



Robyn Wedderburn

HND Business

Why did you choose to complete a Higher National?

I was offered places at Leeds and UMIST to study textile design and design management, and didn't get good enough A level results. So I went to complete an Art foundation course hoping to get a place at the end of my year. During this time, although I applied for places, I didn't secure any, and was really struggling to see a future for myself in the world of art and design, I just really didn't feel creative enough.

So instead of going through clearing for an Art based course, I decided to something more generic and chose business studies. I had left it quite late in the day to get a place, to do a degree course, so decided to do a HND instead, thinking I would transfer at the end to complete a degree course. My strongest memories were the Marketing, Market Research, and Personnel (now called Human resources) modules.

In our final year, we had to present a business opportunity to a local Bank manager and our Tutor. Mine was accepted as a viable offer, and I was offered a bank loan to start up my own business designing and printing T shirts for sports team, and other social groups. Also the modules on HR helped give me an interest in what was to become my future career.

It was a very practical course, and I think it made me keen to go into one of the areas that I had studied, which of course later in my career I did.

Do you have any career tips or advice for current or recent Higher National students?

Get into a large organisation to do any job to start with, as most have internal career pathways that you can follow. And for any organisation it is better and more cost effective to "grow your own" talent, so an enthusiastic novice can be moulded into a real high flyer by the the right leaders.

What has been your career path up until now?

I have had positions as a Grad trainee Sainsbury, Training Manager then Personnel manager Etam, Regional HR and Training manager Grosvenor Casinos, HR manager Swiss air Deep sea Division, Co-operative Group Food, varied positions ultimately Head of HR Food and currently the HR Director FitzRoy, national Charity for adults with learning disabilities. This Creating the people strategy for c1000 staff providing care to adults with learning disabilities. Business partner to CEO, and accountable to the Trustees for ensuring the people agenda reflects the values of the organisation.