A BRIGHTER FUTURE

FOR DIGITAL IT APPRENTICESHIPS

Vishal Patel
Assistant Technical Engineer

Digital IT Apprenticeship standard taken/on:
Level 3 Infrastructure Technician

At 42 years old Vishal has changed his career through an IT apprenticeship. From collecting glasses to configuring routers and switches, Vishal proves that you are only limited by your ambition.

I never knew exactly what I wanted to do with my career. I studied Pharmacology at university, but it wasn't what I really wanted to do in my heart! During university I started work as a glass collector and progressed up the ladder and eventually became the manager. After 11 years I decided it was time to move on, but I still didn't know what I wanted to do, so I joined a driving agency temporarily and they found me a job with a timber company. I eventually left there 9 years later!

I have always had an interest in technology, with a little programming here and upgrading home PCs, but never thought that I could make a career of it. Seeing my brother's progression as a network engineer and how much he enjoys his job gave me the impetus to follow in his footsteps. Not only is he a respected senior engineer within his company, but he gets to travel worldwide to do his job! I could see myself doing a similar role, with time, although I knew it would be difficult with no experience on my CV.

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'I am still learning the ropes through the apprenticeship and my ambition is to become the IT Network Engineer I know I can be.'

My brother suggested that I enrol onto a course and after a year of studying in my own personal time, I took my Cisco Certified Entry Networking Technician (CCENT) exam and passed at my first attempt.

I wasn't working for my current employer before my apprenticeship, DTE placed an advert seeking an assistant technical engineer apprentice through Milton Keynes College, so I took a leap of faith and applied online and was successful. This was a big decision to make, even without a family and mortgage to pay, but the right one. I can certainly see the future benefits!

I have only been on the apprenticeship programme for a few months, in a short time I have had the opportunity to experience programming, networking and cloud services, which includes the setting up of the wireless networking infrastructure within Amazon warehouses. My organisation DTE develops plans for Amazon warehouses, supporting the networks ready to be used by Amazon's automated picking systems.

This is just the start of my journey to becoming a respected and trusted IT professional.

My top tips for a mature person considering an apprenticeship:

There is a wealth of information online that could help decide which apprenticeship and indeed what level you should start at. Courses can range from learning the fundamentals of a job to gaining a degree, so it's vital to understand that the length of an apprenticeship could be between a few months and a few years.

IT Infrastructure, Digital Marketer and Software Developer apprenticeship standards are delivered through Milton Keynes College, a BCS approved apprenticeship provider, they are looking to increase their offering to cover Network Engineer and Cyber Security in the near future.

Contact them for more info mkcollege.ac.uk

www.bcs.org/apprenticeships

Apprenticeships