



Laura Dufort

Freelance Product Development & Production Manager at S.A.R.K

London, UK

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Languages

English (Native)

About

With over seventeen years experience working in the luxury fashion market and having extensive knowledge from both larger cooperate companies to smaller luxury brands, specialising in product development and management, I now work directly with brands offering bespoke consultancy packages; using my expertise and knowledge to improve and grow brands.

Currently I work as freelance fashion consultant for luxury brands, identifying areas for improvement and company structure, with a focus on product development, sourcing, costing's, production, forward planning, business development, structure and sales strategies; with key focus on reducing costs and improving revenue. Previously, I was the Product Manager for luxury, British fashion brand, Christopher Raeburn - a label renowned for its ethical, environmental and intelligent innovative design, as well as for its high quality and extreme attention to detail. I started Christopher Raeburn in 2011 and grew the company with Christopher, having input on all areas of the business.

My role would involve me to oversee the development process from beginning to end, concentrating on the entire lifecycle across men's, women's and accessories. I was responsible for ensuring the handwriting was consistent across all categories whilst making each garment commercially viable.

Christopher Raeburn is known for innovation, therefore each season I would manage the development of our fabrics with leading fabric mills across the world, source unique army surplice garments and discover exciting materials to be up cycled into the range.

The scope of my role included building the range plan, analysing past history of styles, development of all ranges, working to a critical path, implementing budget and costing's, management of production and sales. Within this role I would manage a team of 10 members, from product developers, production, design assistants, sales, studio manager and machinists.

My previous experience also includes working for Burberry as Product Developer for Men's Sports, a department that I led for three years. Additionally, I worked for Ted Baker for five years across production and development.

With a passion for working in the luxury fashion market and having extensive knowledge from both larger cooperate companies to smaller luxury brands, I know that my experience gained through the years is highly relevant in many different areas of the fashion business.

BRANDS WORKED WITH

Burberry

Christopher Raeburn Ltd

S.A.R.K

MAXIMILIAN DAVIS

PETER JENSEN

Mary Katrantzou

Experience

● Product Development & Production Manager

S.A.R.K | Mar 2020 - Now

● Fashion Consultant

| 2015 - Now

● Product Manager

Christopher Raeburn Ltd | Oct 2011 - Oct 2014

•Working directly with the Creative Director to oversee the development process end to end, concentrating on the entire lifecycle across men's, women's and accessories to ensure the handwriting is consistent across

all categories and at the same time making each garment commercially viable.

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- Building the collection plan based on analysing the history of styles, sales and taking the design brief into consideration.

- Develop fabrics for each category once briefed on the concept for the season by attending fabric fairs and working with fabric mills across the world.

- Manage the Product Development team improving the efficiency throughout development and production department.

- Oversee the allocation Production to Factories by understanding their relevant capabilities, capacity and garment construction expertise.

- Managing and Monitoring the Critical Paths for the season, ensuring all deadlines are met and flagging any issues to the design team.

- Work closely with factories in the UK and Europe, and also manage a small production line in-house, while constantly sourcing new factories.

- Lead regular costings meetings throughout the season ensuring margin targets are achieved.

- Monitoring the seasonal budget and working closely with the bookkeeper to ensure costs are being allocated correctly.

- Working closely with the Sales team, leading and attending weekly meeting discussing sales, best sellers and sell-through for the season.

- Hiring new members of staff. Managing annual reviews with staff members.

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● Product Developer

Burberry | Oct 2007 - Dec 2010

- As an original member of Burberry Men's Sport, I was hired to start-up the division along with a very small design team and to formulate the role of product developer. Over the following three years, from small beginnings, Men's Sport grew to become an internationally recognisable line within the brand.

- Managing the development of all Burberry Men's Sportswear, which included outerwear, wovens, jersey and swimwear

- Enhancing seasonal research with updates from new and existing sources and presenting the results to the team

- Working with designers to ensure development programs are complete for supplier allocation.

- Working closely with the Garment Technician, managing all proto fittings, sample fittings and pre-production fittings

- Travelling to international Sports trade fairs to source and select fabric, trim components and research the latest technology in the Sports.

- Travelling to various cities in order to foster relationships with the supply base. Countries in which the factories I regularly visited include: Italy, Portugal, and China.

- Ensuring styles are constructed cost effectively and by most effective methods for bulk production

- Understanding any fit or design changes that would effect price and following up with vendors for revised prices as required

- Ordering and tracking in all samples to make sure that deadlines are met

- Updating all product information on to the range plan

• Look shoot preparation and showroom set up for the selling season
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