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Degree subject: Maths and Computer Science  
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Joined: 2008

Insider Tip: Be open to change

1. Why did you want to join IBM?

I decided to join IBM because IBM is a really big company. I wanted to get experience at a place that other people would recognise, but when I applied for other jobs, other companies would recognise it's presence in the market place. I wanted to get really good experience at a really good company and that would be relevant to things I wanted to do in the future.

2. What stood out about the IBM Futures Scheme?

For me the IBM Futures scheme stood out because firstly it offered such a wide range of jobs. It wasn't just technical, there were also sales, marketing and finance roles. I didn't have to go for one particular thing I could just apply and see where it took me. As there is the 9 month and 3 month process, I knew that I had an option to do something other than what I originally started. For me that freedom made me want to join IBM. Even though I didn't know what I wanted to do, I knew that I had the option to pursue something else later on.

3. How did you structure your placement?

For my first 9 months my role was in software development. I worked in Hursley which is in Winchester, producing WebsphereMQ, which is one of the 5 major software brands for IBM. Once the initial product had been made lots of tests will be run on it, then it was my job to look through the tests, see what was broken and try to find out how to fix it. For this I needed to learn Java, which was really daunting. Even though I was interested in computers, I'd never done any sort of computer programming before. After that first 9 months I'd really enjoyed it but I really wanted to try something completely new, something not in the technical side but something more sales and business orientated because I was interested in that as well. For the last 3 months I was working in the channel sales team, as Sales and Marketing assistant.

4. How do you think the skills you've learnt this year will help you?

I really think that the skills I have learnt this year will help me at university. I'm going on to study maths and computer science, so learning how to write in Java will really help me with my computer science modules next year, because Java is really prominent as a computer science language

5. How has Foundation helped you?

When you join, Foundation has a really strong presence. Everyone who joins the same sort of scheme, like Futures, IT's and Graduates are all part of Foundation. You will also get a PDM, which is a Professional Development Manager. They are there to look after you for your whole placement. I think that is really important, especially for my placement, at times I found it difficult and they were always there to turn to.

6. How has this year helped you?

My year out, here, at IBM will really help me in the future because it sets me apart from a lot of other graduates who are graduating with not much experience or maybe no experience at all. I feel like graduating with a placement at IBM, which is a great company and had given me a lot of good experience, will really set me above.