

Leigh Davis

What were your favourite subjects/best memories from school?

My favourite subjects were Science and History. One of my favourite memories of school was competing in the District athletic competition.

What are you currently doing and how did you get there?

I have actually just started a new job and had a complete career change. When I left school I went to college and did A-Levels in English, Biology, Archaeology, Anthropology and History. I then went to Birmingham City University where I achieved a Bachelor of Science degree in Gemmology and Jewellery studies. I also studied other industry qualifications. I worked in a Jewellers as their Gemmologist and Rolex manager but I have recently left this role to pursue a more 'hands-on' career in engineering. I am still using my degree to do consultancy work.

What is your favourite thing about your career?

My favourite thing is that I am doing something different every day so it never gets tedious. It's very hands on but also theoretical and you are constantly learning which is very important to me.

What is your least favourite thing about your career?

My least favourite thing is that it is a very male dominated industry but there are more and more women becoming engineers so hopefully this will start to change in the coming years.

What advice would you give to a student wanting a job in your field?

My best advice would be to just GO FOR IT! This was a complete step out of my comfort zone and a huge step away from what I did at university but this field is enabling me much more room for progression. If you want a hands-on career that is fulfilling and still slightly academic, engineering is a great option. Girls, please don't be put off because it seems like a job for men! you can do anything you set your mind to!

How did your experience at Dene Magna help you find your first job?

My experience at Dene Magna helped me find my first job because I felt like I had more confidence to enter the world of work. At school you learn some really key skills for your work life such as time management, discipline, punctuality and how to work well by yourself as well as in team.

If you had to do it all over again what would you do differently?

I had a great experience at school, I am very academic and I love learning - even now so there isn't really anything I would've done differently. The only thing I perhaps would do differently, is to not take things so seriously, make sure you take breaks from revision to spend time doing what you love with who you love - that is the most important thing!

What do you know now that you wish you knew when you were at school?

Exams are not the be all and end all! as i touched on before, I spent a lot of time revising and neglecting my social life, while this is not strictly a bad thing, getting out and enjoying yourself does wonders for your mental health. Having good mental health and not being so stressed out will make the exams far easier! try your hardest and that is all anyone can expect from you but always remember to have fun. You'll never get the chance to relive your school days to enjoy them while you can!

