

Sam Bradshaw: My Post-Apprenticeship Life



Sam Bradshaw -
2nd Line Support Manager

At Evolve, we pride ourselves on cultivating a company culture where people are our greatest asset. That's why we recently renewed our commitment to nurturing new talent by exceeding our 5% Club pledge, with 9.24% of Evolve's employees enrolled in apprenticeship programmes in 2024.

To look back at his journey and what his apprenticeship did for him, we sat down with Sam Bradshaw, IT Second Line Support Manager, to tell us about his experience with us.

How I came to Evolve...

Since childhood, I have been fascinated by the rapid development of computer technology and its impact on people's lives. I have actively followed its progression and enjoyed solving technical issues for my family at home. This passion led me to pursue an A Level in IT alongside Sociology and History in high school, further deepening my understanding of technology and its broader societal effects.

After following the traditional path through high school and A Levels, I realised I was ready to move beyond the classroom and apply my skills in a real-world setting.

Although I received an unconditional offer for a place at the University of Nottingham, I recognised that an apprenticeship would give me the best of both worlds, combining the aspects of learning I enjoyed with the practical experience I wanted.

After I finished college, I looked online and took my time to find an apprenticeship that was right for me. The apprenticeship at Evolve was a trainer-led course, which was a big draw for me.

It meant that each module I would spend a week on a training course (roughly every 6-8 weeks), which involved spending 6-8 hours a day from Monday to Thursday on-site and learning the skills, and then taking an exam on the Friday.

This format was the most helpful for me as a learner, and it meant that I got the most out of my apprenticeship.

Apprentice life...

Back when I was an apprentice, my hours were usually 8am-5pm, with an hour or so a day to do coursework, and of course the occasional week at a training course. A typical day would involve me working with more senior people to learn the technical elements of the job while also gathering information and evidence for my apprenticeship coursework to prove that I was learning all the relevant skills.

I always felt that I had the time, space and support I needed at Evolve to meet the targets of my apprenticeship.





In terms of what I learnt from my apprenticeship, the top thing would be the technical IT skills. The soft skills I learnt, such as effective communication and personal confidence, were invaluable – they're not something you learn at school, and I will always be grateful that I learnt so many of these in my apprenticeship to prepare me for the workforce. I was one of the first-ever apprentices at Evolve, and we have since had numerous other apprentices coming through the business, which has been a big benefit to us all.

I completed my Level 3 IT Apprenticeship within 18 months and went straight on to complete my Level 4 IT Apprenticeship within 18 months as well. This meant that in just 3 years I was completely qualified to take on a full-time role in IT, and this was a big accomplishment for me. It also led to me being offered the full-time role at Evolve, and I'm still here today!

Life after apprenticeship...

As an IT Second Line Support Manager, my role nowadays combines technical and team management skills – I manage six people in my team as well as respond to technical issues.

IT is an accelerated industry. The way we use IT and the technologies that it uses (like AI) are changing all the time, so the way we support it as IT engineers changes all the time too. This rapid change is really exciting and keeps us on our toes, and it's what I love most about the job I do.

A highlight for me since starting my career with Evolve was when one of our largest customers came to us with a requirement for delivering over 1000 devices, including tablets, laptops and phones. This involved setting them up and then going to sites across the country so that our engineers could ensure they were delivered and installed correctly. It was a very rewarding project as we got really positive feedback from the customer that everything had been delivered extremely well without it impacting any normal service levels.

In the next five years, I hope to progress in my current career route and stay in roles that involve both technical and management skills. I'm certain that my apprenticeship helped my long-term career goals in a way that I couldn't have done at university.

I have the practical, technical and communication skills that are enabling me to progress much quicker in my career, and an added bonus is not having to pay university fees!

