

Daniel Moloney L3 Management MA Apprentice



ESS-Offshore & Remote

I recently had the pleasure of catching up with Daniel to find out a bit about his career to date and his experiences of the Modern Apprenticeship in Management SCQF Level 7 (awarded jointly with the CIM) which he recently completed.

When I caught up with Daniel, he had just returned from Holland where he had been working with people of 6 different nationalities, with a mix of different experiences and expectations. He reflected on the fact that in 4 years working in the UK and Holland he had set-up and changed 5 different crews and was now working on a rig that was stacked until November. Used to working with a larger team, he had been working alone to get the rig ready to go and was now building up the crew.

Daniel started his career in catering, working at a young age as a hotel manager before going offshore with ESS at 19 years old. He started as a steward, taking a vacancy that was available at the time, on what was an initial 6-month contract. Early in the contract, Daniel found himself with different opportunities, working first as a butcher and then as a chef - something that felt right given his initial training as a chef when he first left school.

When the initial 6-month contract ended, Daniel started another contract on a different rig, again working as a chef. However, Daniel wanted to learn more about being a manager and in his spare time, he started to learn the paperwork on the rig, starting early and working late in order to do so. When the manager left, Daniel, at 21 years old was given the opportunity to take on the role and has now been with ESS for 7.5 years. Daniel appreciates the support from his employer throughout his time in the company.

Daniel clearly loves his job and the challenges that being offshore presents: the changing and unpredictable weather, the logistical issues, the variation with no day being the same, the mix of backgrounds and cultures, and the work life balance that it also gives him. He loves seeing people progress and finds it really rewarding to receive good feedback or to play a part in winning or keeping contracts.

I asked Daniel why he decided to do the Modern Apprenticeship in management: "I am keen to learn, and I am interested in learning. I want to develop the skills that I need to keep doing my job well and to grow as a manager in this role and in any future roles." The Modern Apprenticeship programme is delivered in Scotland by Polaris Learning on behalf of Compass Group. Compass Group are the world's largest multi-national food contract service company, providing high quality, competent people such as Daniel, to their clients.

When I asked Daniel about what he has learnt about himself, he told me: "I have learnt a lot about myself as a manager. The course has opened my eyes about how I communicate with my team, and it has built on skills that I already have as well as giving me new skills and knowledge. For example, before I train someone, I think about how I will go about it before I communicate. Daniel added: "I feel I am probably a better manager now. I understand what makes people tick, what they need from me, that everyone is different, with different backgrounds and in the way that they work. I always appreciated that many have come offshore from a completely different world and this is very different for them. When you are offshore though, you need to build relationships with the people around you and you need to quickly earn their respect, deal with problems promptly before they escalate, and you need to recognize that scenarios that would be simple to resolve onshore are more complicated here to sort out but still need to be resolved."

We talked about this a bit more and Daniel explained "For example, someone's girlfriend went into labour early. I needed to send my colleague home quickly but that is a logistical challenge when you are out here! Or it might be as simple as a need for extra training, and I must find a way to deliver that with the resources that I have right now, or someone may have issues at home, and I need to provide that support. It is a case of constantly adapting and being there for the team. The course has helped me with the skills and tools to do this well"

I asked Daniel how he found working with the team at Polaris Learning: "My mentor has been brilliant: down to earth, organised and always available, without making you feel pressurised. Everyone that I dealt with at Polaris Learning has been great and the online portal PLUS is easy to use, it is great having everything in one place, not having to carry anything with me and being able to quickly upload my evidence whenever it suited me. Sometimes you can wonder why you have taken on a piece of training or qualification but that was never the case with this".

Finally, I asked Daniel what he liked most about the course: "It was great to find out more about myself as a manager, although analysing my own performance and receiving the feedback from others did seem bizarre - I am used to doing it for others but not having it done for me. Receiving the feedback from the staff was rewarding though - it was great to see this and to see if there was anything that I could improve on. I have worked in a lot of different situations and with a lot of different people, and it is good to be able to apply what I have learnt from this course.