

FROM APPRENTICE TO SKILLS COACH

When I left school, I had strong A-levels but no clear idea where I wanted a degree to take me. I wasn't ready to commit to university, but I was certain about one thing, I wanted to keep learning, growing, and building real-world skills. That's what led me to apprenticeships. That's when I discovered apprenticeships. I began on a Level 4 Retail Manager apprenticeship and immediately loved the combination of hands-on experience and structured learning.

“It gave me purpose, pace and direction and for the first time, learning felt relevant, practical, and exciting. I loved the consistency the apprenticeship gave me alongside the fast pace of my job.”

A real turning point came when I changed Skills Coaches during the programme. What initially felt daunting became transformational. My new coach brought clarity, structure, and genuine coaching. She helped me truly understand the journey to end-point assessment and more importantly, she inspired me. Watching the impact, she had on me made me realise something: the part of my role I loved most wasn't the operations it was helping people learn.

As I progressed through my programme, I realised something important: the part of my job I loved most wasn't the operations — it was helping others learn. Retail is demanding, and often learning and development come second to day-to-day pressures, but I found myself drawn to training, coaching, and supporting others to grow. That's when I started researching what it meant to become a Skills Coach.

“A Message to Anyone Considering Becoming a Skills Coach- You don't need to start with a teaching background. You just need curiosity, commitment and a passion for helping people grow. SR Apprenticeships supported me every step of the way and if you enjoy learning, sharing knowledge and making a real difference to people's lives, this might just be the career you didn't know you were looking for.”

With no formal teaching background, I wasn't sure it would be possible. But I took a chance: I started my CAVA qualification alongside my apprenticeship, applied for a Skills Coach role at SR Apprenticeships, and used the interview as an opportunity to learn, or so I thought. To my surprise, I was offered the job. Joining SR was a huge step change and the support I received made all the difference. From structured onboarding and shadowing experienced coaches to ongoing guidance around quality, compliance, and learner support, I was never left to figure things out alone.

“Take the step. Even if it feels bold. You might surprise yourself - just like I did.”

Jodie
Management and
Retail Skills Coach
SR Apprenticeships

That investment gave me the confidence to grow quickly and manage my own caseload, guiding learners from their first day through to successful completion. That support helped me find my feet quickly — and before long, I was managing my own caseload, guiding learners from their first day all the way through to achievement. Seeing them progress, overcome challenges, and gain distinctions has become one of the most rewarding parts of my job.

I've carried forward the passion, clarity, and learner-focused approach I admired in my own Skills Coaches. I adapt my delivery to every individual, encourage open conversation, and use real examples from my background to help them connect learning to their roles. Building trust and rapport is key — when learners feel supported, they open up, and that's when genuine development happens. Today, seeing learners grow, overcome challenges and achieve distinctions is the most rewarding part of my job. Two years on, I'm more confident than ever. I've completed my AET, I continue my CPD, and I'm excited about where this career can take me but most of all, I'm proud to support others in building their futures.

“Jodie's journey is a perfect example of how industry experience, combined with the right support, creates outstanding Skills Coaches. She brought credibility, empathy and potential, and with the fantastic team support, has grown into a confident coach making a real impact on learners' both personally and professionally.”

Operations Director- SR Apprenticeships