

The benefits of being an Apprentice



How Ian seized the opportunity to spark success with his Apprenticeship in Electrical Installation.

“My apprenticeship has given me real life experience which I wouldn’t have gained from a full-time college course. I wanted to learn a trade and develop skills that are in demand and earn respect.” Ian Johnson, Electrical Installation Apprentice.

Ian Johnson, 21, is employed by the Building Services Engineers Company Paro Ltd, based at East Molesey, Surrey. He is due to complete his Electrical Installation Apprenticeship later this year. Paro Ltd is a small company with 25 employees specialising in electrical installation. There are five Apprentices in the company, of which Ian is one of the more experienced.

Knew what he wanted

Ian knew he wanted a career in electrical engineering so even before he left school, he completed a BTEC in the subject.

“That meant that when I started my Apprenticeship with an NVQ Level 2, my classmates were all younger than me, it felt like going back a year,” he says.

But this didn’t worry, Ian, who admits to being ambitious.

Training provider

Ian applied for a job at Paro Ltd, and feels that his BTEC qualifications helped him get the Apprenticeship. His training was organised with Carshalton College, who he

says have been really supportive. Last year he was voted Apprentice of the Year by his College tutors, which made him very proud.

Contributing

Ian understands that construction is a competitive industry and the more he supports his employer, the more success his company will achieve.

“It’s important to maintain good customer relationships, and I feel I contribute towards that. I communicate well with clients, ensure I do the best possible job and present a professional image. I know it’s also important to meet the needs of the client, whatever they want we have to be flexible.”

More responsibility

Ian was recently given further responsibility. He was asked to take charge of a small project when the foreman left. The job needed to be finished within three months and he had to coordinate with other contractors and make sure his work was correct. He was given support from a foreman nearby but the

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responsibility to complete the work was his.

He attempted the job to the best of his ability but this exercise also proved and highlighted his limitations at this stage in his career.

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Setting a good example

Ian hopes that he sets a good example to the other Apprentices in the company. "I try to conduct myself properly at work and always be professional and respect my colleagues. There is always new stuff to learn, so I ask a lot of questions of my qualified colleagues. I think if you show an interest you'll be more likely to be involved with new projects and given more responsibility."

Self discipline

Ian feels that his Apprenticeship has taught him self-discipline, but feels that his hobby, practising martial arts, has also helped him.

"I train four times a week and recently competed for England in an international tournament in Paris. It's a great stress buster and completely different to my work."

Whilst he knows how to relax, Ian says that engineering is his career. "I feel you have to invest to get a return. I work hard to achieve and my City and Guilds Parts 1 and 2 grades were the best in my college class."

Trusted employee

Ian's boss is Jim Page, managing director at Paro Ltd. He said: "Ian is an ambitious and committed Apprentice. He is now a trusted employee and works hard at college to achieve excellent results. He grasps new procedures quickly and was one of our first employees to use a Palm Top computer to collect testing data. He has also undertaken additional industry qualifications in his own time.

"Ian is an ideal role model to other young people as his commitment to work and study is high."



If you would like further information about Apprenticeships in South London call the Apprenticeship Hotline on 0800 169 4824 or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

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