



STEM Insight: Marie Jobson

Role: Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Lead (CEIAG)

School: Churchill Community College,
North Tyneside

Placement: Five businesses in five days,
July 2016

"I now know that until you step through the doors of a company you can't really understand what you are actually preparing young people for."

Host: I embarked on a fantastic programme of daily visits to five local STEM-based employers. I was amazed to find that four are based within a few miles of the college.

- 1.** Port of Tyne Authority - one of the busiest ports in the UK.
- 2.** Ford Aerospace - well-known in the precision machining and component manufacturing industries.

- 3.** SMD - the world's largest independent designer and manufacturer of specialist subsea remotely operated vehicles.

- 4.** Quick Hydraulics - a small but growing company that provides supply to full hydraulic system installations.

- 5.** Unipres - a manufacturer of pressed parts for automobiles, supplying Nissan locally and Renault and Honda in the UK.

Motivation: My role is key to maintaining the college's outstanding reputation for preparing young people well for the future. We are also one of sixteen schools and colleges in the North East taking part in the Gatsby Good Careers Guidance pilot to explore how schools and colleges can achieve eight benchmarks for high quality and effective careers guidance.

STEM Insight has enabled me to talk more confidently to students, staff and parents about the local and regional world of work and to start embedding careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in the curriculum.



I also thought it would be a great opportunity to build connections and gain an understanding of what to expect from employers in relation to their involvement in our CEIAG activities. The programme addresses four of the eight Gatsby benchmarks.

Experience: The tours of each business were fantastic and it was excellent to speak to as many employees as possible about their own routes into the organisation. So many of them are parents or former pupils at local schools and it was fascinating to hear their views about the quality of CEIAG in schools.

The investment of time and energy from all companies was much appreciated. The networking opportunities were priceless and enabled me to meet my secondary aim of establishing strategic links with local business. Since the placement, relationships with these employers have hugely strengthened our careers education programme.

Impact on me: The greatest impact on me has been the huge improvement in my knowledge of both STEM and non-STEM careers and of the types of industry in our area.

I knew about the loss of the local shipbuilding industry but it was a revelation for me to discover that this had been replaced by small but thriving new companies which use and need the same STEM skills base and need to recruit young people to survive and grow.

I feel I have a much more confident grasp of the apprenticeship landscape and related considerations for students and guidance professionals. I also better understand the pressures on businesses around employer engagement in schools and feel informed about what an employer's needs and expectations are of a good school-based CEIAG programme.

The experience has greatly affected my thinking too and I feel more confident both about developing our careers strategy and doing this in a different way. As a result, I have developed a robust plan to offer our year 10 and 12 students a meaningful experience of work. This was very much informed by my STEM Insight experience.



Impact on my college / students: My biggest innovation as a direct result of STEM Insight is the 'Work Experience with a twist' programme:

- Conceived in collaboration with the Multidisciplinary Design Innovation Postgraduate programme at Northumbria University and modelled on my STEM Insight experience
- On day one, students complete a series of preparatory workshops and consider varying types of careers. On day two they enter a workplace looking at company culture, structure, ethos and job satisfaction. By the end of the week, students give a formal presentation on the company and present the outcomes from a challenge set for them by the employer

- Feedback and evidence from the presentations (video) show that this is truly meaningful experience of work with impressive results. "A lifetime of learning in one week!"• Students were unanimous in their support of the programme and they clearly demonstrated and appreciated the value of it. This would not have happened if it were not for STEM Insight!
- As a result of its success, we are currently recruiting employers to allow us to offer Work Experience with a twist to 160 students in June• One of my placement employers hosted the trial for Year 12 and has committed, with another of the employers, to hosting the pre-16 programme
- Two of my placement companies have supported several CEIAG events
- So far, around 400 students have benefitted in some way from my STEM Insight experience

Professional development: The CPD support materials for the placement were great and helped me to reflect on my experience. The structured approach of the STEM Insight programme has been particularly helpful since then to prepare similar tools for students to reflect and make the most of their experience.

"The reality is that we are preparing our students for the workplace not for league table success – it is imperative that staff are therefore in tune with the reality of the workplace and understand the working environment, the demands and the opportunities."