

## Business benefit of employing an Apprentice



Currie Motors see Apprentices as a “real asset to a business such as ours”

**“Having a young, eager Apprentice is a real asset to a business such as ours.”  
Mark Cheetham, After Sales Manager, Currie Motors, Wimbledon.**

Currie Motors was established more than seventy years ago and today is one of the largest privately-owned motor retail groups in England. A multi-franchise business, Currie Motors represents a number of motor manufacturers and provides motorists with a one-stop quality service. The company employs around 300 people nationally, and 40 in its Wimbledon After Sales Centre, which repairs Saab, Fiat, Vauxhall, Chevrolet and Alfa Romeo cars.

### Training is essential to business

The company believes strongly in offering training and several years ago began offering Business Administration Apprenticeships.

Mark Cheetham, After Sales Manager at Currie Motors Wimbledon, says: “Motor dealerships are usually known for offering Motor Mechanic training and we do that too, but we needed young people to work in our after sales centre here in Wimbledon, so we decided that the best way to do this would be through Apprenticeships.”

### Training provider

Mark approached training provider Way to Work, who he says were excellent. “We explained that we had a vacancy for an administration trainee and they swung into action,” he says.

Way to Work began preliminary interviews and then offered Mark the opportunity to interview their short-list. “This saved me a lot of time and hassle,” he says. “It also means that they carry out all the basic checks and we know we will be interviewing young people who fit our criteria.

### “Contributing to society”

Mark was keen to use Way to Work because they have a number of young people who may have come from challenging backgrounds and haven’t had everything handed to them on a plate.

“It makes us feel like we are contributing to society,” explains Mark. “But we’re not a charity,

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and we need young people who are going to take an Apprenticeship seriously. Way to Work are excellent in identifying young people who, given the opportunity, will seize it and make it work for them.”

### A great interviewee

Currie Motor’s current Business Administration Apprentice is Darrel Pemberton. “He was one of five interviewees and stood head and shoulders above the others,” says Mark. “He showed that he really wanted the job and was prepared to work hard. Months later and he hasn’t proved us wrong, indeed he’s really used his initiative and started to think for himself.”

Another reason why Mark was impressed by Darrel at his interview was that he’d already organised some training for himself.

### Asset to the business

Mark reports that Darrel is a great asset to the business, as was their first Apprentice, recruited two years’ ago who is now working as a permanent member of staff in the Parts Department.

“Darrel’s main function was initially to answer the phones efficiently and deal with visitors. This sounds simple enough, but good communication skills, awareness of customer service and organisational abilities don’t always come naturally. Luckily, Darrel has demonstrated that he has these skills. Once he’d mastered the basics, he looked for opportunities to expand his role, and that’s what he’s done.”

### Using his initiative

Darrel now also checks customer’s cars in, takes bookings and even does the banking for Mark.

“He does a lot of work for us, and that’s really made a difference to my working week,” explains Mark.

“Now that he’s developing his skills in Business Administration I can develop my managerial skills as he’s freed up some of my time previously spent on administration, I’ve now got more time to do the work that will really develop our business, so he’s contributing towards our growth too.”

### An asset to the business

Mark hopes that when Darrel completes his Apprenticeship he will stay with the company. “He’s an asset to Currie Motors and we hope he’ll stay with us for some time,” he said.



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Want more information on how to benefit from the Apprenticeship programme in South London?

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](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

