

CHRIS WELCH

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WHY ARE APPRENTICESHIPS SO IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

Apprenticeships are important to young people as it gives them a nother avenue from college to continue their education and allows them to experience an industry first hand which they might be interested in a career in. The hands-on experience of apprenticeships helps young people develop practical skills that are directly applicable to a particular industry or field and many of these skills are relevant to all career paths.

HOW DO APPRENTICESHIPS BENEFIT EMPLOYERS?

We've found that having apprentices in the workforce is actually rewarding for our other employees, some of our staff really enjoy and thrive on the ability to mentor young people, sharing their knowledge and experiences and in a way validate their own career. There are also instances where the apprentices help some of our current employees with improving their skills like technology and social media management.

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH APPRENTICESHIPS?

We've ran our latest suite of apprenticeships since 2015, starting with our 'Warehouse to Wheels' which takes anyone through their HGV licence from just driving a car. Over the years we have put nearly 20 new HGV drivers on the road and many of them still drive with us today, we've found that most apprentices are keen to learn, easily moulded and even if they move away from your businesses later on a lot return.

FROM AN EMPLOYERS POV, HOW EASY IS THE PROCESS OF HIRING AND TRAINING AN APPRENTICE?



We find hiring apprentices really easy, as unlike conventional recruitment you are not looking for a long list of skill sets to match with a role you find yourself engaging with a wider pool of applicants. All local colleges are happy to help you find applicants, promote career paths and take part in career days.

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HOW DOES THE APPRENTICESHIP ROUTE DIFFER FROM THE MORE TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITY ROUTE?

The biggest difference apprenticeships offer over traditional university courses is the learning environment, which in my experience is hands-on, practical learning within a real-world environment, compared to often classroom based, based upon theoretical knowledge learning approaches. The duration of the courses also differ depending upon the level of the apprenticeship, a standard university course is three years, whilst apprenticeships can be as short as 12 to 18 months, getting the individual on the career pathway quicker- but it also means if that apprenticeship is not for you, a new experience can be found quicker.

WHO ARE APPRENTICESHIPS FOR?

Apprenticeships are for everyone. Whilst we offer 4 different apprenticeships for young people to gain access to the logistics industry, we also offer a number of higher level apprenticeships to all staff which either improve departmental or supervisory/management skills.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS TO STUDENTS UNDERTAKING AN APPRENTICESHIP?

Unlike other traditional education routes one of the main benefits of an apprenticeship is they are paid, and quite a few now adays offer a salary similar to that of a fully trained individual in that role- at Welch's Transport 80% of our apprentices pay exactly that of a fully trained employee at that level. Other benefits include the tailored learning approach, where typically apprenticeships involve a combination of on-the-job training and classroom/workshop studying (20% of the overall job) and most importantly we feel that apprenticeships enhance a person's employability as it demonstrates a person's commitment to and understanding the industry they were in.

