Thomas Pedley
BSc(Hons) Computer Science, 2006
Technical Lead for the Vodafone Money Transfer Account, IBM

Working for IBM

Thomas Pedley certainly seems to be on his way to great things. Despite only graduating in 2006, he is already Technical Lead for the Vodafone Money Transfer Account (VMT) at IBM, a role which sees him managing 80 technical staff and being solely responsible for, amongst other things, commissioning new markets for the software. Having been transferred out to India for the role, Thomas is now based in Pune.

The VMT was a project that Thomas was originally meant to work on temporarily whilst the details of a music software project were finalised. Originally the project was with software company Sagentia, and only transferred over to IBM in September 2009. Certainly, Thomas seems to be thriving working for the software giant and being based overseas, balancing both management and technical responsibilities.

“Even since I was moved out to India my responsibilities have become greater and greater, to the point where I am now responsible for the technical team and their output. I find this level of trust and belief that has been bestowed on me to be a great honour and is something that I find IBM is very good at. If they recognise potential in someone, they will open opportunities that may not be so commonly available in other companies. I now find myself reporting directly to the CTO of an entire section within IBM.”

Making a difference

Even though Thomas started working on the VMT project soon after graduation, he had also held roles with a popular online games company and a business responsible for developing geo-spatial software. Even though both were technically interesting roles, Thomas felt stifled by the lack of creativity and the lack of fulfilment that he felt. “I wanted to be doing something that had a meaningful and positive impact upon people’s lives.”

Thomas certainly seems to have found his niche with VMT, with the system handling millions of transactions each day, which equals up to 170 financial transactions each minute. The software also sees 33% of Kenya’s GDP go through it which has helped money transfers in different developing countries become easier and more secure. He is keen to maintain this in the future, saying “I love what I do at the moment as I get to make a visibly positive impact on people’s lives – not only in markets to which VMT is deployed, but in my colleagues. I help them learn new skills which they can use in their work. These skills will stay with them throughout their career, which I find to be a very rewarding benefit of my role”.

A thirst for learning

Thomas credits his tutors at the University for helping to instil a passion for learning and problem solving. “I found that my lecturers were far more concerned with teaching individuals ‘how to learn’ rather than prescribing answers to set questions. My tutors would encourage me to question why things are the way that they are – they would always be there to sate my inquisitive mind.” Certainly with Thomas’ thirst to learn, focus on team work and drive for creativity, he looks like one to watch.