

STEM Ambassadors working with

THE CAREERS AND ENTERPRISE COMPANY CAREERS HUBS



Context and Overview

All About STEM manages the STEM Ambassador Hub (SAH) in Merseyside and Cheshire but also has a staff member who is one of the Enterprise Coordinators (EC) at the [Liverpool City Region's \(LCR\) Careers and Enterprise Company \(CEC\) Careers Hub](#).

The EC staff member works with a group of 14 secondary schools to support their Career Leads in developing the school's strategic careers plan for achievement of the 8 [Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance](#).

STEM Ambassadors have always played a key role in supporting schools' careers plans by providing a careers context to curriculum activities, attending careers fairs, supporting mock interviews etc. However, the role of an [Enterprise Adviser \(EA\)](#) as part of the CEC programme, offers a new opportunity for volunteers to partner with a local secondary school or college, and use their skills, business experience and networks to help them develop a strong careers programme.

All About STEM, and the LCR Careers Hub Lead, saw an opportunity to mobilise STEM Ambassador volunteers to support the work of the Careers Hub and to bring some joined-up thinking to the two programmes in the region.



Rachael Baker, of J J Smith Woodworking and Machinery

JJ SMITH

Enterprise Ambassador role

The role of an EA is quite skilled and requires an individual who really wants to make a difference over time. All About STEM had recruited Rachael Baker, of [J J Smith Woodworking and Machinery](#), to the STEM Ambassador Programme, following a chance meeting at a local business network, which involved impassioned discussions about the need to develop more effective school/business engagements to ensure local pupils had clear pathways to work within local companies. Rachael's ensuing involvement in the STEM Ambassador Programme provided ongoing support for the company from the SAH and a menu of opportunities for the company to develop their school outreach. In addition, it provided schools within the Careers Hub with a range of careers-focused support from the company. As the relationship developed All About STEM encouraged Rachael to consider the role of an EA.

Key successes – what was achieved?

Within the first year of signing up as a STEM Ambassador, Rachael offered support for several school activity requests:

- Employability skills, mock interviews and CV writing workshops
- Primary Futures workshops
- Careers convention

In addition, she supported the New Futures programme (offering her company as a test case for apprenticeship programmes) and introduced the SAH to the Manufacturers' Alliance

A programme of STEM Ambassador recruitment was started at J J Smith, with the aim of signing up 10 volunteers by the year end (approx. 25% of all employees).

At this point All About STEM introduced Rachael to the Enterprise Advisor role. Keen to recruit local people to local jobs, the opportunity to have a long-term, influential and supportive relationship with a local school was one which Rachael accepted willingly. All About STEM introduced her to the LCR CEC staff who then took her through the application process.

Whilst this was taking place, Rachael was able to offer wider support to the Careers Hub schools:

- **Providing hands-on activities at two school Industry Days**
- **Hosting five schools at a J J Smith open day**

Rachael also agreed J J Smith support for the Careers Hub Annual Conference at Anfield Stadium, attended by over 150 Headteachers and Careers Leads from across the LCR. Staff from the company's Technical Support Department and Apprenticeship Programme presented to the audience. These J J Smith staff had attended LCR schools and so were snapped up to do follow-up sessions for students at their alma mater! In addition, staff from a large majority of LCR schools benefited from engagement with J J Smith STEM Ambassadors.

Impact

Less than a year on from Rachael's initial contact with the SAH, and she has:

- **Completed many hours of STEM Ambassador volunteering across a range of organisations**
- **Begun a recruitment drive within her own company and across her other networks**
- **Supported school activities, and the wider work, of the CEC Careers Hub**
- **Recently been allocated as the Enterprise Advisor for a secondary school less than a mile from the company site**

This role opens up the potential, not only for the school to benefit from Rachael's business knowledge and networks, but also provides the company with the opportunity to invest in their own future pipeline and pre-recruitment programme.

Next Steps

Making the step from STEM Ambassador into the role of an Enterprise Advisor is not as simple as it may, at first, seem. There's additional admin to complete. The process can take time. Success is based on the relationship and support between the SAH, Careers Hub and individual volunteer, as well as the desire of the individual involved to really make a difference. But, our All About STEM EC said, 'With 50 EAs like Rachael Baker, we'd transform the LCR overnight!' Praise indeed.

And so that's our aim. To continue signposting our STEM Ambassador volunteers to the EA role, and to work with our CEC partners to encourage EAs with relevant skill sets to sign up as STEM Ambassadors. 'Joining the dots' and 'Providing a world-leading STEM education for all young people across the UK'.

