

EMPLOYER Q & A

Dean McFadden
Company Director (former apprentice)
Timothy Wood Ltd



TIMOTHY WOOD LTD
HARDWARE & IRONMONGERY

Timothy Wood Limited is a family-run business established in 1926 making it one of the longest established hardware stores in the country. They supply a wide range of hardware and ironmongery to local authorities, housing associations and large contractors. Products are distributed throughout the UK, Europe and Scandinavia. They have been trading successfully online since 2004 and in 2012 launched a new online brand, DJM Direct.



Why does your company take on apprentices?

I'm a former warehouse apprentice who then went onto take management qualifications. The fantastic start an apprenticeship gave me has allowed me to progress right up to becoming a company director. We wanted to give young people the same opportunity to take a different route and get started on a great career.

What are the benefits to your company of taking on apprentices?

A lot of our business is now online and with increased sales we require a bigger team to cope with the demands of a growing company. We have very loyal staff that have been with us for years and we want them to pass on their knowledge and skills to the next generation. Taking on apprentices allows us to breath new life into the business and nurture the employees of the future.

Tell us about your apprentices from Kirklees College?

They can grow with the business and be moulded to suit the needs of the company. We spent a lot of time and effort teaching and training our apprentice – it's well spent as you get so much back. Our current apprentice struggled with school work but is doing really well here in a real-life practical environment. It's wonderful to see someone shine when they are exposed to a different situation that suits them much better. He's become a perfect member of the team, independent, maturing quickly and growing in confidence. We really landed on our feet.

What does the future hold for your apprentices at the company once they have completed their course?

They are definitely being taken on by us full-time in our warehouse and dispatch department. Going forward they will continue their development and training, becoming a key part of our family. They will become multi-skilled and move up through the ranks like I have done.

How does the college support your company and your apprentice?

The college has been superb. They arranged everything for me making the whole process really easy and stress-free. They helped me get quality employees. They've supported the business and our apprentice every step of the way. We've even got help from the Government with payments. It's a win all round.

Would you take on more apprentices in the future, and why?

We're already looking at getting a new apprentice from the college to fill a new role we have as we are expanding. We've had such a good experience with Kirklees College that we are going through them again. We'll be bringing in the younger generation and giving them a chance to develop their career through this fantastic route.

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