



# APPRENTICESHIPS

## Apprentice Guide

Top tips to keep in mind when looking for an apprenticeship



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**WMJobs Marketing Advisor Illesse Uppal started out as an apprentice just three short year years ago. Here she gives a frank insight into what it's like to be "The Apprentice".**

"Leaving education can be scary. I left sixth form with 3 A – levels under my belt and no idea of where I was headed.

I spent the first month catching up on all of my Netflix series that I had neglected due to studying. This was great – until I got bored of it. (Impossible you say? I thought so too)

Meanwhile all my friends were receiving their Uni acceptance letters. I knew that I didn't want to go to university and spend three years studying a subject when I didn't know what I wanted to be.

I started applying for entry level jobs so that I could make some money, but got turned down as I didn't have a degree or enough experience.

Feeling desperate, an apprenticeship was my last choice. But if I knew then what I know now – it would have been my first.

My apprenticeship was the best decision I've ever made and I don't know where I would be without it.

**If you are thinking of doing an apprenticeship – GO FOR IT.**



**Here's my top ten Apprenticeship tips to get you started:**

**You don't need to have your whole life mapped out right now.**



If you're not sure exactly what you want do for the rest of your life – that's absolutely fine. I started out wanting to become an event manager, so I took an apprenticeship in Business Admin hoping to get some experience. I got exactly that - as well as experience in finance, recruitment, HR and marketing. That's the whole point of apprenticeships! Getting a taste of different sectors to find out what you do and don't enjoy doing.

**Nerves are normal**

If you're looking for an apprenticeship, I am going to assume that you don't have much interview experience. I certainly didn't and I had no idea what to expect. So I can tell you that nerves are completely normal. Everyone gets nervous before an interview – even people with years of experience. The trick is to believe in yourself, do some research on the company and the role you are applying for and don't let your nerves upstage you!



## 30 years work experience at 21

If you're a big meme fan (which I am) you will have seen the ones about jobs expecting 30 years work experience at the age of 21. In some cases this can be true (maybe a tad exaggerated), but not with apprenticeships. They understand that you won't have much real work experience. They are looking for skills that you already have that can be transferred to the work place. For example: communication, organisation and interpersonal skills.



## Why do you want this job?

In my opinion, this is the single most important question in your Apprentice interview and is why I secured my apprentice role. Why do you want the job? Nail this question and the panel will see how passionate you are about the job and why they should consider you. Never, ever mention that you are applying for the money. Show them how you can benefit from the opportunities and training they are offering and how they can benefit from employing you.



## Get back on the horse

I must have attended at least 10 interviews before I secured an apprenticeship. If you get turned down, learn from where you went wrong in the interview, listen to their feedback and improve on this next time. You have to keep putting yourself out there.



## What to expect

When you secure your apprenticeship, what can you expect? The work environment was not what I was expecting. The thing to remember is that even though you are an apprentice and will be going to college, this is a real job in a real organisation. You need to get to grips with the environment and establish the ground rules such as dress code, lunch times, mobile phone policies etc.



## You are there to learn

I wish somebody had given me this advice. It's not just a job – you are there to learn, train and get your qualifications. Put your name down for every single training course you can. If it doesn't benefit you now – it will at some point in the future. Make the most of any and all training materials and anyone willing to give you advice.



## Put yourself out there

Once you settle in, it's easy to turn on autopilot and sink into the background. Don't. Don't wait to be asked. Put yourself out there, take the initiative and show that you are driven. It will get you noticed for the right reasons and go a long way with your managers.



## Speak up

Being an apprentice doesn't mean you can't have an opinion. I thought nobody would want to hear my ideas because I was young and inexperienced. I was completely wrong. You have a different perspective than most of your colleagues and will probably have fresher ideas. Speaking up about an idea I had to launch the Apprentice Hub website led to me being given the project to run, which was a deciding factor when I applied for my permanent role - Marketing Adviser at WMJobs.



## Team building

Christmas parties are when you see different sides of people. You see your managers and colleagues let their hair down after a successful year and celebrating as a unit. I would advise you to engage in social activities outside of the office as this will build relationships with your team and maybe even lead to some good friendships.



I learned a lot from my apprenticeship, but I wish I had been given this advice before I started.

Three years on I'm no longer the Apprentice but I am the Marketing Adviser at WMJobs and without the training and support that I had on my apprenticeship, I know I would not be in the role I am today.

I hope my story inspires you but for more advice and real life apprenticeship stories head to the [apprenticehub.org](http://apprenticehub.org)

**Good luck!**

