issues that have to do with pricing, regulation and availability of materials, and try to decide on appropriate actions.

What do you most enjoy about what you do?

Not one day is the same and no project is the same. It is great to have such a varied, challenging job! I never get bored!

What skills do you use most regularly in your work?

I can speak 5 different languages and because we work with a lot of international clients this is definitely an advantage and something I use often. I am a very curious person, and this really helps with my creativity. I am always looking for answers to new challenges.

Who do you work closely with on a day to day basis?

My main contacts in my day to day work are the sales team, my general manager, the evaluators, my perfumer colleagues and the laboratory staff. Some clients and agents work directly with our team and so I have direct client contacts as well. We work B2B.

What are the career development options open to you? What do you hope your next step will be?

I hope to expand my role as a Perfumer and to continue to grow and learn. This never stops in our job!

What experience/qualifications are needed for this role?

A good sense and memory of smell is essential. A degree in chemistry is particularly helpful, but not obligatory (I don't have a chemistry degree). I definitely think that some kind of knowledge and understanding of the fragrance industry and of ingredients and smells is very helpful when you start out.

Has anything else helped you to be successful in this career/role?

The support and training that was given by Senior Perfumers and other colleagues in my company when I started as a Trainee was the most helpful. And I think working for a company who value passion and dedication to the job has helped me keep at it as well. To become a Perfumer you need a lot of patience and a lot of stubbornness and a willingness/curiosity to always keep learning.

What tips can you offer to those interested in this type of work?

It can be difficult to get a position as a trainee Perfumer, there are few jobs to go around. Very often companies recruit internally, so if you find it hard to find job offers I recommend applying for another position if available and to start from there. The benefit here is that you have already built up some skills should a position as trainee Perfumer become available.

Quite a few companies offer internal Perfumery schools and will look for new recruits every couple of years or so, so it is good to stay in touch and send your CV.

Claudine is a full member and Past President of the British Society of Perfumers (BSP).

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