

# Apprenticeships

## Learner Case Study

Jaker Ahmed  
Business Development Manager  
CDW

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**Sales Executive Level 4**



### **Why did you decide to go ahead with the apprenticeship programme?**

The Apprenticeship was a huge opportunity and influence in my decision to take my first role within the Sales industry. Having studied law, my first exposure to the law firm involved a lot of negotiating with barristers and managing various relationships. As a result of this experience I wanted to pursue a long term Sales journey whereby I could build on these skills. I saw this apprenticeship as a great opportunity to do this.

### **What areas of development did you see the programme meeting for you within your role/responsibilities from where you started?**

I was hoping for the chance to get really immersed in the programme and mainly focus around building my confidence and communication skills. I joined Quadient as an SDR with a view to progress as quickly as possible. I actively sought out the criterion which I would need to satisfy in order to do this, with my competencies in mind. Having looked at the outline of the course in full before I started, I knew that I would like the opportunity to see the Sales cycle in its entirety and took on some added responsibility in order to do this.

### **What were your perceptions of doing an apprenticeship before starting on this journey?**

He had close friends who had completed apprenticeships as opposed to going to University. He felt inspired to start one himself as he was motivated by the hands on approach and the much more appealing risk to reward ratio. The combination of both fulfilling the Sales position and also having the exposure to the theory/resources was very appealing to him. This is something which was outlined really clearly from the start as achievable on the programme.



### **How have these changed since starting the course?**

I had some positive preconceptions of the apprenticeship that have only been accelerated and advanced throughout my time on the course. I underestimated the amount of support that would be available to me outside of the training sessions and assessment preparation. For example, I was really keen to expand my relationships within the Quadient organisation. This was something that Pareto offered guidance with and this resulted in some really fruitful conversations with my seniors that made some noise around the SDR team!

### **How would you describe your experience of doing this qualification?**

I thoroughly enjoyed my time on the course and learned a lot about myself and what I was looking for out of my Sales career. The foundations of my conversation, from the manner in which you introduce yourself in a new interaction, to the art of reasoning (soft, hard, killer questions) and closing are attributable to my training with Pareto. I believe Pareto have helped me direct my enthusiasm and eagerness in a really efficient way.

### **What have been your biggest learning points from the course?**

My interaction with my skills coach and general experience of the programme really motivated me to be pragmatic and proactive in my approach. I squeezed as much as possible out of the programme and this really helped with my confidence. My ability to adapt to various communication styles over the phone dependent on the task at hand/client in prospecting was really developed during his time on the apprenticeship, and these skills are such that I actively employ them in my role every day. I have progressed from a role focused on lead generation and triaging, to going on to having ownership of relationships and optimizing new business opportunities within these. The journey as a Sales professional in a relatively short period of time has been really built on the skills acquired during the apprenticeship. I can't recommend it enough.





**What impact has the course made on your development and career?**

This opportunity is the perfect way to embed yourself within a long term career in the Sales industry. I am so grateful for the experience and the support in establishing myself within my first company, and then going on to secure a promoted position in a new business. I faced various adversities having started my apprenticeship just before the onset of the pandemic. Navigating through this with the support of my Sales Coach, in combination with always striving to do my best resulted in me landing a new role within CDW where I have gone on to generate some great new business winning some great accounts in the public sector.

**Having completed/once you complete the course, what is next for you?**

I am hoping to continue to progress, win more business and grow as a professional with CDW. I am working towards a Team Leader role, taking on yet more responsibility and really looking forward to sharing my skills and learnings with the team and helping others optimize their intrinsic talent whilst also developing constantly.

### What advice would you give to anyone else thinking of doing an apprenticeship?

Use working documents to log your work! A key component in achieving well in your Apprenticeship is ensuring that you track/log all of the hard work that you do. You will need to do this throughout the time that you are on programme, so ensure that you start this as a 'working document' and allocated small portions of time to keeping this current and up to date throughout. Staying on top of your admin is very manageable if you get this organised at the start. Finally, utilise your 'Off the Job' time, immerse yourself in the sector and saturating your knowledge as much as possible with all the available resources. Use your skills coach and learn from their suggestions/advice.

