

E-Commerce Merchandising, Kravet Inc.  
Kelly Collins  
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Summary by Shelby Kanski

Kelly Collins, a recent TMD graduate, instantly caught our attention with her surprisingly direct point of view on what it was like being a student here years ago. Her relatable anecdotes made us take note as she provided insights on navigating the next steps in our careers as fashion students. Regaling us with her beginnings in the fashion industry, Kelly Collins walked us through her career timeline. During college and immediately after graduation, she worked as an Executive Assistant to a PR fashion firm in New York City. Hoping to work in the “glossy” life of NYC fashion, Kelly Collins admitted that she was more caught up in the image of her job and not its actual functions. After realizing that a tumultuous and erratic work environment was not for her, she quit and began applying to other industry-related jobs. Interviewing for the interior textile company, Kravet Fabrics Inc., placed her on the path to where she is now.

A well-known family-centered interior textiles company, Kravet Inc. is a leading supplier of luxury fabrics for hotels and high-end homes. Kelly described the intersection of the TMD courses that we take and how they are applicable to her roles at Kravet Inc. She told us that it was a “waste of money [...] not paying attention in class” because she immediately needed to know the terms that we learned in Textile Science and Color Science. Directly referencing our professors and the knowledge from classes she used, put into perspective the importance of what we’re learning in our program. Kelly worked in Product Development for four years with executive exposure before she was able to advance. Once the global pandemic hit, both Kelly and Kravet Inc. had to restructure their way of operating.

As organizations shifted to remote work and learning, Kravet Inc. did too. Setting up individual studios at home forced the company to rethink how to best serve their customers in what was previously an in-person tactile textile experience. They pivoted to creating a system that helped to better get the product to floor in this new environment. Then another set-back hit: furlough. After the reshuffling of company positions and employees, Kravet Inc. restructured itself in order to adapt to the new climate. Kelly found herself in the new role of Product Development Manager for the eight to nine brands under Kravet Inc. As the COVID-19 “new normal” shifted to relying on mobile technology, changing the way e-commerce is used in the industry, Kravet Inc. readjusted as well. This new structure included updating their website to function as a proper sales channel. Also, Kelly was in charge of creating the first digital “look-books” as a means to provide customers with a way to experience Kravet’s textiles. This position gave her the chance to work with all departments through cross-merchandising, a skill that she had previously acquired at Kravet Inc.

After her first real brush-up with corporate hierarchies, Kelly became the Director of Digital Merchandising – the first of its branch within Kravet Inc. An integral asset in the global textile industry shift during the pandemic, Kelly helped Kravet Inc.’s ongoing transition into a more e-commerce structured company. Although this was not the “glossy” job that Kelly first imagined getting upon graduation, she finds aspects of it to be just as rewarding and exciting, if not more, than what she pictured when she was a student. Coming from a textile science class that Kelly claimed to not have done well in, to seven years later as the Director of Digital Merchandising for an interior textiles company, shows that our paths are not always linear.