

From Tour Consultant to product president: Shane's EF Journey



Each month in our main office hubs, [EF Education First](#) hosts a series of professional development series called “Bricks,” which provide staff with opportunities to hear from senior leaders. Whether it’s navigating a career path or learning how to use LinkedIn professionally, employees can guarantee they’ll come away with solid advice about working at EF.

This month, [EF Educational Tours](#) President Shane Steffens spoke about his journey through EF Educational Tours, where he’s been for his entire EF career. EF Educational Tours works with high school teachers to bring their high school students abroad, everywhere from Costa Rica to Spain.

“I consider myself a unicorn,” Shane joked, acknowledging it’s rare these days for someone to spend their entire career with one company.

Born in Chicago, Shane grew up in the Midwest but was always fascinated by the prospect of travel. His childhood bedroom was papered with National Geographic clippings of far-off destinations, but it wasn’t until his junior year in college that he traveled abroad for the first time

for a study abroad program. He described the experience as “life-changing;” for someone who has always wanted to travel, living abroad was a really big deal.

After graduating, Shane wasn’t sure what his next step would be, but he couldn’t shake the travel bug. He eventually found himself in Boston—to him, the most European city in America—where he saw an ad for a job with EF Educational Tours in the newspaper. Shane decided to apply for the Tour Consultant role, and his first thought after finishing his interview was: “If I don’t get this job, my life is over.” He immediately felt at home with the people, the building, and the position and knew he just had to be a part of EF.

Lucky for Shane, he was offered the job at EF—and was sent on a staff tour his first day on the job. Staff tours provide an opportunity for employees to see what the tour experience is like, while being able to meet with students, travelers and Group Leaders face-to-face. Since then, Shane has moved up the EF ladder, experiencing a number of different initiatives within Educational Tours and EF. At 27, he and his team designed the CRM system, and in 2007 he helped open the EF Denver office.

“You own the things you work on,” he said, which allowed him the opportunities he found (and sought out). Shane also credits his success with his all-in attitude and desire to embrace the EF culture. “I really took the core values and open office idea to heart. I believed in the system and the people.”

Now, Shane sits as the President of Tours for North America, which—so far—is the culmination of his 18 years at EF. “EF represents me as much as it represents my colleagues,” Shane said. As far as parting words of advice, Shane said it all comes down to having passion for what you do. “Love who you work with, love the mission, love what you do every day.”