PDA1 (Participant 6) – 24 June 2019

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| Timecode | Speaker | Transcript |
| 00:00:00 | DT | [inaudible 00:00:00] |
| 00:00:02 | PDA1 | Hello, that is definitely recording. |
| 00:00:05 | DT | Oh, that’s good. That’s good. No worries. |
| 00:00:07 | PDA1 | Apologies. |
| 00:00:08 | DT | No worries at all. |
| 00:00:09 | PDA1 | So if we could um, start again, yeah, for the purposes of the recorder which definitely is recording, are you happy for me to um, take this interview?  |
| 00:00:19 | DT | Yes, I am. |
| 00:00:20 | PDA1 | Great, thank you very much. So um, thank you very much for your time today, uh, would you mind giving a brief overview of the role of a placement development advisor please. |
| 00:00:31 | DT | Absolutely. Um, the- I love the role, it’s um, our role kicks in when um, the students go out on placement um, and we support them with a combination of a personal telephone and email support um, and we check on how they’re doing and what they’re doing, what they’re good at and not so good at, so we um, try to articulate and get them to articulate their transferable skills and um, their objectives for the year and what they’re improving in things as well, so it’s all about employability and getting them to realise there is a [inaudible 00:01:03] possible. Um, we talk about their course work um, we talk about the course work that they have to do on placement um, which is in a form of a portfolio, and they’re very interested in the final year so we talk about their um, final year options and in particular, quit a bit of time goes into um, their research project uh, to give [inaudible 00:01:24] students that depends on the degree, but business days in particular, we spend quite a bit of time on that as well. Um, we speak to their manager either uh, with the student um, which is my preference or on a one to one basis if the manager would prefer that and I do give them the option, most of them actually opt to- to speak to the- with the student there as well because I say to them you know, they’re not the finished article, that’s the reason they’re doing a placement rather than running a company and actually the whole point is to- to- to become as employable as possible and the only way you can do that is by constructive feedback, so- so I do encourage the manager to give that kind of feedback as well, but a lot of the time, they are quite- I find they’re quite honest anyway, it- it doesn’t hamper them with the student being in there. Um, my rest of the role um, does involve a lot of admin, a lot of logistics of booking the visits and a lot of um- with the course work we do the marking as well, there’s a lot of support as well in addition to the structured staff, um we’re trying to send out videos to the students now, we also send them a lot of information like um, careers information or stuff from the university as well, because we’re their go to person during that year um, and there’s a lot of trouble shooting and- and facilitating the managers um, so in a nutshell I suppose that’s it, it’s quite of com- a complex role but we are their go to people and we’re their support for the year, I feel like a placement mum most of the time (Laughter) so- so yes, that’s… |
| 00:02:58 | PDA1 | Yes, fantastic. Mm, sounds a really interesting role. |
| 00:03:02 | DT | It is, it is very interesting, yeah. |
| 00:03:04 | PDA1 | And how long have you been working in that role for? |
| 00:03:07 | DT | I’m in my 18th yeah (Laughter) so- so I’ve seen a lot of changes and a lot of not- not so much changes, but I think- I think the students and- and the increase in technology I suppose has definitely made things more, um, for want of a better word, needy I suppose, the- the- the students see themselves as- as- as customers rather than stakeholders um, and so they actually want more bang for their bucks, so they will be very much, “I want this information, I want this now.” and everything as well and you probably see that within the academic side as well um, and um, so they do, they’re not shy in coming forward and asking for information and help, uh, more so than actually probably um, finding out things for themselves I find you know, we’ll send them information and rather than look back over the emails that we sent them, they’ll actually say, “Remind me again.” and- and that, so we are finding a lot more neediness and a lot more mental health issues as well which I think you know, sort of like makes things more complicated sometimes because obviously we’re not- we’re not trained in mental health and things like that as well, so that’s something that probably needs to be addressed a bit more as well so we can decide who are the ones that are just slightly stressed out about a change in- starting a new job and- or workloads and things or- or who are the actual true genuine cases and everything that need a bit more support as well, so. |
| 00:04:32 | PDA1 | Yes, which is yeah, interesting. Um, And we probably come on to that area in- in a bit. So going from education into the workplace can be a big transition for a lot of students I think um, so I wonder what sort of processes organisations have in place um, to help students make that transition. |
| 00:04:57 | DT | Um, a lot of the larger companies and some of the better ones I feel that- that- that- that you know, solidify the students quite quickly, um, are those that actually address before they even start working for the company, so they’ll have gone for interviews and they’ll know that they’ve got a job there and before their start date um, and it’s the larger companies like, Xerox and HP, they will actually set up something like a Facebook page or an email sort of like, or an Instagram or WhatsApp or whatever groups um, to get all the students in touch because they have probably about 60 odd students um, or interns they call them mainly, per year, um, and uh, they’re all from different parts of the country or different universities or things like that, and even the ones from our same university might not know each other because they’re on different degrees um, and they get them in touch and they’ll say you know, “People are looking for accommodation.” um, and you know, sort of like, “If you want to have a social beforehand, if you want to meet the outgoing interns and have um, uh, a sort of like, function as well.” so I think that really sets them up, that makes them feel included before they’ve even started and there is uh, a place to kind of like, for them to ask question like you know, sort of like, what’s the dress code or you know, sort of like, which is the best way to get- to get to a place every morning, how’s the traffic and things like that, so that is- that’s a great way to include it but of course um, that’s for the larger companies that maybe have a dedicated kind of like intern coordinator or you know, sort of like, someone who supports, for the smaller companies it’s a little bit more tricky to do, um, but I think um, a great way to start is obviously uh, introducing everybody to each other when they first set out, having their um, their IT set up already sorted as well so they know beforehand, maybe having a name of their actual manager, some people go for generic kind of like, interview processes um, so they’ll know that they have a job but they won’t even necessarily know, and JPMorgan used to be a bit like that uh, where they arrive on the first day and then maybe wouldn’t necessarily know what their role was going to be until the first day, um, I had that a couple of times um… |
| 00:07:13 | PDA1 | That must be challenging for the students. |
| 00:07:14 | DT | Yes, yeah, yeah. I think some of them don’t know any different, so- so in that respect they maybe think, “Oh, that’s normal for everything.” but it’s- it’s peculiar for us because you know, it’s not like you normally apply for a certain job, but sometimes they can um, uh, go to assessment sectors and the people will pull out the skills and the strengths that they see in them, um, so it’s almost like, “Oh, we know better, what you’re going to be better at than students themselves.” uh, so that’s always an interesting situation, but I think it is that- that prep so that they know maybe they’ve got a timetable for the first week or something like that, so that they know and they’re introduced to the key people, they’re shown around the building, uh, and it’s just the basics I suppose really, of- of considering how someone’s going to feel if they’re in a new environment as well, um, and having someone to go to, a lot of um, companies that again, are successful have a mentor as well as a manager, so they’ll have like a mentor scheme so it might be someone who’s um, not even in their department or someone’s that doing the graduate scheme or something like that, someone who they can go to with the- with the really dumb questions that they don’t want to ask their managers as well, so, yeah, so that’s- they- that probably works best, but you know, it is quite time consuming, it is um, uh, almost like a structured set up um, and if you’re just a person that’s got their own job through uh, contacts or something like that, then that probably won’t necessarily be the case.  |
| 00:08:46 | PDA1 | Have you got any examples of bad practice and the impact that can have? |
| 00:08:51 | DT | Um, I think- I think sometimes um, and it seems to be the ones that actually really haven’t got a clue what they want the student to do, they think it’s a good idea and it’s lovely, it’s commendable of them and they want the student and everything, but they’ve never had a student before, so they’ll either go all guns blazing and sort of like, go over the top and it will overwhelm the student, or it will be the opposite way where they sit down and they think, “Oh, we haven’t go the IT set up for you yet, so if you just read that for the first two weeks and everything and then we’ll see if we can put something in.” or um, as well timing is everything, a lot of the time when the students start their placement if say, where they make the summer months, when things are either a bit quieter or there are key staff that are away on a holiday, so often you’ll have a situation where a student will start and their manager might be on holiday for about two or three weeks and I’ll have- they’ll feel uh, floundering because they’ll- they’ll think, “Oh, like there’s no support and my key person isn’t there.” um, but you also get a lot these days of- of companies where the manager is remote, so I think this year I’ve had about five or six at least, where the manager either works abroad or works in a different office or a different location or is- is- is sort of like part time work or yeah, so- so I suppose that sort of like is- is its own issue, but that’s longer term than just the holiday [inaudible 00:10:21] |
| 00:10:22 | PDA1 | Yes, um, so actually I’m talking to students, that is something that seems to be more prevalent. |
| 00:10:28 | DT | It does, it does very much so actually, I’m finding that more and more, and- and I think it’s just this kind of like, “Well we can work anywhere, we can put them under anyone.” but it’s still to think- I mean it makes them hit the ground running really fast because they become more self-sufficient if their manager is remote, but at the same time, if- if you haven’t- if you’re not that kind of person, you have to- they have to pick their student very carefully I think because- because you know, some people will just go, “I hate this, I absolutely hate this.” and others will say, “Yeah, okay, it was unusual at the beginning, but actually um, it’s fine now and we just have a system and we work okay.” so yeah.  |
| 00:11:09 | PDA1 | Interesting. On the other side, do you ever see any- or hear about any students who have been very proactive before they’ve started their placements and maybe getting in contact with the company? |
| 00:11:23 | DT | Yeah. No- well, I- I say no but only because I’m not sure that- that we would hear- yeah, it- it might be because we tend to try and time our meetings to about three months after they’ve started, so unless they remember to kind of tell us that or the manager remembers to tell us that, so there might be some that do that anyway, um, I mean you know, it- it would be great- a really good practice and- and bizarrely, I use to do- I- I temp for a while when I was a student, and um, I use to have like a two week temping jump and I had to go the Friday before the Monday I started and I’d go and introduce myself during my lunch hour and sort of like say, “Is there anything I need to know, is there anything you- that will be good.” so- so actually yeah, it would be really good for them to actually do that, so- and that’s maybe something we could encourage them to do because um, I think that would really help to kind of like settle them in a bit as well. |
| 00:12:20 | PDA1 | Yes, settle the nerves. |
| 00:12:21 | DT | Yeah, yeah. But some of them may do it but actually I- I- I haven’t heard of it, I haven’t outwardly said, “Oh, this is what I did and that’s really worked for me.” but I think it’s an- a really, really good idea actually to get them to do that because um, I found it very helpful in my own personal experience when I use to do like, “Yes means go.” so um, and that was just for- just for two week temping, so actually to do it for a permanent, yeah, would be really good, so um, no, I mean whether- whether the students already get together on Facebook, uh, the ones that work for the larger companies that group together, they might have more um, input in that, but uh, I haven’t really heard that much from the other ones.  |
| 00:13:06 | PDA1 | No. Um, so what impact do you think uh, a good positive induction has on- on students and the rest of their time at the company, or does it have no impact at all? |
| 00:13:19 | DT | I think it does depend on how good the- the induction is as- as you say, a good induction, um, I think um, that it makes them feel included and it makes them feel- I think you know, sort of like, a lot of places are going towards hot disking and things as well, I think even now, even with the mind-set of the younger ones, they still like to have a kind of base in everything, so um, so to- to know they’ve got a desk, to know where they’re going to be, to know they’ve got an IT set up, to know um, what the rules are as well I suppose really, and- and as I say, meeting the key people who know where the toilets are and they ring in, they’re sort of like- and an HR if they’ve got any issues, because sometimes when you’re first setting up, your- your- your salary or your tax can- can be wrong and things like that, so- so I think um, a good induction can probably lay a lot of the- the worries and fears, um, if you’re just left to fend for yourself and I think that that- that will make people a little bit more nervous as well, so.  |
| 00:14:22 | PDA1 | Yeah, I think so. So obviously um, you see lots of students most certainly over the years, I mean there must be thousands of students. |
| 00:14:31 | DT | I know. I know, I think so.  |
| 00:14:34 | PDA1 | So when you see students who perform well on their placement year and their managers are saying this person is doing a fantastic job, what is it they’re doing different from other students you know, is there anything- any traits, competencies, attitudes that you’ve noticed?  |
| 00:14:52 | DT | Yeah. I think it’s uh, being proactive, I think it’s uh, coming with solutions rather than problems, I think it is uh, going the extra mile, um, it’s their attitude I think uh, a big part of it is their attitude and it’s their- maybe their enthusiasm for the job you know, no one really wants to work with a person who’s sort of like, doing the bare minimum and is sat there sort of like, can’t wait and just clock watching, um, so I think it is- it is all about attitude initially, they’re- they’re sort of like their open, they’ve got this can do attitude, I hear that all the time from managers um, that have the successful ones, it’s just getting it as well, just getting it as well, uh, and that’s quite difficult actually, but I think it is- is- some- some- some students will take longer to kind of like understand things, um, it’s asking the relevant questions, it’s not just sitting there and not doing things, um, it’s um, yeah, being interested as well, um, and I think those are the main things really, so it’s more about their personal kind of like, attitude towards it rather than actually what they can do, a lot of them then- a lot of the managers then say, “Oh gosh, and their IT skills are brilliant or their social media skills are brilliant and we’ve been able to use them with this.” but I think the very first step is sort of like, showing an enthusiasm and a proactivity and a- and a real can do attitude really, so. |
| 00:16:23 | PDA1 | Hmm. And you mentioned just getting it, is that about just getting it in terms of the job role or what the organisation does? |
| 00:16:32 | DT | Yeah. I think- I think it’s- it’s understanding or maybe seeing the bigger picture a little bit you know, sort of like they get it’s the business acumen you know, so it’s the sense, it’s sort of like it’s assessing sort of like the information uh, and then uh, sort of like, working out what the key objectives are and then you know, something like- so- so- and I think that’s probably what it is, some people are just kind of switched on enough to actually see what was going on and what the reason why they’re being asked to do what they’re doing, um, and it does depend a little bit on the role as well you know, you do feel for some people because you think, “Wow, this is really complex.” sometimes I have to say like- like “Explain that to me like I’m a five-year-old because you know, sort of like this- this job is quite complicated.” um, but you know, sort of like, yeah, yeah, they- they- I think- I think as well, probably um, the speed that they’ll kind of like, pick things up is quite impressive to some- some people as well, I think because they’re so used to sort of like, instant and technology and things like that as well, then- then probably they’re used to kind of like, picking things up and- and- and- and running with it quite quickly as well, so maybe it’s- it’s that, but that’s- maybe they’re just getting it, yeah. I’ve- I’ve had trouble with- with that one as well, when they say they just get it, I’m assuming it’s just sort of like, well they’ve understood straightaway what I want them to know, um, and they just you know, sort of like, get on with it really, and they’re not a problem, they’re not an issue, because so many of the times, the managers are really busy and they don’t want to keep explaining, explaining, explaining it, and making notes as well, it’s amazing how few of them makes notes but how important it actually is as well. |
| 00:18:11 | PDA1 | Of course, absolutely. It’s interesting when you talk about the speed of getting it, um, because my next question was obviously, you see students at about 20 weeks. |
| 00:18:25 | DT | Yeah, yeah. But yeah- well no, it’s about for- well, so normally I- I try and see them about three months in… |
| 00:18:32 | PDA1 | Okay. So 12 weeks, sorry, yes. |
| 00:18:34 | DT | …for 12 weeks, but it can be later because of timings and sometimes we don’t even know the students out there or if they have told us, so- so yes, so it can be- it’s probably about 12 to 20 weeks… |
| 00:18:45 | PDA1 | 12 to 20 weeks. |
| 00:18:46 | DT | Yeah. Probably about that, yeah. |
| 00:18:48 | PDA1 | And at that point, especially at the 12-week point, are managers already sort of- yep, they’re saying positive things about certain students? |
| 00:18:58 | DT | They are. I- I- I lose track of how many times they say, “We don’t want him to go already, we’re dreading him go already, they’ve- they’ve already become valuable.” which is surprising because- because normally, you’d think after three months they’ll just be finding their feet you know, really, and that’s why we see them that because a lot of companies have um, a probationary period of three months, so it coordinates with- with us seeing them, coordinates with the time and the manager think- uh, thinking about giving them feedback anyway, so it’s kind of like it’s a consideration but if we do see them a bit later on, it isn’t- it isn’t too much of a problem because I’ll often have that first sort of like um, time, but yeah, um, I think- I think it is a case of you know, sort of like they- they- they do pick things up quite quickly some of them um, you know, so I think that is you know, sort of like at that stage even, the managers are saying already they’re proving valuable as an asset to us an everything as well, so it’s quite- quite reassuring really. |
| 00:20:00 | PDA1 | Mm, absolutely. Um, and do you think those students who do seem to be performing well, do they have a lot of autonomy in their job role? |
| 00:20:15 | DT | Yeah, yeah, I would say so. I would say the ones that are- are- are flying uh, are the ones that are actually going off and doing- doing their own thing a bit more as well at that stage um, you know, sort of like- it’s often they- they- they need a bit of handholding initially but then the- the good ones, the ones that are already sort of like, identifying maybe why well, this process seems to be taking a lot longer, what if we change that we could do that a lot quicker um, or more effectively or something, so yeah, yeah, I think um, it probably is uh, the sort of like, they’ve got the free range to suggest the ideas to maybe get on and make the processes and changes to- to be proactive as well. Um, I don’t think there’s many companies that don’t encourage ideas, but there are some maybe that- that is more difficult to- to- to put in place and everything, but the ones that- that can make those changes seem to be the ones that really fly as well. |
| 00:21:13 | PDA1 | Okay. And do you think the- that comes down to the organisational structure or is it the manager or do you know- see any similarities in organisations and reasons? |
| 00:21:27 | DT | You’d think wouldn’t you, with the- with the bigger companies that there will be you know, sort of like, more red tape and everything, and sometimes there isn’t and some of them there are, um, but actually you know, a lot of the IT companies in particular, I’m thinking of car companies, I see a lot of car companies as well, they’re probably a bit slow, the IT- IT companies tend to be- and probably because of the nature of the actual business that they’re in, they seem to be very uh, encouraging and actually suggesting changes and things like that, car companies I think are a little bit slower, um, some of the smaller companies does depend on probably a key decision maker, so- and the busyness of that so you know, even if the students do have a good idea it might be that it’s- it’s stalled a little bit until it goes through the key decision maker, um, but yeah, yeah, I think the- the- the biggest one I see is IT [inaudible 00:22:23] and that tends to be the other ones I’m trying to think, and also social media- actually marketing companies, marketing companies are very progressive as well and they love if- if students come up with different ideas and everything as well, more creative stuff, I think it is a fresh pair of eyes really. |
| 00:22:41 | PDA1 | Yes, that’s true. So how much impact do you think fits to a job role or the organisation matters, or um, sometimes companies talk about getting the right person for the role. |
| 00:22:54 | DT | Right, yeah. |
| 00:22:55 | PDA1 | Yeah. |
| 00:22:56 | DT | Um, I think- uh, yeah, I had a scenario probably years ago where the student was awful at finance, absolutely awful, brilliant at everything else but awful at finance, very commendably he decided he wanted to get a placement in finance so that he could better himself, after about a month and losing the company thousands, he- they- he and they realised that he was never going to be any good at finance, so they moved him to marketing and he flew, absolutely, he was- he was brilliant and they loved him and they you know, so like- well that was- that was a- a- a really good example where he just didn’t fit the square peg around the hole, um, I would say a majority of students, and- and to be fair, we’re covering- I’m covering three different degrees, with business studies I would say that the- the student on there, um, unless they’ve got a real bend already towards something like, finance or marketing or something like that, um, they will um, they will probably have uh, an interest in most things, um, and they will fit quite well I think um, with the finance students obviously they tend to be towards uh, that in the marketing, so uh, so it does depend a little bit on the degree and the student as well, um, but um, I think attitude again, going back to attitude, I think often companies will look for the right person, the right fit for their team, so uh, you know, sort of like a real kind of team player, a real energise person, a real proactive person, and then they can teach them whatever uh, because I think lot of jobs these days you just- you’re not expected to know the job but you’re more expected to sort of like have the right approach, the right fit, the right attitude and things, so. |
| 00:24:48 | PDA1 | Yeah, okay. And what about confidence, does confidence- if a student has confidence, does that impact? |
| 00:24:56 | DT | I think if it’s- as long as they’re not over confident or- there- there is a- a fine line between um, uh, cockiness or um, you know, sort of like arrogance and confidence, but I think confidence helps in terms of actually being able to network and communicate and pick up a phone and- and things like that and everything, and maybe approach task and say, “Yeah, okay, no, I can do that.” whereas some people who are still in this- always in this- I mean the student mentality, they can’t often believe that they’re actually um, you know, sort of like going to be given the task that they’re doing, I’ve got a student this year um, and she’s um- she’s got um, I’m not sure whether, -this is- will- will this give away if I don’t say any student names or…? |
| 00:25:46 | PDA1 | That’s fine, yeah.  |
| 00:25:46 | DT | Yeah. She got cerebral palsy and- and she’s never even been able to speak on the phone with her best friend for the last seven years, ooh I might start welling up in a minute um, uh, because she went to um Bournemouth hospital for her placement and uh, she’s become a different person, she’s now so much confident, she- she can pick up the phone, she said, “I can now speak to my- my- my best friend on the phone.” and- and I know, I know, I know, um, and she did a presentation um, to her team when she invited me along and she said, “I am now this different person, I’ve…” you know, sort of like, so things like that, it’s- it’s massive for them as well, yeah, so yeah, so I think you know, sort of like it does- I think having- have a supportive team even if you are a shy person will build confidence, those that are going with confidence you know, sort of like, they probably maybe don’t get as much support, but I think there is a very much a nurturing in- in a lot of places still where they see that a student isn’t confident they will nurture them and get them to the place where they need to be, but yeah, yeah, I think probably the people with more confidence probably hit the ground running a bit- bit- bit easier than those without.  |
| 00:27:01 | PDA1 | Yeah, yeah, I should imagine so. And so what impact do you think a line manager has on- on the student and…? |
| 00:27:10 | DT | Can be huge. And- and more so if it’s a negative impact, um, I think oh, again, we’ve had a lot of clashes, um, if you- if you- if you have someone, a student that- that- that doesn’t get on, invariably it’s because they clash with their manager, um, with- I’ve had, and this year, probably about six or seven, and they’ve been more micromanagers, and um- and- and I don’t know whether that’s generation Y managers with millennials or you know, it- it- it- it could quite easily be just the- the generic kind of like the managers coming through now are a different um, generation sort of like, generation Y managers maybe with- with millennials and they don’t communicate quite as effectively as well, and I see that quite a lot because they’ll say, “My manager hasn’t told me what I meant to do and then they go and give me a hard time when I go off and do something and everything as well.” and you know, so like- so- so- and often you’ll find that actually if students are going to leave, it’s because of manager problems and I’ve had that I say, with about six students this- this year, but you can see when you- when you talk to the managers, they are very much sort of like, uh, there is a clash almost immediately, you can see that, um, and often they’ll- the companies will let the managers cut their teeth and get their first management experience on a student, um, and that can be really difficult because if the manager doesn’t quite know what they’re doing in everything as well, the student doesn’t quite know what they’re doing, then automatically there’s this clash, so yeah, so it is an interesting dynamic um, you know, often the- the managers who maybe have had more than one student or it was their first person they’ve managed or there isn’t a clash, they- they- they will be the better ones and they’ll be- have the better experience. |
| 00:29:03 | PDA1 | Interesting. |
| 00:29:04 | DT | It is, it is really, and I do wonder what’s going to happen further on down the line as well because- because you know, sort of like, more and more, you’ve got people that- that will uh- and often- often the comment that we get from the managers is they do the job but then they forget to feedback that they’ve done the job, so- so you know, sort of like it’s that communication thing, the student knows that they’ve completed it, but without actually having fed back to the manager that they’ve completed the task or- or the project or whatever or where they are at in the process, then- then the manager doesn’t know, and it is this real impasse because it’s almost like, well, the manager should ask or the student should tell, and both of them think that the other is in the wrong and it is so interesting, so- and I see it getting worse in the most possible way, but I do see it as a clash because neither the manager nor the students communicate brilliantly, so it’s… |
| 00:29:58 | PDA1 | Interesting. |
| 00:29:59 | DT | It is really interesting, yeah, yeah. I’ve noticed this over the years. It’s gotten uh, uh, progressively worse and worse and worse, yeah, another **juncture**. |
| 00:30:09 | PDA1 | Yes, I know. I just think (Overlapping Conversation) oh, that would be really interesting (Overlapping Conversation) yeah, we need to forget about that. |
| 00:30:16 | DT | Yeah, sorry. (Laughter) |
| 00:30:18 | PDA1 | Um, actually no, this study is about psychological ownership, uh, so how would you describe ownership in the workplace? |
| 00:30:28 | DT | In- in terms of um, them owning their job, the students owning their job or- or them owning their career or what- what would you…? |
| 00:30:37 | PDA1 | Well I’m deliberately leaving it quite vague… |
| 00:30:40 | DT | But yeah, there’s- there’s- there’s- I mean automatically they become institutionalised you know, sort of like they become part of the company and you see it at three months, at three months they’ve learned all the terminology or most of it by then, they’re talking in TLAs, I call them three letter abbreviations, um, so they’re actually sort of like, they’ve become integrated with it, they- they- they- they- so- so they- they own that role and you see it as well when you speak to them on- on their second meeting as well, because um, it’s kind of like, “Oh, my- my replacement is coming, I can’t believe I’m going to have to give my job up to someone else.” and things like that, and that’s interesting because they’ve only been there a short-ish time and yet they see it as it’s their job, it’s their position, it’s their- their colleagues, it’s their place as well, um, but on the flip side, uh, you know, sort of like, often the companies will say, “Oh, we’d love him to come back.” and they’re saying, “Well you know, sort of like, yeah, I’ve had a great time, but I want to do this, and this, and this.” so they have an ownership of their own career as well, and they have their own sort of like, um, “Ultimately I want to run my own business or I want to spend a couple of years doing this and then a couple of years doing that.” so- so- so they- they have- they have two different forms of ownership, they feel very much integrated while they’re there, but there’s also still that- that kind of like, um, I own my own career, and it’s not going to be just fixed in one place for a long time, whereas in my day, it was a career you know, you would join somewhere and you would work there and- and you would aspire to spend a long time there because that meant that you were doing really well, whereas now they aspire to do lots of different things, I remember one of my students, he wanted to go in police but he said, um, “I only uh, want to do a couple of years in police, and then I’ll use that as a stepping stone to something else to then something else.” and things like that, and that’s how I think they see it, they don’t see any stigma in just staying in one place, whereas previously you know, we- we think, “Oh gosh, they’re going to- I only stayed there for two years, they’re going to think that I’m just a fly by night jumping and everything.” yeah.  |
| 00:32:49 | PDA1 | Yeah. It’s a change in attitude, isn’t it? |
| 00:32:51 | DT | Very much. Very much change in attitude and everything. |
| 00:32:55 | PDA1 | So it’s interesting though, the idea that some of them can feel ownership towards their company and their job role, but also still quite easily make that mental switch to actually, I can move on because… |
| 00:33:10 | DT | That’s it, and it also surprises me because they’ll say, “I have had a fantastic year, I’ve had a fantastic time.” and I’m sitting there thinking, “Well I’ll tell Betsson that they want to come back here.” and then you say, “So what about the career plan, is it to return here then?” then they’ll go, “Well no, I’ve had a fantastic time but I still want to work in London or I still want to do this or I still want to- or I don’t want to work in an office all the time or I would like to travel first or I want to work abroad.” so- so- so it is this- they have these kind of like, goals, so although they- they- they feel this real bond, it’s almost like, um, the company should want them but they necessarily don’t need to want the company, like it’s bizarre, but when they’re there, they’ll- it’s sort of maybe that’s why it works that they chop and change so often, because actually when they’re there, they have this real sense of ownership and everything as well, uh, but they still got their, their, their ownership of their own career goals and- and interest, and unless those that just haven’t got a clue what they want to do. (Laughter) |
| 00:34:13 | PDA1 | Oh, yes. (Laughter) |
| 00:34:14 | DT | But um- but then that’s- that’s yeah. (Laughter) |
| 00:34:17 | PDA1 | It’s a weird world, yeah. |
| 00:34:18 | DT | But yeah, I do see it as two distinct ownerships you know, sort of like as well, that they- they- they’ve got that but they’ve also got their- their goals as well, their ownership of their goals.  |
| 00:34:28 | PDA1 | And it’s interesting you say that because the interviews I’ve carried out with students, I have seen that… |
| 00:34:33 | DT | Have you? Have you?  |
| 00:34:35 | PDA1 | And it’s yeah, it’s really interesting.  |
| 00:34:37 | DT | Yeah. Because- because you know, I’m just- I’m just saying what I’ve notice over the years and things like that, but I have no real idea, I’ve never really asked them or anything like that, but- but interesting that you found that that’s- they- they- they did have both of those as well or they might- one of them might have a stronger lean towards one or the other, but yeah. |
| 00:34:56 | PDA1 | Mm, yeah, really interesting. |
| 00:34:58 | DT | Yeah, yeah. |
| 00:34:59 | PDA1 | And, do all student do you think feel ownership? |
| 00:35:04 | DT | No, I don’t think so. I think again, it is these kind of like, um, I’m doing this because I have to because it’s part of the degree, some of them- some of them do that, not many I have to say, uh, but maybe those that actually haven’t found the right- the right role and they’re not so happy and that’s when they start thinking, “Oh, you know, sort of like, yeah, I’m doing this, but this is just to buy the time so that I can get this and then I can start my real career.” um, uh, but then that probably would be more of an ownership towards their actual career than the- than the company, so- so they probably have one or the other more so, but then they’re- as I say, there are some that just don’t know what they want to do, and then that’s- that- that probably- those probably are the ones that- that- that really don’t have that as much ownership for- for anything really particularly, well from not wanting to do much (Laughter) I have found that actually (Laughter) yeah, so sometimes.  |
| 00:36:01 | PDA1 | Yes, I can imagine. (Laughter) And do you see more ownership for their job role or the company or the team or is it sort of equal? |
| 00:36:13 | DT | Yeah, quite a lot. It’s- quite a lot is the team, and oh, it seems to be in a sort of like I mean you know, um, oh, I always ask them for an overview, at the end of the second meetings I always ask them for an overview or their- their final meeting, um, of uh, how- how their year has gone, they say it’s been a good year, and invariably it’s sort of like it’s been amazing, I’ve learned so much, I’ve made so many good friends, so- so it’s the kind of like the learning and the good friends I suppose, that- that- that comes out the most, and I’ve- I’ve grown this year, I’ve matured and everything, so that’s what they’re saying, so I suppose the ownership is and- and I’ve said, “Are you sad to leave?” “Oh, yeah, I’m really sad to leave but I’m really looking forward to going back to uni too.” so- so they’ve- they’ve got this- this- this kind of real mix as well, but I think a lot of it is about the people um, that they work with, um, I think it’s maybe more so about that than I think if they have a really good experience with the people that they’re working with, because a lot of people will say, “I’d like to come back to the company but only if I can work in this team or in this role.” so it’s the team and the role possibly more than the actual… |
| 00:37:27 | PDA1 | Company, yeah. And so when you’ve seen students demonstrate ownership of their job role, have you got any examples you can think of? |
| 00:37:38 | DT | Um, uh, I mean sometimes it’s- it’s sort of like I’ve done this and I’m really proud, we- we did some of the portfolios coming through at the moment, and we asked them for their main achievement and everything, and it’s, “I’ve left my legacy, I’ve changed this process.” you know, sort of like, um, “I was really proud because I managed to get 100,000 back of- of- of um you know, sort of like revenue and everything.” and- and it is or- or um, I’ve created a website or it’s things like that, it’s- it’s something that they’ve made or they’ve done or they’ve made it better, um, so it is progress I suppose, it is something that they- they can call their own, they’ve left their legacy, so that’s probably where the ownership comes from is- is they’re leaving a legacy, I think if they’ve just done a good job, then it’s- it’s okay, but they won’t probably have that same- as strong a feeling about it all so yeah, and also um, uh, I think ownership also comes from good feedback from managers as well, it sounds really bizarre but I suppose, that they get their validation from the feedback that they get from their managers as well, and- and that makes them own it more I think, that makes them like the job more and things like that, maybe they haven’t realise how much they enjoyed it until they were told how brilliant they were doing and how well they were doing and how much they were valued, so I think that- that helps- being valued um, promotes the ownership I think as well, so.  |
| 00:39:12 | PDA1 | Okay. Yes, I can see that. Um, and do you think that’s coming from the line manager or the team or both?  |
| 00:39:20 | DT | Um, both I think. |
| 00:39:23 | PDA1 | Or the manager of the line manager. |
| 00:39:24 | DT | Yeah, yeah. I think- I think probably- probably everyone, I think the camaraderie with the team probably- probably makes them want to come to work in the first place, the validation from the manager particularly if it’s even more senior manager you know, sort of like makes them think, “Yeah, I’m doing this, I can do this.” you know, something like that as well, and actually bizarrely when we go to see them for their meetings as well and we get them to talk about how much they’ve done, they haven’t looked back and seen how much they’ve done, and I get comment all the time, “Gosh you know, sort of like…” and- because I say, “Oh, wow, you’ve done so much.” and they go, “Yeah, I have, haven’t I?” you know, sort of like, “Oh, yes.” and sort of like, “What have you learned?” and they’re, “Oh gosh, I hadn’t realised how much I learned.” and we- on the surveys that we put through as well, they turn around, they say uh, “It got me to recognise how much I was doing, how much I was learning, and what skills I was developing as well.” so I think that helps, so pointing it out to them of- of- of how well they’re doing or how much they’re learning really promotes that as well towards the ownership, I think it is all about validation, I think you know, a lot of it is about you know, sort of like, they can feel better about themselves and about their ownership of everything if they have the validation from anybody, from- from- but I think you know, sort of like, from someone they respect maybe and- or like, as well or, yeah. |
| 00:40:50 | PDA1 | Yes, yeah. No, I can see that absolutely. Um, do you think the students who feel ownership have different characteristics to students who don’t feel ownership? |
| 00:41:04 | DT | I think proactive students would be- have more, I think those that um- I mean it’s the ones that get their placement late, it’s the ones that- that- that don’t quite know what they want to do, it’s the ones that haven’t really thought about it even if you press it, it’s the ones that have trouble articulating what they’re learning everything, those ones, the- the less um, uh, involved or- or even maybe self-aware, less self-aware students, um, because they just float and don’t necessarily think about things, they just do without considering, and those that actually have a plan or maybe are more proactive or they know what they want out of life or things like that will probably try and own things more, will probably- because of the nature of the person that maybe they are. |
| 00:41:52 | PDA1 | Yes, okay, interesting. And do you think feelings of ownership for the job role, the company, and the team um, do they appear at different times do you think or is it hard to sort of say how and when they manifest and will it be different for different students? |
| 00:42:13 | DT | No, and- and again it’s probably a good experience as well you know, sort of like if they- if they have um, a project and it’s going really well or something like that, then- then that might be ownerships, I think it is, yeah, I think it’s to do with success a lot of it, success and um- and uh, you know, sort of like, I don’t think many- and- and I suppose that’s human nature a little bit [inaudible 00:42:38] if you have a really bad day you think, “Oh god, I hate this.” or something like that, whereas if you have a really good day, then you’re positive and you’re fired and you want to do more and you want to you know, sort of like, yeah, so maybe it’s linked with- with success, so obviously at different stages of the placement, if they have a different success or something like that, then maybe they will feel more ownership then.  |
| 00:43:01 | PDA1 | Yes, maybe. Um, do you think perhaps some students might feel ownership for a company because it’s a company they’ve um, been aware off for many years? |
| 00:43:15 | DT | Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think so. I mean um, I’ve had students in Formula One companies and things like that, that’s a- that’s a good example because often they’ve been you know, loved Formula One before, it’s their dream job, I had a student that was in uh- that absolutely adore motorbikes and he went into BMWs motorbikes, and he said, “I’m living the dream.” you know, so like- because that’s what he wanted to do, but he said, “I will struggle to find uh, a job now that is as good as this placement.” because BMW, even if he did go back to BMW, they won’t put you back into your placement department or at that stage, so they didn’t- maybe that’s changed now, but they wouldn’t put you back into that department, they wanted you to rotate around, and then after a while, maybe you can go back, um, but he said, “I think- I think I will have- I will struggle.” but he was there, he was- he was owning the place, he was living the dream, he was sort of like- he was branded, he was sort of like, there, um, and I think if you have had that kind of like, that love of you know, sort of like, uh, cars or a big one, Disney and- and Warner Brothers, I’ve had students that didn’t get into them but went for the assessments then they got turned down but were still aspiring to then go back after graduation because they just- it was their key company that they always wanted to work for, so um, yeah, yeah, I think it’s probably is, uh, if you- if you’ve had a dream or uh, an ambition to work somewhere, I was the same with JPMorgan actually, I used to drive past JPMorgan, the glass house, and I use to think, “I will work in there one day.” and everything, and I did (Laughter) and- and it kind of initially lived up to the dream as well, so yeah, uh, yeah, so anyway, yes, I suppose- I suppose it is if you have this aspiration, so the Formula One were a bunch of good examples because they were just like, “I can’t believe I work here.” you know, sort of like, it was still like, it was unbelievable, yeah.  |
| 00:45:12 | PDA1 | Yeah, absolutely. So do you think there’s positives and negatives to- for students if they have ownership of work? |
| 00:45:23 | DT | Um, yeah, I think- I- I can’t see any negatives to ownership unless of course they desperately want to come back and they can’t do it then, that’s the only thing if- if they- if they you know, sort of like- and some students that happens to and unfortunately that’s a life experience isn’t it, but I think you know, sort of like the- the- the more you see them integrating and- and own their role and their team and their company you know, sort of the harder they want to work for them in a way I think, you know, sort of like because it is that kind of like, I belong here, it’s a- it’s a- it’s a feeling of- of sort of like, this is right, I belong here, I want to be here, I want to work hard, I want the company to succeed, I want my team to succeed, and in particular in sales roles that’s brilliant because you know, sort of like, a lot of them have targets and they’ll have team targets, so I’ve got a company called Golfbreaks, um, and um, they have team sales targets, um, and actually sort of like, it really bonds the team because they’re all working towards one goal, and they got- it is money or trips or things like that, so there is a sort of like- but at the same time, they- they- they’re inspired, but they also have a sales person uh, of the team as well, so whilst they’re working as a team together to get their goal, they’re all still a little bit competitive and a little bit sort of like, “Well, it will be lovely to get the top- top boy.” you know, or the top girl, so- so yeah, so I think- I think ownership is great, I think if you know, sort of like if you can own that and feel proud of something that you’re doing and the people that you’re working with you get on well, yeah, then I think there’s nothing but positives, I- I can’t think of any negatives.  |
| 00:47:12 | PDA1 | Well where students have alluded to, and it almost comes back to the working hard, that maybe they’re working too hard and actually then it becomes quite stressful, and I want… |
| 00:47:26 | DT | Yeah, because you down want to let anyone down. |
| 00:47:28 | PDA1 | Yeah. |
| 00:47:28 | DT | Yeah. |
| 00:47:29 | PDA1 | And I wonder, didn’t know with mental health as well if they’re… |
| 00:47:32 | DT | Yes, yeah, yeah. Actually thinking about that, um, yeah, I suppose they do, there’s- I’ve- I’ve had students where they’ve said you know, sort of like, um- um, one in particular at the moment she said, um, “I’ve got a whole heap of health issues and everything, but I don’t want to go because I don’t…” and she’s done her placement and everything, but she said, “I don’t want to go because I don’t want to let them down because there’s not going to be anyone else.” so yeah, so I suppose really, yeah, yeah, actually thinking about it, you’re right, um, there is that kind of uh, negativity, I wasn’t thinking about their own wellbeing, but yes, it probably is wellbeing, um, that- that- that drives them to keep going, um you know, sort of like that- that sort of like, I don’t want to let anybody down- down, and things like that. |
| 00:48:18 | PDA1 | Yeah.  |
| 00:48:19 | DT | Yeah. |
| 00:48:19 | PDA1 | Interesting. And do you think- what do you think are the positives and negatives for the organisation? |
| 00:48:25 | DT | Um, I would say there’s a lot of positives because they do get you know, if you- if you feel ownership straightaway then you probably get um you know, it’s like I say to students, if you’re um, uh- oh, I can’t think of the word, oh, stupid one. Um, so if you’re um- no, I can’t think of it. I can’t think of it. Um, it will- it will come back to me, but you know, sort of like, if they are um, you know, sort of like, dead set I’m going to- doing a good job and everything like that, um, then you know, sort of like, it’s great for the company, you know, sort of like it’s a- so it’s good- it’s good for- for them necessarily because they’ll beat themselves up trying to do the best job they can, and so- and I can’t think of the word, I know exactly what it- it’s- it’s- oh, no, so annoying. Um, anyway, but- but yeah, so- so- so yeah, but I think they do um, they do kind of like, do more than- and I suppose and even with our own personal experience as well, within our jobs you know, sort of like we do it because we’re- we’re- we’re owning the job, we’re owning the students as well, so we don’t want to let them down and so we’ll do more than we probably should do and it’s the same for them, so the company gets a lot out of that, and you know, sort of like an- and they probably do, a lot of companies these days probably do rely on the fact that people have got this- this um, sense of- sense of um, doing right even though you know, necessarily we’ll be doing more than they are.  |
| 00:50:07 | PDA1 | Yeah. Do you think there any negative sides for the organisation? |
| 00:50:12 | DT | Um, well I suppose if you aren’t like that, then you could be getting actually stressed out and ill and things like that and everything and then you know, sort of like, if you have to go off sick and everything like that but the company hasn’t got any contingency, um you know, sort of like- and also it- it- it’s an unrealistic state as well, isn’t it, really for all the company, because they then load on work onto people, they have the minimum numbers and then if something goes pear shaped like a whole department suddenly goes off sick or- or you know, sort of like, or- or they- they have to go off for work related stress, then there isn’t- there isn’t that knowledge- there is uh, you know, sort of like, that contingency, and they- they might not have people that are able to do the jobs because they’ve got some- some- the small team that are just experts in their field and no one else particularly knows what they’re doing, so it’s the only bits I can think off…  |
| 00:51:10 | PDA1 | Yeah. No, that’s- that’s interesting, thank you. Um, just to finish off then, you mentioned about students saying when it was coming close to leaving that they maybe didn’t want to leave their job and have to hand it over, um, can you think of any examples where you’ve seen students in that situation? |
| 00:51:31 | DT | Yeah, yeah. There’s- there’s quite a lot, because often they’ll be involved in the recruitment of their replacement, and actually that sometimes can help because again, it’s that ownership, I own the process, I’m choosing my replacement, I’m- I’m- I’m having you know, sort of like, some say in this, um, but- but a lot of the time they go, “I can’t believe you know, sort of like, um, I’m going to be leaving and someone else is going to be taking over.” um, but they also- they want to be the ones to produce the very best handover notes to train up the students as well because they want- they- they- they feel like they’ve done a good job and they want the student coming next to- if they’ve got to hand it over to someone, then they want it to be a good job, and yet they don’t necessarily want them to be slightly- quite as good as they were, it’s a real mishmash, it’s something like I want to be the best person handing over, but I don’t want them to be quite as good as me. (Laughter) |
| 00:52:25 | PDA1 | I- I can’t imagine, yeah, yeah. But I think that’s an understanding of feeling, yeah. |
| 00:52:29 | DT | So yeah, but- but a lot of them are you know, sort of like, “Oh, I’m leaving you know, sort of like- so I don’t want someone else to do my job and lose it.” so yeah, it is, but um, so that’s ownership probably.  |
| 00:52:41 | PDA1 | Yeah. (Laughter) Actually in terms of their portfolios, have you seen any particular trends um, which you think might relate back to ownership? |
| 00:52:52 | DT | Yeah. Um, they use the word proud quite a lot, I was- I was reading a couple last night actually, um I had about five in and they- they use the word I’m proud of my achievements, I’m proud of my what my manager said, I’m proud of being able to introduce this new process, I’m proud of you know, sort of like, um- and- and I think that process of getting them to- to articulate what- what are these that they’ve done, things like that, makes them suddenly feel, particularly because they’re nearing to the end of their placement, um, they’ll see their development because we asked them to look at their skills, strengths, and weaknesses, and their improved skills and things as well, and I think by getting them to do that they suddenly see how much they’ve done, and- and as well, the company will get them to look at a little bit of the company structure as well and things, and yeah, no, but- but the word proud comes out quite a bit which- which I can only- only sort of like, liken to that- that kind of like, um, I’ve- I dealt with it- I think it is a combined kind of like, I’m proud of what I’ve achieved here, rather than necessarily sort of like, I achieved on my own you know, so.  |
| 00:53:59 | PDA1 | Yeah. Hmm, interesting. Brilliant. Well thank you very much… |
| 00:54:04 | DT | That’s all right… |
| 00:54:05 | PDA1 | And I’m going to switch this off. |

[00.54.09]

**[End of Audio]**

**Duration 54 minutes and 9 seconds**