

The benefits of being an Apprentice



How his Apprenticeship helped Leigh recover from an early career disappointment.

“After an early disappointment when my expected career took a ‘nose-dive’, I just knuckled down and got on with things. The Apprenticeship was a great confidence-booster and I’m now enjoying my career again.” Leigh Dorell, Magnet Trade, Apprenticeship in Customer Service

Leigh Dorell is 27. After a number of false starts at a career, he has now completed an Apprenticeship in Customer Service with Magnet Trade and has a bright future ahead of him, according to his boss.

“I left school early, at age 15, with the intention of doing a long-term work placement and training with a graphic design agency,” says Leigh.

“The idea was that I would complete my training as a graphic designer then go on to do a degree.”

A redundant career

The only problem was, a year into his training with the design agency, they lost a big contract and could no longer fund Leigh’s training, so he was made redundant.

“It was a very tough time, but luckily I had the support of my family and friends,” he explains.

Leigh tried for a place at college, but after a year working full time, he couldn’t face returning to full-time education so he started to work with his dad, a mechanic.

Rising fast

“I sort of fell into the car business,” he says. “I started off as an Apprentice in panel beating, but the job was a long way from home so after a few months regretfully I had to leave. Luckily I found a job locally and started work with Kwik Fit.”

It was here that Leigh’s drive and determination started to become obvious. Employed as a tyre fitter, Leigh worked his way up to Store Manager in four years, leaving only when he moved to another part of London to live with his partner, with whom he now has a baby boy.

“I did try to get a transfer, but there were no Kwik Fits in that area, so I picked myself up and eventually applied to Magnet Trade for a job.”

Almost as soon as he started his job at Magnet, he was offered the chance of an Apprenticeship in Customer Service, through training provider CBE Training, so he seized the opportunity.

“Leigh is very good at his job. Keen to learn and keen to improve his skills. I think he’ll have a bright future with Magnet”

Adding to his CV

“Since I don’t have many GCSEs to boast about because my early career as a graphic designer didn’t come to anything, any qualifications I can add to my CV seem sensible, so I began an Apprenticeship in Customer Service,” he says.

A year later and Leigh has an NVQ 2 in Customer Service, and a thorough knowledge of kitchens. He also has a very supportive boss in Mark Charles.

Commercial good sense

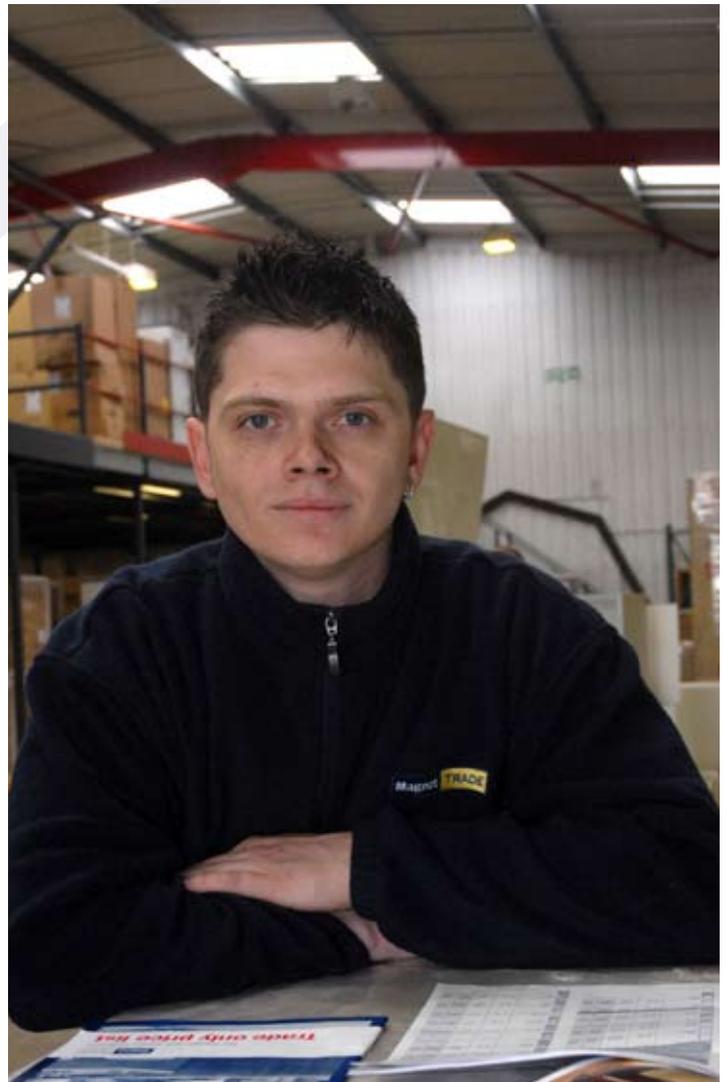
“We offer training because we want to get the best out of our staff. If we improve their skills, they are going to bring more to their jobs so it makes commercial good sense,” says Mark.

“Leigh is very good at his job. Keen to learn and keen to improve his skills. I think he’ll have a bright future with Magnet.”

Leigh admits that it was tough to recover from the early failure of his dream of being a graphic designer, but loves his current job.

Great support

“This is the first job I’ve had where I feel that I’m really supported by both my colleagues and the company. I feel lucky that I’ve been able to develop my skills in a number of different fields. My mum used to care for handicapped children and I only have to think of their lives, and my life, to realise how privileged I am.



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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