

# Mentoring partnership stories



Carolyn

Lucy has recently been employed by Network Rail having worked three jobs to make ends meet. Her mentor, Carolyn, who has been her bedrock of support for achieving her dream role, is an independent advisor for the rail industry and was recently awarded the 'highly commended' programme partner of the year at the 2020 Women in Rail mentoring programme celebration awards.



Lucy

“ In January I was working three different jobs to make ends meet, now, because of my mentor I have my dream role. ”

Lucy

**In one sentence, can you please explain what you do on a day-to-day basis for someone who knows nothing about your role?**

*Lucy:* I currently work two jobs; I'm both a contractor and a carer. I got a zero-hour contract with Network Rail, but my goal when I began this mentoring programme was to have a permanent contract with them. That is exactly what Carolyn and I have been working towards.

*Carolyn:* I'm an independent advisor for the rail industry. Day-to-day I create suggestions for delivering safe railways for passengers, in my son/daughter's view I 'make sure trains don't crash'! I also provide an oversight into what other railway companies are doing.

**Did you have any mentoring experience prior to being involved in the programme run by Moving Ahead? If so, could you please briefly outline?**

*Carolyn:* I've been a mentor previously, but I've never been a mentee. My organisation offers mentoring for people who are looking for a charterhip and so I've previously helped out individuals in my organisation with this. The Women in Rail programme is different in the way that I was paired with someone I didn't already know, and I found this refreshing.

*Lucy:* This has been a great new experience for me as I've never been mentored before.

“ Without a doubt the best part of mentoring programme has been getting offered the job I set out to achieve. ”  
Lucy

### So, Lucy, tell us about your success story?

*Lucy:* In one of our early meetings I told Carolyn that I wanted to secure a full-time job with Network Rail and so together we worked through my CV. We had to work quickly, though, as I only saw the post two days before the application closed. I was so excited to have secured an interview, and Carolyn helped me prepare for this too. We did mock-style interviews and she gave me invaluable feedback. In the end, I was offered the position! It has been amazing to achieve the goal that we set out to work towards throughout this mentoring partnership.

*Carolyn:* It has been an incredible experience from my perspective, too. I've been in leadership roles for some time now, and so I know what to look for in a CV. Lucy was anxious about the fact that her previous experience might not seem relevant for a position within the rail industry. However, we worked together to draw out Lucy's transferable skills and plan for her interview. We demonstrated that you can be qualified for a job no matter what your previous experience might be.

### Has your mentoring experience led to any tangible benefits either inside or outside of work?

*Lucy:* Without a doubt the best part of mentoring programme has been getting offered the job I set out to achieve.

*Carolyn:* For me, the benefit has been meeting Lucy and helping her work through her goals and then achieve one. It's been so rewarding to guide someone who needed an entire career steer, as opposed to someone with a traditional route into the rail industry. As a mentor, you always question your ability to make an impact, so seeing Lucy's success has been so rewarding.

### What's the one piece of advice you'd give to somebody who is just about to embark on a mentoring relationship for the first time?

*Lucy:* I would absolutely recommend the Women in Rail mentoring programme; really go for it and embrace the opportunity.

*Carolyn:* The advice that I'd give to anyone starting in a mentoring relationship is to commit from both sides. The relationship is so much more impactful when you both put in the effort. Lucy and I both put in time and effort and I think that's why our partnership has been so successful.

### How have your goals changed from the start of the programme to now?

*Carolyn:* Since I've found the programme so rewarding, I've wanted to do more mentoring. I've now started mentoring someone outside my organisation to help them with complete their chartered application.

*Lucy:* I've absolutely achieved the goal which I set out to work towards. My goal was to secure a full-time job in the rail industry, and with Carolyn's help, I managed to achieve this. Our relationship has gone beyond the mentoring programme. I hope we get to meet one day as Carolyn has become a true friend.

*Carolyn:* I am so excited to see Lucy's progression with Network Rail. She has so much to offer in terms of her experience in caring. I think she will be an asset to the company with how conscientious and caring she is.