

**Name:** Andrew Reynolds

**Job title:** AVP, Credit Risk Analyst (Middle East and Africa)

**Business area:** Credit Risk Management



I started my career at Merrill Lynch when I was recruited as a German-speaking chartered accountant, to act as country controller for ML Frankfurt. After nearly 3 years in that role I transferred to Middle East Credit Risk Management. My degree was in Arabic and Modern Middle Eastern Studies, so when this position became available I leapt at it. It means I am able to draw off my knowledge of the Middle East, my linguistic ability and my background as a chartered accountant – quite a rare combination!

I review the credit worthiness of ML's counterparties it trades with, as well as the countries in which they operate. In addition I help consider individual transaction for their riskiness. On a day to day level, I normally arrive to find I have a load of FT news alerts for my geographical regions, the Mid East and Africa. Keeping abreast of economic and political developments in each of the countries I handle is paramount. On top of that I have to delve into the specific differences between companies and banks that ML does business with. It is quite an all encompassing role – but the variety keeps it interesting.

Aside from looking at specific transactions I also have to complete annual reports on each of ML's counterparties. This is an internal review process which involves me digging into financial statements and reading up on what the external agencies have to say. I also keep up-to-date on the performance of countries and new product areas as a whole by attending conferences and having meetings with the sales team.

In addition to my day job I also co-run the ML LGBT network and Co-Chair a cross-bank Forum, the Interbank LGBT Forum. I will regularly receive sponsorship requests (ML will be sponsoring the London Pride Run for the second year in 2007) and am involved in arranging events for gay and lesbian staff in ML and across the industry.

Once or twice a year I get the opportunity to meet up with other network leaders and heads of Diversity in ML over in New York to feedback what has been going on in our region and community.

The most challenging part of my role is being able to have several things on the go, prioritising, answering the phone on something completely different, and then getting back to where I was - some days can be very start/stop. On the flip side, being sent to the Middle East to interview the client management, compiling a report and feeding back my opinions (and having them listened to!) is the best bit. I also love being in London, and having a gym and a restaurant directly below where I work. My work/life balance that has enabled me to pursue my sports interests, as well as setting up and co-chairing the ML LGBT Network for the last 3 years.