



## Fast Facts

**Apprentice Name:** Chelsea Orme

**Age:** 20

**Type of Apprenticeship:** Business Administration

**Job Role:** Development Coordinator

**Training Provider:** East Midlands Chamber

**Employer Name:** Duresta Upholstery Ltd

**No of Employees:** 190



## Chelsea's Story

### Getting the Balance Right

Chelsea Orme has been an Apprentice as Duresta Upholstery Ltd since May 2013, progressing from Level 2 to Level 3 Business Administration and working across a range of areas - from Health and Safety to carrying out ISO audits. She was recently named as Apprentice of the Year at the 2015 Enterprising Women Awards. Chelsea shares her experiences below.

#### What were you doing before you became an Apprentice?

I'd secured a place at university to study nursing, but I realised it wasn't for me.

#### How did you hear about Apprenticeships?

Lots of my friends had started apprenticeships and they were all really enjoying it. Also, my school had talked about apprenticeships as a real alternative to university.

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### **Why did you decide to become an Apprentice?**

I liked the fact that you could be learning alongside earning money. What put me off university was the lifestyle and now I have a great balance of learning and working – and the learning is really relevant.

### **What does being an Apprentice involve?**

The best part is the training - I've done absolutely loads! I've done a lot in relation to ISO, CSR and health and safety. People often bring things to me to do because they know I'm interested in learning.

### **What sort of tasks do you get involved with in your job?**

One of the main areas has been around the ISO audits. I've got to see every process in the business which has helped me to understand the whole production cycle.

### **What do you like best about it?**

The people – I'm learning so much from their knowledge and skills.

### **What challenges have you had to deal with?**

Upholstery is very male-dominated. Also, lots of the people have worked here for a very long time and are all really knowledgeable so it was a bit daunting coming straight

from school. I have spent time getting to know people and that has been a great way to find out how everything works and what everyone does.

### **As an Apprentice what support do you get from your employer and from the Chamber?**

The guidance from everyone involved has been great - I always know someone is there if I need them. As I have got to know more people in the business and become involved in more activities, I now have a wider support network.

### **How has the Apprenticeship helped you progress into a career or a permanent job?**

I now have a wide range of skills that I could apply anywhere. But here at Duresta, there is a lot of opportunity to move within the business and I'm really interested in that.

### **What do you feel were the advantages of doing an apprenticeship over other options such as full-time education or work without training?**

The best part is that the company has invested time in me - it's so useful being with people who know the business so well. University is more about the theory of work - here, it is all about putting it into practice.

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