



# Apprentice Ambassadors Q&A





# LIBBY CARR

Business Administration Apprentice, aged 21

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### **How old were you when you started your apprenticeship and what were you doing prior to it?**

I was 19 and had completed an apprenticeship elsewhere in digital marketing, but really wanted to advance to something different and more challenging

### **Why did you want to get involved in manufacturing?**

Unipres is well known across the manufacturing sector and that we are a major supplier to Nissan, so to go from a local firm to a global company with a clear career path was fantastic. The region has a strong manufacturing sector and Sunderland has excellent automotive manufacturing, so I knew if I did well at Unipres, it wasn't just a job, it was a career

### **What made Unipres stand out against other manufacturers?**

A friend worked here and recommended I apply for a job. I was reluctant as I didn't want to be an engineer, but when I came here I realised how many other jobs there are in the offices and Academy. There are more men than women at Unipres, but I have always felt valued and that the company is keen to help me progress.

### **Can you tell us what your typical work day at Unipres involves?**

In our department, we run a three-week training programme, which I look after supporting the tutors, setting out a weekly timetable, administration and timesheets to make sure people get paid. However, different jobs just crop up all the time, so no two days are ever really the same.

### **What skills have you learned since joining the company?**

Loads! When I first came to Unipres, I didn't even want to answer the phone or talk to anyone, but my confidence has grown, my computer skills have progressed, writing reports, working as part of a team, with men and colleagues of all ages, doing presentations – my Unipres apprenticeship has helped me develop professionally and personally.

### **What has been your proudest career moment so far?**

I completed Level 3 in Business Admin and was accepted to do Level 4. So that was probably my proudest achievement, as it allowed me to gain my qualifications while getting experience and not racking up debt at college or university.



### **And what are your plans for the next five years?**

I want to stay at Unipres. Once I've completed my Level 4, I'd like to do a degree and move up to maybe team leader in the department, or maybe something else will come up that I feel helps me progress.

### **What would you say to someone considering taking up a manufacturing apprenticeship?**

It's not all heavy engineering! There are loads of careers as well as those jobs on the factory floor. Manufacturing is for everyone because we have admin roles, jobs in HR, IT, logistics, designers...people think manufacturing is only about what happens on the factory floor, and that is important, but there's so much more to it too.

### **Also, what more do you think the manufacturing community can do to reach out to and appeal to young people?**

Unipres has its Industrial Cadets programme for 11-19 year olds. Young people get 30-hours work experience and see all of the different departments and how Unipres runs from top to bottom, so they can get a rounded view of how a Tier 1 manufacturer operates.

### **How has your apprenticeship helped you grow as a person?**

Personally, it has helped me become more independent and confident. It has also allowed me to buy myself a car and I'm saving up to buy a house. My personal skills have really developed and the professional qualifications are fantastic.

### **Finally, if you could sum up your time at Unipres so far in one word, what would it be?**

Challenging – but in a good way! I feel like I've been taken out of my comfort zone and it's had a really positive impact. I have done presentations in front of people that I never would have had the confidence to deliver in the past, so it's challenged me to improve and I feel that has been of huge benefit.





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