

Peter McCleery Alumni Speech

Woodlands Meed Business brunch 13th November 2019

Thank you for inviting me to this event. It's been over 6 years since I've left so quite a long time. So, originally and I'll say from the humble beginnings, I've always been interested in IT uses, technology, as a kid and actually it all started from work experience actually here, when the IT department used to be at the back of there before that changed and everything. And I progressed from there and I was told to do a course for 1 year, I did 2 years doing a level 3 IT course which I think was quite a step, and a massive challenge going to mainstream education. I had to retake my GCSE English again which I passed and through a lot of perseverance and determination I got a double distinction in my BTEC which I was incredibly proud of. It took a lot of work and a lot of perseverance but I got there.

I left there and I got a job in the summer at a company and unfortunately it didn't work out. There wasn't enough support and this is the key thing; there needs to be support from day one and more people need to be aware of Autism and how they can approach people, and how they can make those simple adaptations. Unfortunately I didn't have very much investment in that in terms of time and unfortunately it didn't work out after 3 months, but you learn through perseverance and determination that you've got to just pick yourself up and go forward from there.

I then did 5 months volunteering at my old college and I used to help students who were struggling in the IT course with various things, various concepts, stuff like that. And then after various interviews I got a job, and I got the job at Oathall Community College as an IT technician. I worked very hard with one of the job coaches that's part of the company called Potential Diamond with Richard Lamplough, alongside Mark and Mel and another Mark. Basically they helped me too, and they helped me fund an access to work support coach and they basically came up with a list of strategies; stress relieving, problem solving, a support network and they liaised with the employer, for 4 months in the end I had a support worker for and that just eased me into the role, it gave me the confidence and the responsibility and the independence to grow in that role.

So through this time I had a probationary period and a temporary contract and I was offered a permanent contract in November 2017 by the business manager and through that I've had various invitations to go to various networking events and I've been supported by my employer and so forth and I've had a review meeting with my former job coach.

What I do on a typical basis, so IT technician, it varies; day to day IT support, asset management system, you have to make sure everything is up to date on the asset manager, things like photocopiers, scanners, projectors, white boards thing like that.