

Earning and Learning: Tunstall Launches New Apprenticeship Scheme

Oct 7, 2019

Monday:

We all travelled to Tunstall's head office at Whitley in Yorkshire, feeling very nervous as well as excited. Duncan Bennett, the Director of Customer Service & Support met us and gave us a warm welcome. He explained how he was passionate about introducing the apprenticeship scheme and gave us a bit of insight into the company's history. We were then given our company vehicles which we were very excited and grateful for. After our first day we went to stay at our hotel where we got to know each other over a meal.

Tuesday:

We started our second day by meeting with Chris Clarke from the Engineering Trust, a charity which helped Tunstall develop the apprenticeship scheme. He took us through the structure and plan for our college placement. He also us about a teambuilding course we have been booked onto in Wales, where we will be taking part in activities such as caving, raft building, zip wiring, orienteering as well as project work during the evenings. The course is targeted at helping young people integrate in to their new companies and work well together.

We then had Asbestos training with Brian where were taught about the importance of asbestos awareness, before joining a managers' meeting which gave us insight into the scale of the company. This amazed us all - we knew the company was big but didn't quite realise just how big it actually is. Being part of this meeting made us all feel included in the business, and the understanding we gained from attending will be really useful for us.

Wednesday:

Wednesday began with another managers' meeting. We met with various senior staff, including the Head of Commercial finance, which helped us to understand the finance side of the business. We also met with the Managing Director, Gavin Bashar, and HR Director, Katie Collins, who both gave us a warm welcome to the company and offered their support to us which we found very reassuring.

Glen Thorne, Commercial Manager, then gave us our fire training, this was very informative and showed us just how important fire safety is. This was followed by a tour of stores where we learned how we will access the parts we need. We then visited the CEG lab, where Product Specialist Wayne Moate who showed us Tunstall technology from 1981 to the modern technology of today; it was great to see how the technology has developed and changed over the years. Next was the Tunstall museum, where System Consultant Kevin which showed us in more depth the development of the company from the very start to the present day.

Thursday:

On Thursday we started the day off with Facefit training from Dave Almond, Field Service Supervisor, which taught us how important the use of face masks is and the job that they do. We were also taught about the overtime and mileage forms that we will need to complete each month, this is something very important for us to learn and complete correctly as this is a declaration to the HMRC.

After lunch we met with Yael Bannister from the HR department and went through the Safeguarding policy. It's especially important for us to learn what safeguarding is and to learn how to spot safeguarding issues, as we will be working in the field with potentially vulnerable people. We were also taught about how to deliver good customer service, which gives us the knowledge that we need to ensure when we go out into the field we know how to present ourselves and represent the company properly.

Friday:

The last day of our first week saw us tour the factory, and it was really interesting to see where the products we will be servicing have come from and the process used to manufacture them. Our final training for the week was Electrical Test for Dead training. This was important for us as we will be dealing with a lot of electrical equipment and will need this knowledge to keep ourselves safe. We visited the Innovation Centre where we were given demonstrations of some of Tunstall's latest solutions. Finally, we had an overview of our week and were briefed on what will be happening next.

Conclusion:

Our first week at Tunstall has been a great experience for all of us. Everyone we have met has been kind, friendly and welcoming. All members of the staff have met made us feel involved in the company straight away. We feel inspired and reassured about our apprenticeship and can't wait to get started.