

Developing your career



“I’m proof there can be a different career route to the traditional one of A levels and university.”

How Jackie Cook found her own route to success

Thousands of South Yorkshire 16-year-olds must feel their future hopes either raised or dashed by their GCSE results each summer.

But Jackie Cook, marketing expert, knows better than anyone that success in life is not governed by early academic achievements.

She left school at 16 and made her own way in life.

Says Jackie: “I’m proof there is a different career route to the traditional one of A levels and university. In recent years there has been increasing emphasis across many industries for the need for practical and experience-based skills. It is something I care passionately about demonstrating to future generations.

“I didn’t want to stay on for A levels and go to university like most of my classmates. I wanted to be a secretary and left school to go to Chesterfield College for a year to study for the relevant qualifications. At 17 I was thrilled to get a job as an office junior.

“In recent years there has been increasing emphasis across many industries for the need for practical and experience-based skills. It is something I care passionately about demonstrating to future generations.”

“I worked for an American company based in Chesterfield and after a year I was approached by a larger local firm, The Beverage Company.

“I joined as Junior Secretary but by the time redundancy hit three years later I could cover five different office admin roles.”

She was unemployed for just a week before landing a secretarial and HR role with a Sheffield firm of accountants and business advisors.

When she became the company’s marketing assistant, she started evening classes for her Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) qualifications, eventually gaining an MSc in Marketing Management at Sheffield Hallam, always studying in the evenings and on weekends around her full-time job.

In 2008 she joined engineering company DavyMarkham in Darnall, then AVK UK, one of the world’s largest international valve manufacturing groups.

Armed with her years of experience, Jackie finally set up her own thriving company, CQ Marketing Services, which offers marketing and PR expertise to a broad range of clients. Now Managing Director of her own business, she has recently added CQ Marketing Academy to the CQ group.

She aims to give strategic marketing advice and practical support to small and medium-sized business looking for growth, and even writes a Business Monthly column, ‘Marketing Matters’, in the Sheffield Star.



Put it all down to experience...



Work experience success for student on Summer Camp Programme

During August 2015, Greg Welsh (15) from St Mary's High School in Chesterfield completed several days of work experience with CQ Strategic Marketing. Greg's work experience was part of the Summer Camp programme run by The work-wise Foundation, which gives 14-18 year olds work experience during the summer holidays supported by 2 days of employability skills induction. Greg had the opportunity to accompany Managing Director, Jackie Cook to two clients' premises - LBBC Technologies in Stanningley, Leeds, and Opus-UK in Sheffield.

Jackie explained, "Whilst working with CQ Strategic Marketing, Greg has been involved in scheduling regular social media content for both CQ Strategic Marketing and the separate brand CQ 4 Small Biz. He has also worked on the company database, helping conduct market research to identify the correct contact with the target organisation. He has also prepared, with little assistance, directions to the company's premises which will be used in marketing brochures, on the website and to send out as required. Greg has been very professional when out at clients and involved in client meetings. He has assisted greatly with the marketing of both CQ and our clients business."

"These experiences have enhanced my skills in many fields such as understanding marketing through social media and also my ability to suggest my opinion in formal business situations."

Greg Welsh, St Mary's High School, Chesterfield

1st year marketing student excels on work experience

Chloe Ireland, 1st year marketing student



During March 2016, Chloe Ireland (18), a 1st year Marketing, Communications and Advertising student from Sheffield Hallam University has completed a week's work experience with CQ Strategic Marketing. Chloe accompanied Managing Director Jackie Cook to three client premises including Rollem in Tankersley, Barnsley, LBBC Group of companies in Stanningley, Leeds and Newburgh Precision in Rotherham.

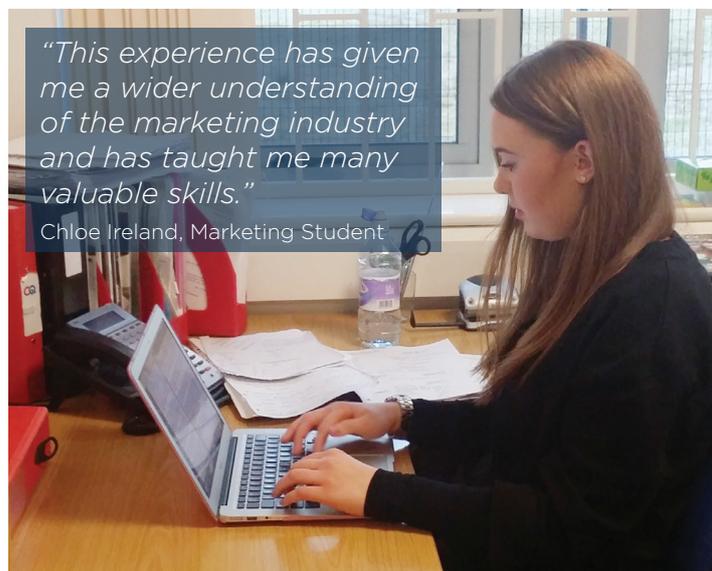
During her work experience, Chloe also managed CQ Strategic Marketing, CQ 4 Small Biz and CQ Marketing Academy's social media accounts, as well as creating target databases for CQ.

Jackie was delighted with her progress and commented "Chloe has really added value to our team during her week's experience - she's been professional in her approach in client meetings, producing work of a high standard efficiently. She shows real commitment to a career in marketing."

Chloe said "I've learnt many valuable skills in aspects such as managing marketing through social media, the development of brand guidelines, and putting together target databases. Not only this but by spending the week with Jackie, I have seen partly what it takes to manage a growing business".

"This experience has given me a wider understanding of the marketing industry and has taught me many valuable skills."

Chloe Ireland, Marketing Student



"This experience was extremely beneficial and will be most helpful in preparing me for the world of work."



CQ Strategic Marketing hosts Cutlers' Ambassador on work experience

During August 2017, William Allender, 15, from Bradfield School completed six days of work with CQ Strategic Marketing. William's work experience was part of the Cutlers' Ambassadors programme run by The work-wise Foundation, which gives 13-16 year olds work experience during the summer holidays. William accompanied Jackie Cook to four client premises including Rollem in Tankersley, Barnsley, LBBC Group of companies in Stanningley, Leeds, Red Dog Linings in Barnsley and Newburgh Precision in Rotherham.

Whilst working with CQ Strategic Marketing, William has been involved in scheduling regular social media content for various clients. He has also worked on three news articles where he has written about his experience with the Cutlers' Ambassadors and Summer Academy programme and the skills he has learnt on work experience. He has then worked on the work-wise website where he edited the page and inserted his two articles under the news category. He has then worked with Red Dog Linings, helping conduct market research to identify the correct contact with the target organisation.

William said, "I've understood what it takes to manage and grow your own business and learnt many valuable skills which will be useful in later life. This experience has opened my eyes to what it is like to operate in a working environment and has given me a wider understanding of the marketing sector. This experience was extremely beneficial and will be most helpful in preparing me for the world of work."

Jackie Cook, Managing Director said "William has done really well. He has attended and contributed to business meetings in a professional, respectful and appropriate manner. William has shown initiative, good timekeeping skills and has followed instructions extremely well, picking things up quickly and asking questions where appropriate. He has got on well in our small team and with our clients and contacts."

Jennie experiences the world of work at CQ Strategic Marketing

During August 2016, Jennie Grice (15) from Sheffield Springs Academy in Sheffield has completed a week's work experience with CQ Strategic Marketing. Jennie's work experience was part of the Summer Camp programme run by The work-wise Foundation, which gave 14 - 18 year olds work experience during the summer holidays supported by two days of employability skills induction. As well as visiting a range of CQ's clients, Jennie attended a meeting about the annual Get up to Speed (GUTS) careers showcase on Wednesday, with discussions around how to improve the GUTS event and promotion, along with sharing ideas about Get up to Speed 2017.

Jennie said, "Working with CQ Strategic Marketing for five days showed me how the real world and the world of work is, and has taught me many things, one being time management and making sure I'm organised for the big day ahead."

During her work experience Jennie helped update the company's marketing database, created content for and updated client social media accounts, helped update content onto a new client website, wrote copy for CQ's news pages and prepared copy for a client press release from basic notes on the case studies and forthcoming event.

Jackie Cook, Managing Director said "Jennie has proved a useful asset to our company this week getting involved in a range of client work under guidance from Claire and myself. She has been professional, willing to learn and interested in finding out more. The work-wise team have provided a good opportunity for our business to gain extra help and provide an engaging real insight into the world of work for these students, I'd be happy to support them in the future."

"Working with CQ Strategic Marketing for five days showed me how the real world and the world of work is."

Jennie Grice, Sheffield Springs Academy



Marketing yourself

In an increasingly competitive job market, how do you make yourself stand out to your future employer?

Although more generally used to market a company or product, there are several marketing techniques that you can apply just as equally to promote yourself and your skills.



A few thoughts on researching your chosen career:

- Read books on theory and practice to top up your knowledge or research a change of role
- Look at relevant professional bodies, membership of a professional body shows commitment to your career and continuous professional development, they also hold a lot of information to help you in your career and hold regular networking events
- Find out what are the recognised qualifications for that job role
- Get a subscription to online and print trade magazines so you are up to date with what is happening
- Book to go to networking events that the types of businesses you want to work for will be attending
- Research job vacancies, look at job specs what are employers looking for in skills and qualifications, identify the gaps in your knowledge and work out how you can fill them
- Think about volunteering, committees for relevant charities/organisations to gain experience

Showcasing your talent, making yourself stand out:

- CV - bring your relevant experience and qualifications to the front
- CV - format of the document, make it easy to read but maybe style the document to suit your ideal job so event programme for event management, set of accounts for accountant, marketing brochure, legal document, engineering drawing etc
- Testimonials and references from former employers and colleagues to highlight the skills needed in that job role, get a to whom it may concern letter so you have it to show your future employer or client
- Develop a portfolio of examples of work that you have done, to write case studies remember what was the problem, how did you solve it, what was the outcome, quote from the person you did the work for, include pictures to break up the text
- Use of video, particularly for more creative careers or where people skills and personality is important make a little video to use on your LinkedIn profile or send a dvd/usb stick to your prospective employer with your cv and portfolio