

Apprentice Success Story

Ben Stookes – The Apprentice

Brentwood Council is engaged in a large transformation programme, and a major part of this is technology change. The ICT team needed to expand



resources in a cost effective manner. Already having a good track record with apprenticeships, with a previous apprentice moving onto a successful career with a private company, it was felt that this would be another positive step forward for the Council and also give a young person a great opportunity.

We partnered with Basildon ITEC college to source candidates, hold interviews and appoint. Ben stood out from the start. He had basic IT skills previously learnt at school, but when leaving school decided to work in the family business. When he saw this opportunity he decided to take a complete change in career, seeing that the apprenticeship scheme would offer great work experience and excellent opportunities formal qualifications.

Our Training Partner

Basildon ITEC is the college that supports us with the apprenticeship scheme. During Ben's level2 training they were responsible for learning support using regular meetings with an assessor and attendance from individual IT team members. These were used for checking up on progress, ensuring that not only Ben was progressing, setting realistic goals, but also to ensure that Brentwood Borough Council was also supporting him and providing a safe and suitable working environment. In addition to basic office education and Health & safety in the workplace ITEC were also responsible for providing formal training and examination centre. We are very pleased to report that during Ben's first year with us he has gained:

1st Year

Level 2 Diploma in ICT Professional Competence

- CompTIA A+
- Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA) – Networking Fundamentals

- Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA) – Windows Server Administration Fundamentals
- ITIL Foundation Certificate

We are also pleased to further report that Ben has agreed to stay on with us and carry on with his level 3 apprenticeship and further formal qualification.

2nd Year – (currently being studied)

Level 3 Diploma in ICT Professional Competence

- CompTIA Network +
- Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA): Windows 8 - 2 Exams
- Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA): Windows Server 2012 - 3 Exams

Why Ben was interested in the apprenticeship

“I always had an interest in the IT industry but never had the opportunity to work in this sector. When I saw the advertisement for the job online I applied not expecting to be successful, due to only school experience in IT. Brentwood Borough Council gave me a fantastic opportunity to join an exciting and fast paced industry that I now work in. So far I have gained a great amount of work experience and also the professional qualifications to go with this. My team have helped me every step of the way and have passed on so much knowledge to myself, I couldn't ask to be in a better department. Colleagues around the building have also made me feel very welcome and it always feels great to hear feedback from them after completing a task. I look forward to the remainder of my apprenticeship and hope to study and learn as much as possible while at this fantastic and friendly organisation.”

The benefits of the apprenticeship

- The benefits to an apprentice is allowing a young person the opportunity to embark on a complete career change. The apprenticeship scheme allows the candidate to gain excellent work experience in real world situation, but apprentices will only grow in knowledge and skills if they put the effort in.
- The benefits to Brentwood Council are growing its work force in a cost effective manner, succession planning, reputation, opportunities for young people and bringing in new and fresh ideas.

Ben's role now

Ben Stookes is now a vital part of the ICT team. We have not given him an easy time and have expected a lot, but we have had much in return. He is at the stage where he is trusted to deliver work to a very high standard involving problem solving, dealing with third parties, team support, technical

configuration and customer support. He has learnt good communication skills and is popular with all departments. The success is down to:

- formal training to give confidence in IT knowledge
- appropriate work experience within a nurturing team environment that understood that the time invested would enable the whole team to reap the rewards
- the correct attitude and commitment from Ben to succeed.