



Beamont Collegiate  
Academy



my  
story

DARREN SHERRATT  
SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER  
BUPA UK

## WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU DO?

Hi my name is Darren and I am a Senior Product Manager at Bupa, for those who don't know Bupa it is the biggest private healthcare company in the UK and also operates globally. Bupa's purpose is to help people live longer, healthier, happier lives.

In my role at Bupa I lead on the management and development of Bupa's mental health and primary care products and services. Examples of the products include counselling for employees, resilience and stress management training, specialist finance and legal support for when you have an issue and private GP services.

## WHAT YEAR DID YOU LEAVE?

I left high school in 1999 when it was called William Beamont High School. It has changed an awful lot since then and all for the better! Students who attend now are very fortunate to have such amazing facilities which can really help get your career started early.

## WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER LEAVING?

I planned to go to college to do a GNVQ in IT and then join the police force; however my career took a different path and I joined Warrington Wolves as an accounts assistant through a modern apprenticeship programme with Charter Training.

If you're wondering why this happened, after a lot of careful consideration and talking it through with my parents I decided that an apprenticeship would offer me more on the job experience as well as a qualification and the opportunity with Warrington Wolves was attractive.

I also had to re-sit my maths GCSE at night college because I got a D grade and needed a C or above to continue with the accounting training and exams. Looking back I neglected Maths and focused on other subjects to get good grades so I would definitely advise you all to do well in Maths because it is so widely used in everyday life.



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## WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST PROPER JOB?

I joined Warrington Wolves as an Accounts Assistant and stayed with them for eight years eventually becoming Assistant Finance Manager and completing by NVQ 2, 3 and 4 in Accounting and then went on to qualify as an Accounting Technician with the AAT before moving on to do my Chartered Management Accounting exams with CIMA.

During my time at Warrington Wolves I got involved with the entire business including the retail store, lottery and sales and marketing. I helped to set-up the first online retail store and introduced an EPOS system for the retail business as well as developing the businesses IT infrastructure. In 2004 We moved from the old stadium at Wilderspool Causeway to Winwick Road which was an exciting time.

## HOW DID YOU GET WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

I have always had a good work ethic and believed that if you put the effort in and have the right mind-set you can achieve just about anything. Don't create barriers for yourself and aim high.

Throughout my career I have continued to learn new skills and focused on my personal development always having my next role in mind so I knew what I was working towards to achieve my goals. I have also done a number of development and leadership programmes in work and PRINCE 2 Project Management qualification. You can always learn new skills and having a development plan helps you be at your best and get the roles you really want.

Mentoring has also played a key role in helping me in my career and I have had some excellent mentors as well as mentored people myself and it is really rewarding.

I left Warrington Wolves in 2007 and joined Bupa in Manchester and have now worked for them for ten years in a variety of finance and commercial roles. One of the benefits of working for a large corporate organisation is the opportunity to move around the business and develop new skills.

## WHAT DOES YOUR JOB TODAY INVOLVE?

My current role involves me working with people across the business to ensure that my In-life products are marketed and sold effectively to meet targets and customers receive the service they expect.

Markets continually change so it is also important that we understand customer needs as they change so we can respond to them with product development and keep ahead of our competitors who want to win the same customers.

## AT SCHOOL, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?

I wasn't really sure but really enjoyed IT and planned to join the police force. I never would of imagined I would be doing what I am now but really enjoy it.



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### WHAT SUBJECTS DID YOU ENJOY MOST AND EXCEL AT?

I enjoyed IT and History the most, I had excellent teachers for both subjects and that made a real difference. I believe Mrs McNulty is still teaching History at the school.

### WHAT DID YOU FIND DIFFICULT AT SCHOOL?

I struggled with German the most and also Geography. Although now I wish I had learned German better as I have visited the country several times and it is a great place.

### LOOKING BACK, WHAT'S THE ONE THING THAT SCHOOL GAVE YOU THAT YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO USE TO GET WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

Listen to my teachers more and take on board what they told me because I now realise they wanted to support me and help me develop. Teachers have lots of life experience which students can learn from so my advice would be just stop and listen more.