

Karen had changed in the two years since her father's death. From a hormonal, but almost painfully conventional teenager to a hormonal, rebellious little bitch. A change of which she had been the conscious architect. Short hair, shaved at the sides and dyed green in a lick across the top, but still black at the back. The nose and eyebrow studs, the rings in her lip that made her take out for school. The pictures of One Direction on the wall had been torn down to be replaced by Marilyn Manson posters she had found in the goth shop.

The first tattoo had caused a monumental row with aftershocks that went on for days. But there was nothing her mother could do about it. *Fait accompli*. Tattoos were for life, and this one had been such a small thing. A delicate little butterfly just above her left ankle. The others had followed had reduced it to insignificance. A winged skull on her chest, just below the neck. An elaborate and colourful snake that coiled its way around her left arm, from shoulder to wrist. An eagle with wings spread across her back and shoulders. And a couple she hadn't even told her mother about.

Dressed discreetly, it was possible for all of them to be hidden. But pointing that out had done nothing to allay her mother's fury with each addition. And after every grounding she had simply gone and got another. They couldn't lock her up in her room for ever.

Her mother had demanded to know where she had got the money. But Karen only ever shrugged, infuriating her further. How could she tell her that the tattoo artist was a friend returning favours? An older friend, with a penchant for teenage girls.

She had gone from being Daddy's little girl to Mother's nightmare in twenty-four short months. A deliberate decision. To leave behind the fragile, broken child, so filled with regret, and become... she didn't know what. Anyone but who she really was.

**Peter MAY, *Coffin Road* Chapter 9, pages 94-95**

Vikki Knowles

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**theguardian**

# **Ink-sulting: why tattoos shouldn't limit your career prospects**

*Some employers may view face piercings and tattoos negatively, but more companies are realising the value of self-expression at work*

We hear it time and time again: having tattoos will hinder your job prospects, and a new recent survey from YouGov shows little change in attitudes towards body art. Around one in five Brits have tattoos, and while 44% of adults said they would feel no differently about someone with a large tattoo, 36% still said they would feel less positively about that person, with just 3% thinking more positively.

Nevertheless, 86% of those with body art didn't regret having it, so it seems self-expression is still important to Britons in the workplace.

According to the Colourful Lives report, 33% think a casual dress code would improve productivity and nearly double that feel that it would boost their happiness, with the report noting one in 10 bare their tattoos at least once a week.

So, while research from the British Sociological Association of 15 managers warns that some viewed tattoos negatively, it seems they are out of step with the attitudes of staff. With your productivity and happiness potentially at stake, is there refuge out there for the ink-proud?

Meet Hilary Jones. Sporting long red hair and tattoos since the early 80s, she interviewed for Lush when the company first started in 1995. Two decades later, she's still working for the cosmetics company, now as their ethics director.

Along with companies like Google and Ikea, Lush has a reputation of being a tattoo-friendly employer but actually, Jones tells me, there is no official policy and they've never had an internal discussion about tattoos. "We don't have an appearance policy," she says, "we've never been prejudiced against anything."

She recalls a "really lovely" employee called Ben, who interviewed for a job at the Lush factory with 25 facial piercings. He told them he hadn't worked for three years because of his appearance – but that he was also very reliable and would do the best job possible.

"We just thought: you don't even have to discuss the facial piercings, because we've never judged anyone on what clothes they wore. They could come in a suit or a pair of jeans; what we're after is the attitude of the person," says Jones.

Having 25 facial piercings or tattoos up the side of an employee's face is irrelevant, she says. "We don't discriminate on the grounds of colour," she notes, and "our customers don't care about that; they care about quality customer service." And that seems to be in great shape, as this year Lush has been crowned top out of 100 UK high-street stores for its friendly customer service.

Jones says that Lush became a safe haven for those who were normally met with prejudice; that goes for gay people, vegetarians and vegans as well, with Lush employing many more people from these groups than the national average. "It's a safe harbour," she says. "We all just accept each other."

Of course, one way to avoid tattoo policies altogether is to be self-employed. Lee Hiller is a freelance hairdresser in Bristol, with a tattoo sleeve on his left arm. Many of his clients are inquisitive about his ink, and being his own boss means he can dress as he pleases, but that wasn't always the case. Working at a

supermarket in his late teens, he was asked to cover up his tattoos – with a watch, a wristband, and even asked if he could wear a longer shirt.

“I’m not being a rebel,” he says, “I’m not trying to make a statement. I’m dressed really smartly.” He felt that his employer didn’t accept him visually, and moreover, that those workplaces that do embrace tattoos are much more relaxing to be in. “It’s not like [the employees] are slacking. It’s just that everyone’s allowed to be themselves.”

For those of you with visible tattoos, there’s nothing stopping you achieving a successful career, says Hiller. “There are loads of jobs where it wouldn’t matter,” he says, from carpentry and building work to brewing wine or beer. “There’s so many options. If you want to be a music producer, it doesn’t matter.” He says the employers who uphold a “small-minded” policy on tattoos are not ones he would choose to work for anyway. “The types of jobs that you are not allowed tattoos for are probably the most boring jobs.”



## You want a good job – but you also want a facial tattoo. What should you do?

Sun 10 Jun 2018

Face ink is all the rage, in part thanks to Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex – but job-hunters might want to think twice

Making a statement ... a man with a facial tattoo. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

**Name:** Facial tattoos.

**Age:** As old as ink.

**Appearance:** Like some friends scrawled on your face while you were passed out.

**They're not my friends any more. It was a permanent marker!** A face tattoo is even more permanent.

**True, but you've only got yourself to blame. I don't think they're allowed to put one on you when you're asleep.** No. You'd have to really want to make a statement.

**What sort of statement?** For instance, the Texan rapper Post Malone recently had the words "Always Tired" tattooed beneath his eyes.

**That must make people think he's always tired.** He's also got "Stay Away" scrawled across his forehead.

**Wow. You'd have trouble getting a job at Staples with all that on your face.** He's got a No 1 album out, so I don't think he's worried, but you raise a salient point.

**Really? There's always a first time, I guess. Remind me what it was again.** That a face tattoo can make it hard to get work. A new survey shows that 78% of HR decision-makers would be less likely to hire a candidate who had one.

**That's a lot.** It's a lot more than for any other kind of tattoo. Only 50% would be less likely to hire someone with "tattoo(s) covering the entirety of one or both arms", while 78% said a back tattoo would make no difference to their hiring decision.

**Sorry, but isn't this discrimination? How can a face tattoo make you less employable?** It does demonstrate a certain lack of forward planning, in that you failed to anticipate that one day you'd be applying to work behind a perfume counter.

**I suppose it's lucky that facial tattoos aren't more fashionable.** Are you kidding? They're all the rage, thanks to Meghan, the new Duchess of Sussex.

**Meghan has a face tattoo?** No, but the light spray of freckles across her nose and cheeks has become a sought-after look, so much so that an Atlanta cosmetic artist, Gabrielle Rainbow, is doing brisk business offering a tattooed alternative at \$250 (£187) a pop.

**But real freckles aren't permanent.** Neither are these – they last from one to three years.

**That would have been about right for the “Karen 4 evah” on my chest.** Yeah. Same for the one I got when QPR were promoted.

**Do say:** “Yes sir, I did know I was coming for an interview this morning. That’s why they’re not my friends any more.”

**Don't say:** “You can see my relevant experience written all over my face – literally. Just ignore the contact number on my chin – that’s the old one.”

<p><b>theguardian</b></p> <p>Lizzi Hart</p> <p>Mon 6 Oct 2014</p>	<p><b>Are tattoos a stain on your job prospects and career?</b></p>
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First impressions are important when it comes to interviews and tattoos still divide opinion

In 2012 a survey by The British Association of Dermatologists suggested that 1 in 5 British adults had a tattoo. So it is reasonable to conclude that many graduates currently looking for a job have some form of body art. Many high ranking employees of desirable companies are of an older generation and have a traditional view of tattoos. But with body art becoming increasingly socially acceptable, both in and out of the workplace, are young jobseekers really risking their careers by getting the latest body decoration?

### **Can you be rejected or fired because of a tattoo?**

Sadly, in 2014 the answer is yes. Just a few months ago Jo Perkins allegedly had her non-client-facing contract terminated after she displayed her small foot tattoo of a butterfly. At the age of 38, with plenty of high-level experience under her wing, the termination came as such a shock that she is considering legal action.

In the UK, the law on equality in the workplace does not cover those with tattoos as a protected characteristic, allowing employers to base their recruitment decisions on just that. The only exception would be religious or beliefs related markings under the 2010 Equality Act, but proof must be provided.

In terms of rejection for a role, Rebecca Johnson, a managing consultant at the Graduate Recruitment Bureau (GRB) explained: "I think in the majority of cases and certainly in the more corporate world, if there were two candidates in the running for a job and there was absolutely no difference between the candidates' skills/abilities resulting in the choice purely being based on presentation, most employers would pick the candidate without tattoos. I believe this would be to limit potential offence made to their clients."

It does depend on the company's dress policy, and employees with more than two years' experience have more rights. But a change in the dress code, in a similar manner to Jo Perkins' company, can see those with visible tattoos come under fire.

So is this fair? If a candidate was rejected from a role because of their faith, the company would face punishment under the Equal Opportunities Act. Yet if someone was rejected because of their visible tattoos, another lifestyle choice, there wouldn't be nearly as much uproar.