



Fast Facts

Apprentice Name: Rebecca Coward
Age: 25
Type of Apprenticeship: Business Administration Level 2
Job Role: Assistant to the Family Department
Training Provider: East Midlands Chamber
Employer Name: Bakers Solicitors
No of Employees: 11



Rebecca's Story

Into the Office

What were you doing before you became an Apprentice?

I was a bar supervisor at a local pub. My background is in retail.

Why did you decide to become an Apprentice?

I heard about Apprenticeships through general conversation. Every job I'd had from the age of 19 to 24 was in retail - coffee shops, pubs and bakeries. I wanted to do something different. When you only have retail experience, getting into administration is really difficult and I realised that an Apprenticeship was a great way in.

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Everyone is willing to help me learn....

What does being an Apprentice involve and what do you enjoy most?

I provide admin support to the team here so I've done lots of reception work and computer work. My phone skills have improved hugely and I can now use a variety of software packages. I really enjoy working as part of a team and the customer care side. Now, I mainly work with the Family Law department. I enjoy getting to know the family clients and getting to grips with the work in this area.

What challenges have you had to deal with?

I'd never worked in an office before so I was a bit scared initially. Working here has definitely built up my confidence. In retail, you have to figure a lot of things out for yourself. Here, you are dealing with people's personal lives - so if you make a mistake it could have a big impact. Before, if you got someone's drink wrong, it wouldn't be the end of the world. In this role, it's about being really focused and totally aware of everything you say and do.

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

Ingrid, my tutor, has been great and gives lots of advice and tips. She explains what we are doing and makes everything so clear and logical. Here at work, everyone is willing to help me learn - I am going to be learning for the rest of my life.

How has the Apprenticeship helped you progress into a career?

They have offered me a full-time job! In terms of progression for the future, it is all about building my skills up. Maybe I can move to being a personal assistant one day - this has given me the opportunity for constant progression.

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

Lots of people say education is the most important thing. But work experience is equally as important. I worked for six years in retail and couldn't get a job in an office because I didn't have the work experience. I had the life skills - but not the experience. That's what being an Apprentice gives you. The fact that you get that experience and education at the same time is brilliant! Apprenticeships are the way to go and I would really encourage anyone to go for it.

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