

INDUSTRY: EDUCATION
ACTIVITY: EMPLOYABILITY
ORGANISATION: MCR PATHWAYS

NICHOLAS CARROLL, GLASGOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

How long have you been mentoring with MCR Pathways?

I was first matched with a young person in 2017.

Why was MCR of interest to you?

For most of my working life I have been involved in employability, predominately with young people. I am also from the east end of the city having gone to school there throughout the 1990s, so I'm very aware of the challenges that young people face in areas such as that, and I wanted to do something that might encourage a young person to make the most of their potential.

Tell us about the young person:

S was in third year when I first met him, and it became clear very early that he was a good lad with a lot of potential but was in danger of perhaps going astray as it seemed like he felt he had to prove himself to his peers in a way, which could potentially lead to gang issues and disengagement. S had a lot of territorial issues and was often frustrated by some aspects of the school environment, but he did have a goal to secure an electrician apprenticeship so we were able to focus on that.

What support did you offer to your young person?

Having a background in employability meant that I have a good knowledge of opportunities for progression and what the requirements are to secure them. Firstly though we had to build a relationship, and we did this mostly by talking about football - the fact that we support different sides of the 'Glasgow divide' meant that we could get some good banter and always had something to refer to if the conversation was waning. As S prepared to leave third to go into fourth year, I introduced more topics about progression and life after school, and as time went by I would bring in tips for application and interviews with examples of job descriptions etc, and before long we were actually completing applications, mock CSCS tests and a whole variety of other preparatory work. Along with the in school MCR Co-ordinator, SDS worker and ELO we were able to ensure that S was informed of opportunities and prepared to apply.

What was the result?

S really did well to keep his head down and achieve the grades required to progress, especially with one or two subjects that he wasn't too fond of. Happily, in the Autumn S received word that he had been successful in gaining an Electrician apprenticeship with Citybuilding, which really is no mean feat as it is one of the most competitive processes in the city.

What Next?

I have been matched with another third year at another school who has a lot more complex challenges than S, so we start the journey again.

Any other comments?

MCR is vital. I have seen first-hand the value to a young person in having a non-authoritative and non-judgmental adult just taking the time to listen to them and take an interest.

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