

SANDRA BERWICK

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO DO WHEN YOU LEFT SCHOOL?

I wanted to be a Chef, but I really didn't know how to get into this job. I enjoyed cooking and baking at home and my favourite subjects at school were Home Economics and Food & Nutrition.

When I was 15 in S4 my Guidance Teacher helped me to organise a work experience placement at Glasgow's iconic Albany Hotel. I then spent a week working with a large Chef Brigade and experienced working in each section of the hotel kitchen – the Larder, Sauce and Pastry. I got to see how a real professional kitchen worked and asked the chefs questions about how they got into their jobs.

This work experience helped me make a more informed choice about becoming a chef when I left school. I then spoke to my school careers adviser about the different options I had to get into this career.

WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER SCHOOL AND WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

I soon moved into S5 to study for Higher Art and an O' Grade in Food & Nutrition. At aged 16 I was very shy and lacked confidence. To earn some money whilst still at school I got a Saturday job through a family friend in a Glasgow restaurant called PJ's Pastaria. I served food and soft drinks to customers and helped in the kitchen with cleaning and basic food prep. This job helped me to learn about the workplace and by meeting new people I gained more confidence; I then began to overcome my shyness.

Due to my commitment and willingness to learn the owner asked if I would like to start working full-time in the restaurant as a Trainee Chef, he also offered to fund a day release course at a local College for Professional Cookery - I jumped at the chance of this great opportunity. Over the next 3 years I completed my chef qualification part time and worked in the restaurant. I was a chef for 7 years, progressing to even more job roles during my 14 years working in the hospitality industry for companies such as Whitbread and Tennent's Pubs - I continued to learn.

#NOWRONGPATH

AGE: 37

JOB TITLE: LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONER

BUSINESS: PEOPLEPLUS



"The important thing is to reach out for support, someone WILL be there to help and advise you."



HAVE YOU CHANGED JOBS OFTEN?

Yes, my jobs gave me the chance to help colleagues learn and develop. I really enjoyed this side of the role and found it very rewarding. These skills meant I could progress onto careers in Training and Advisory roles. I delivered work-based qualifications then careers guidance by moving on to work at Skills Development Scotland as a career adviser.

Due to my love of learning I continued to study in my own time. An HNC in Hotel and Catering Management, then progressed to University part time in my 30's to complete a Post Graduate Diploma in Career guidance. An opportunity came up for me to start a small creative business, which had always been an ambition of mine. This was challenging and pushed me outside of my comfort zone. I learned how to run a small business and developed skills in marketing and social media.



HOW DID YOU GET INTO YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

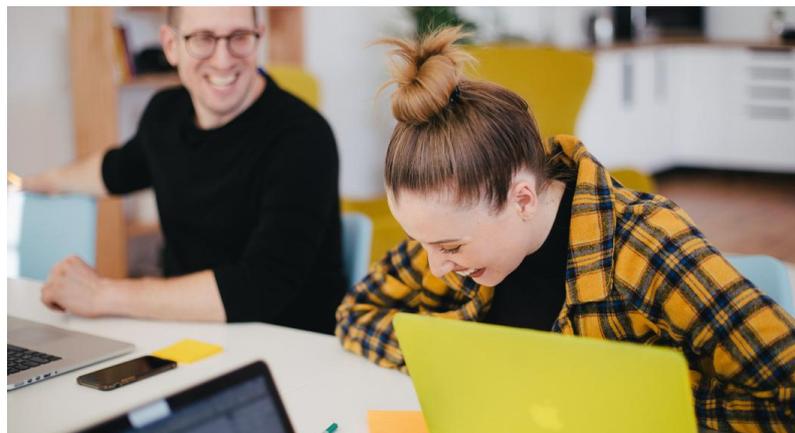
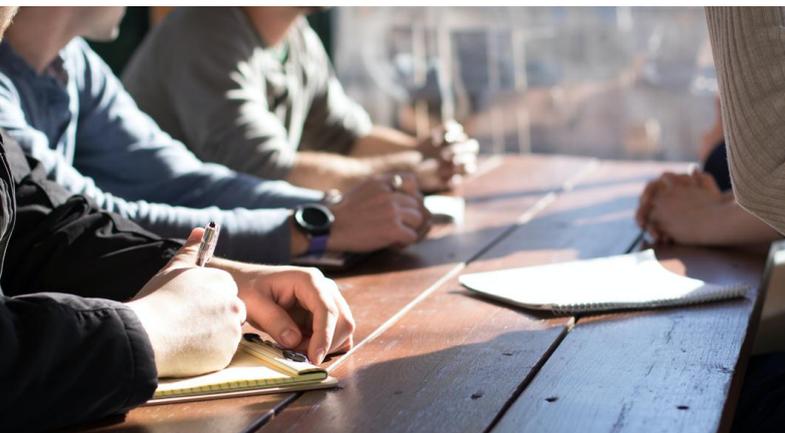
For the last 5 years I have worked in a training and employability roles for a company called PeoplePlus. I enjoy my job, it's very rewarding. I've supported school leavers into employment and deliver apprenticeships to one of the biggest supermarket chains in the UK: Sainsbury's. I'm excited about delivering a new Digital Apprenticeship programme soon!

DO YOU HAVE A MESSAGE TO PUPILS RECEIVING THEIR EXAM RESULTS TODAY?

I've had many ups and downs in my career - things have not always gone to plan. If you find yourself in this position think about who could help? I would encourage you to speak to a careers' adviser. A guidance teacher, support worker, parent or carer could also help. The important thing is to reach out for support, someone WILL be there to help and advise you. You can still get to where you want to be, but it just might take a bit longer or you may have to take a slightly different path to get there.

Be brave, be positive, try to get outside of your comfort zone. Ask questions, keep learning, and look to the future.

Good luck - it WILL all work out!



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