

The benefits of being an Apprentice



How her Apprenticeship gave Rachel confidence and a new belief in herself

“I never thought I’d be capable of holding down an office job, when I left school. I’d wasted my last couple of school years. But when I was offered an Apprenticeship, it really gave me confidence and now I can’t believe how much I’ve changed.” Rachel Anderson, Successful Business Administration Apprentice, Travel Republic

With a short string of failed retail jobs behind her, having left sixth form after just a month, you might have thought that Rachel Anderson had no serious commitment or motivation for work.

Well, you’d be wrong!

Whilst she admits to not having focussed on her GCSEs as much as she should have done, Rachel, 19, is now a successful business administrator at Travel Republic, a successful on-line travel agency which has been trading for over 20 years.

No motivation

Rachel went to Coombe Girls School at New Malden, and whilst she did well in art and drama, she didn’t really achieve the grades in other, core subjects such as English.

“I am dyslexic, which obviously didn’t help, but more than that, I wasn’t motivated,” she explains. “It wasn’t the school’s fault, but mine.”

Training provider

Having walked out of sixth form just a month after starting, because she decided that a qualification in health and social care just didn’t interest her, she worked in a large supermarket and another local retailer for a few months before visiting a local training provider to ask for help.

“My sister had gone there and they’d helped her, so I hoped they could do the same for me,” she says.

Rachel reports that the training provider, now called Quantica, were fantastic. “They took me on and offered me an Apprenticeship in Business Administration,” she says. “I was told that I could do it one of two ways: either I could do the training entirely at the training provider, then look for a job at the end of it, or I could take a placement with a local company and do the training on the job.

“For me it was an easy decision. Get a job and train there. So after a few months at the training provider,

“To do it you need a high level of accuracy and patience”

I was offered a position at Travel Republic and said yes immediately.”

It was the few months at her training provider which Rachel says was the turning point.

“The way they set out the training was designed not only to show you how to do the work, but to give you the belief in yourself that you could do it with confidence. When I went to Travel Republic, I felt that I was capable of doing the job.

Teacher surprise

“Even my old teachers couldn’t believe how much I’d changed,” she goes on. “The training provider had to contact my old school to confirm that I had dyslexia and could have extra time for the exams. When they talked and my tutor told them what I was doing – they were very surprised.”

At Travel Republic, Rachel started with the basics but soon worked her way up and now, having completed her training, she’s being entrusted with responsibility that she never thought she’d achieve.

A great attraction!

“I’m now sending out attraction vouchers to clients, some of which have a high monetary value,” she explains. “To do it you need a high level of accuracy and patience.”

Her boss is Steve Dean. He says: “Rachel has worked hard to get to where she is now and we’re delighted for her. We are confident that she’ll grow with the company.”

Rachel is so delighted with her achievement, that her best friend is now also with the training provider, and will be looking for a job soon.



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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