



# BSE Ambassadors Scheme Case Study

Paul Antino, director of Surrey firm NRT Electrical & Mechanical says his BSE ambassador role allows him to pass on his own learning experiences and contribute something back into the industry...



## Here's how I got involved...

When SummitSkills was looking for employers to get involved in the ambassadors scheme, I was referred to them via my trade association ECA. I was interested in joining as I felt it was a way of putting something back into the industry that has served me well over the years. I also thought it would enable me to pass on words of wisdom that I learned from my own experiences throughout my career.

## This is what I've done so far...

So far I have taken part in numerous school careers days where I gave talks to classes of children to provide an insight into what skills and qualifications are needed as part of an electrical apprenticeship.

Equally as important is giving advice on how students can make themselves stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs and attending interviews. The perception among parents and young people of what you need at an interview is usually different to what employers are looking for, things like common sense, initiative and an aptitude to listen and learn. It was important for me to share that guidance to give the students the best chance possible.

## For me the benefits are...

The feedback has been very positive as the children and teachers appreciate your input. From the teacher's perspective, more often than not I am talking about many things they have already tried to get the students to take on board, but coming from an employer it helps to reinforce their advice.

The most challenging and interesting thing about working with students is forming a bond with them, helping them to realise that you understand their needs and worries. I'm chairman and manager of a local youth football club so have a good level of understanding with young people.

On a personal level, by acting as an ambassador I feel that even by helping just one child you have achieved something, and try to achieve even more from each visit that I make. For my company, I hope that it is seen by clients and customers alike as a business that contributes to the values of the community and life skills in general. As a result, somewhere down the line the business will be remembered and rewarded.

## If you are thinking about joining the scheme...

It doesn't have to be time-consuming. I can take on as much or as little as I like – from one session a year at a careers fair to taking part in science lessons in primary schools. At the most basic level it's two hours of my time out of a whole year – I would challenge anyone to say they can't afford to contribute this.

Many people have views on society and how things should and shouldn't be done. If you have these views then you have a duty to contribute to the community. Taking part in schemes such as this is our chance to pass on our own learning experiences. There is no price or value you can put on helping children. The majority of kids these days are good and want to learn – our industry needs to support them.

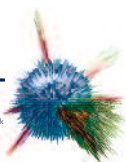
## My future as an ambassador...

During the next 12 months I hope to guide Year 10 & 11 students as they move towards the age when they may be considering the building services engineering sector as a career.

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