PDA2 -

DT: Hello, thank you very much for participating today. Are you happy for me to record this interview please?

PDA2: Yes, I am.

DT: Great. Thank you. And so first of all, can I ask you a little bit about the PDA role? Could you briefly tell me a little bit about what you do, how long you've been in the role?

PDA2: I've been in the role now, there's going on to my fourth year, umm started, umm I worked for the university for that, and really enjoyed working for the university. So as basic as a continuation, I was (not understandable) so then moved across to the IT department and this is became permanent staffing move when I became PDA, my understanding of what we do as a PDA, really, is to look after students umm, while they're on placement, and that's obviously a third year while at University. Umm and it's supporting the students and making sure that they are ok and looked after whilst on placement because effectively they are still students at the university whilst they are on placement. So it's important that we do keep a link with them. As we do, we create that link between the student and the placement and the university. Umm it's basically sort of getting them into the role where they find the own placement role. But after three months, we'd sort of go and visit them, make sure they're okay and then we'd answer any queries that they do have during their placement. Yeah, we've changed things slightly this year, the way we work in that we're trying to sort of keep up to speed with the, the way things are changing, things are changing. So we're looking at modernising the way working as well. And we probably can talk about that later if you want to, but it's more for videos, and the interaction. But really, the interaction starts with the student. As soon as we get our lists of students, we send out an introduction email, and that gives them our contact details. And they will start really from about three months till they come back to university and even when they're back into university, we have one session with them. So we have 24/7, effectively contact with students, weekends, evenings, whatever, that's just just full on the whole time.

DT: yes. A fantastic role, though. Very interesting.

PDA2: Yes. Great. Absolutely.

DT: So obviously going into education from you, sorry, going into the workplace from university can be a quite a big transition for students. Have you come across any organisations who helped manage that process? Any examples of good practice, I suppose?

PDA2: We do and, and it does vary from from company to company. Umm you've got you could call it the worst case scenarios to your best case scenarios. You know, I think a worst case scenario company will just know that there are students available and and I mean, really worst case scenario look at so just getting free students to work and, and top up their their staff, you know, and that's when we would get involved more in the transition. Best case scenario, there are certain companies like NCP, one of mine, I like to use an example, where a student will go in, and they've actually got a structure in place for that student to guide them through their placement and give them different work experiences and try and get the most out of them and manage the student gets the most of that placement, which is a really good system, and then basically align to give departments etc. So yeah, there are certain companies that do that, you know.

DT: Good and so when they have the structure, or structured sort of entry induction, what sort of things do they get students to do?

PDA2: Normally, one of the first things we do tend to find is that we're hopeful is a handover from previous students. And that's really, really important. And that's something that we encourage our students to do to hand over, whether the student comes with, with us been from BU or can become from Bournemouth as a future student. So that always helps because it basically helps reassure the student that, you know, this is the role you're gonna be doing. I've done it before the same as you and that's, that's great, you know, thereafter, it's a bit of training, etc. and one thing we find is especially marketing students, etc, they get things like social media, (DT:of course, yes, absolutely). Very, very common, It's one of the first things and I say, what do you do and they say, social media. Laughs and we say, okay, good. It's not too daunting. It's more fun than onerous in essence, that's what I tend to do. Yes. And so yes, the induction to slow process of getting them into things, and there after they start to get projects to do, and then progress through the whole placement, and eventually hopefully, they're finished, they have done their own project, or certainly an account and like it, that's, that's nice.

DT: And when you see early teething problems at organisations, what generally tends to be the reason for that?

PDA2: Umm a number of reasons. And that goes everything from confidence is huge. Umm, you know, you're a lot of students have come straight from school, straight to University straight into the proper working world in this place. And confidence is a huge issue, you have certain other teething problems, things like discipline issues, you know, just getting to work on time, dress code, etc. Those are the sort of things that we sort of try and nip in the bud, and generally, that's also part of the reason we don't try and see them as it was before three months is because we want them to sort of sort of tough love the first three months, let them sort of go through that whole process, hopefully to settle in and understand what the work environments all about. And then we get there three months, if we do find the still issues. I’ve seen a student after three months and, and he's, you know, he just rocked up, he wasn't wearing socks and loafers on and he's looking for an accountancy firm, but they were wearing suits and ties, you know, and, and I'm sure to really come to the bottom of the laundry hamper to put a shirt on that morning, you know, and asked me to see him as well. But then we set them objectives, that's our job as well and we nip that in the bud, Madam, so teething problems are basically that, it's the confidence and the networking skills, it’s their communication skills, writing business emails, business etiquette, those are the things we get them sorted out.

DT: Do the proactive students do anything themselves in advance of taking, starting their placement? I don't know if you'd hear of any examples?

PDA2: We don’t generally, to be honest, to hear about that. But I think that if you were looking at proactive student, that would be a student that, you know, naturally while of at university for the first two years, possibly at school would have looked at things like Excel, Word, PowerPoint, those sort of standard Microsoft programmes so that when they go into the placement, they they didn't, they weren't starting from scratch and had a good grounding as to what they needed to do. And then it kind of started into the working world, whereas other students possibly hadn't done that. And that's, that does go a long way, you know, students that do shine and, and effectively will go on to yeah, I’ve done excel spreadsheets and doing pivot tables, and yeah, wow, okay. Yeah, I was at this rate sheet. So I think that's the difference. It's the understanding of the working world. And, you know, hopefully, they've had experience with that at University for the first two years, and that'll help them as well.

DT: Good. So, um, obviously, you'll see a lot of students that that sort of three month period, or over your four years in the job, or you will have seen an awful lot of students at the same sort of period, what would you say, is the difference between those students who seem to be doing well, and their managers are very sort of, lots of praise, versus those students who are struggling a little bit more?

PDA2: it comes down to engaging, I think, and that's the key to it, is that the students are doing well, if they're, they're happy in a job role, because bearing in mind, a lot of students don't get the job they wanted to get, you know, so some of them aren't really happy in the job role, they're really are just waiting for the 30 weeks. And, and that can be a problem, you identify that and you say we'll look at this, let's try that sort the issue out and other we get you a new job, or we get to enjoy this job, but then there's all those that want to go from Microsoft, they've got the Microsoft role, and they couldn’t be happier and, and they have volunteering for everything and she got the role, he/she got the role, particularly because they are good about some products, and it's a passion for them. And that's what you find is it's a, it's an engagement, that passion, and some willingness to sort of get on and do it. And you do see that you can actually tell the students that are really engaged and those are just waiting to sort of finish the placements. And luckily, most of them are engaged, to be honest, it's a large majority that are really engaging, really going for it, you do have the occasional one who has problems, horrible companies or bad companies, or has been said rather not being at, but needs last.

DT: And often those students who are proven successful early on, are they enthusing or being proactive about the organisation or is it the job role or does it just depend on the students and sometimes it can be both sometimes it's one, sometimes it's the other?

PDA2: I think it is a definitely a two way street for the student and you do get some students that go to company and they're very, they're enthused when they first start, but their manager doesn't quite buy into the whole programme and, and puts them in a corner just doing the petty cash accounts or just doing an arbitrary marketing thing. So it's definitely a two way street and I suppose we need to encourage them, we do encourage them to meet the manager, that’s why we actively like to meet their managers in the first meeting, is because we say to the manager to push the student out of their comfort zone and give them projects that they want to work on. And it does go hand in hand definitely you know, and you find the students, we encourage them to ask, you know, ask to work in teams and if you've got no work, you're going to see other teams and try and get involved and stuff like that. It's it's definitely it's a reciprocal thing for both of them

DT: Umm actually, I was going to ask you about the managers, what sort of impact do you think managers have on our placement students?

PDA2: Huge, huge, I think, you know, and we, and we get a feel for that, because that my background, isn't education, per se, it's business. So I get to talk to the manager and then after the manager leaves a five minute sort of recap just with the students. And I think it's important, I'll say to the students, you know, from what I saw watching manager, are they engaging with you? Are you getting on, are they enthusiastic, are they giving you work, you know, and that's and said, the manager can have a huge impact on the student, and you get good managers that really take the student on board, take them under their wing, possibly put them in a team, with, with other interns and that's, that's a really good thing to do as well. And then also, it goes hand in hand, you know, I've seen students where the manager himself, you know, he was a very important, very well established businessman, had about four businesses, and hired a student, umm he was a Vietnamese student. So what you had there was a culture issues, he had a Vietnamese student who possibly wasn't used to having power, you know, being a bit of a student, then you had a very open minded thinking manager who a number of businesses, and he bought this guy and almost as a PA. And that was interesting dynamics there between the manager said to him, Look, you are my PA, we want you to run this side of the business, and I'm not sure let's and he gave more autonomy and it was, it was a great opportunity. And the student absolutely flipped. He couldn't handle it. He couldn't handle the fact is, oh, he does nothing. He just wants me to do everything. Why must I, and I said, you're seeing it wrong, you've been given an opportunity and he's he's trusting you to help him run his business, you know, very lucky, he was had containers that he rented out, so it wasn't huge money. If you met him, he wasn’t running a blue chip company. So you been putting in charge of these container units, you know, and there was an opportunity for the student really to shine, you know, so there I saw the manager really giving the student an opportunity, possibly the manager could have explained it differently to him and his culture or thing. But after speaking to the student and at the end of his placement, he came back and he said, Yeah, cI understand what's going on, what the guys doing for me . He understood the culture and the opportunity he had.

DT: Yes, well I'm glad it worked out in the end and do you think if students have or are already given autonomy, that tends to be a benefit?

PDA2: I think so nine times out of 10, Nine times out of 10? Yes. You know, generally, you know, as I said, we, if we ever have 136 students have 136, three, maximum four would be problems students, if we can call them that, you know, the rest of them really are getting on with it really enthused and given a free rein to do the thing given autonomy would do really, really well. You know, they're looking forward, a student that worked for a marketing company and he was doing the marketing for Aston Martin. That’s incredible to see.

DT: Very exciting. Yeah, definitely. Um, if you have a student who is a high performer, at the sort of first review, do they often stay as high performer for their placement rr is it more common that they slip?

PDA2: No, almost 100% of the time that they will excel even more. You know, yeah, when you identify them as a high performer in their first three months when you have seen them. Generally, you'll hear good things. Yeah, you'd never Wow, I don't think I've ever had one go backwards. They were just go on to do amazing things afterwards. Probably in the coming back as uni winning a prize, you can identify those from the beginning.

DT: Yeah and what is it about them, are there other, other characteristics?

PDA2: Confidence, I think it's their confidence, their confidence to, to push the envelope, I think and I'm not scared to make to make mistakes and try, (pause) whereas some students probably don't want to do that and you can tell those that are a little bit reserved. It's a confidence, their knowledge. It's it's the, it's the environment they're working in as well, I think plays a part, you know, I had one at Intel, and she basically wrote Intel's shopping website. It was amazing, absolutely incredible. So the, I think it is it's a very positive environment, you have a positive student in a positive environment and a student that really wants to do and you identify those students early on. And as you keep an eye on he/she keeps on working hard. You do get others that basically, umm you find some of them got the jobs early as well and Maria says, you know, the ones who really start in June, July, they will excel and the ones that you seen this darling I've ever seen, starting November, December and January and I had one who didn’t find a placement and ended up working for his dad's taxi company doing the books and all that. And so that was one of my less attractive placements that we had was that guy. He really hadn't almost accepted that was what he had to do. This company was working for and he was doing the placement, doing the books. So it all tied up, if you put on paper, it was like a Boeing, it all tied up, put on paper it flies. But its not gonna fly. But on paper it flies. What happened with him, it was as good of a job. But yeah, he wasn't in the most dynamic environment, we could have done something in any programme, although we encouraged him to do seminars with you, this is your opportunity as well. So we try and turn that around. Yeah, look at it, its your father's company, it's your family business, why on't you try to do something amazing here? Yeah.

DT: So perhaps sometimes, if students are already slightly lacking in confidence, because they found it challenging to find a placement, they may then at the start also,

PDA1: sometimes, yeah, eah, it kind of goes hand in hand, well, because those that battled to find placements, the factors that come into that, and those are the students, and then there's, that's what we sort of see in the interviews that the ones that started late, they've just basically got on holiday and sat around for a bit when they could have actually been job hunting. Or it may just be something like, you can tell us about talking to person that they would possibly have interviewed badly, and that comes down to confidence. Again, it comes down to how they portray themselves professionally, etc, etc. Whereas the ones you speaking to, you know, I’ve been to see placement students where they were sitting in reception, they walk down the stairs, or they will walk out the door to come pick me up from reception. And I'm for the first five seconds, you're not sure whether it's the manager or the students, you are talking to. Okay, you see them coming towards you and its, just, just to see who this is, you know, and so you do get those knows that, obviously, are the ones that do really, really well, the ones that, but as I said, we rock up in the loafers, and (laughs) there the late starters. So they do tend to sort of almost pigeonhole themselves. And yeah, it's just kind of repeats every year, you can identify them. You've been reading people as well, yes. You know, especially the, you know, the good ones. Yeah, sometimes they're really stand out, the handful that you can’t tell is the manager or the student in the first five seconds, but generally,

DT: you can tell, do you notice, umm do companies try to do anything if they've realised the student is a little unconfident?

PDA2: Generally, yes, yes, I think they do. They go, it's a standard thing isn't, they probably address it as they would have done a staffing issue, they may look at that student and look, either before they put the student with other students to try and boast their confidence, we've had them change managers before, if they needed to do that and then once again, does depend on both as a student and the managers to how they are handling it, you know. If it's a student that's not trying then I’ll get a phone call to counsel (unclear) But generally, we haven't really had, well, yeah, I suppose you do get average managers and good managers, as well as bit of a mix in other and as we said earlier, the great combinations when you got a good student and a good manager, it's just going to go so well, when you've got a poor student and a bad manager, you can have a lot of calls to the placement.

DT: Do you ever find circumstances where you get a poor manager and a good student?

PDA2: Umm, yes, I've had, we had that once, a company in Reading and I had a student there and she was very good. She was very keen. And basically, I got a phone call, student in tears, please come and see me, I can’t work my manager and basically I mean, through talking to a student, she really seemed level headed and wanted help and the problem was that the manager would sort of come in the morning and the manager was in a position whereby she was trying to probably do two, three jobs at once. And so she should sort of scoot in the morning, do a flyby, everybody gets I need this, this and this done, and then go and the student was like ok, I’ve got to do this, this and this and the manager would come back and say, have you done this, this and that? The student would go well, no, I haven't done that. Because you have to do this, this and this, I need that now. So the student was really stressed out and he, that manager come back in the afternoon and say, well, where's this and this, and she didn't know where she was, what she was going to go. So what I did there was I had a meeting with her, we actually designed it to do spreadsheet for her. As her and I sat down, we bought the spreadsheet and we could actually what she was going to do was email it to her manager every day and say this is what I'm working on, this my priority traffic light system. And once it was done, we made some boxes she could click, and it would change it from basically blank to green and drop it to the bottom of the list. So every morning her manager would get this in her inbox and she could say no, no, and prioritise and then she would have it in writing from a manager. So yes, she could say, but you said this is a specialty. So this gave her a lot more, she had no structure, he was all over the show. So by doing that spreadsheet it gave her structure and it allowed her to sort of get past that manager. The manager didn’t change unfortunately, to that was one that kind of carried on, and but at least a student had a bit more control of what she was doing.

DT: Yeah, this helps a lot, right. can imagine. Yeah, absolutely. So as you know, my study is about psychological ownership and I just wondered how you would describe ownership in the workplace?

PDA2: ownership in the workplace, for a employee, it would be effectively, and I tell my students, this, it's a, it's about making it if you use the phrase making your mark, it's basically running your job as though it was your business. And that's what I tell, I had a student who was struggling, as well. And I said to him, hold it a second, because he he back and he was battling to come to work and it was it was like I am I should I and I said to one second, you're looking at the wrong way. I said you're looking at it, as though you're working for somebody, and you just you have to do a job. And it's it's a menial task. I said, look at your job, as though it's your business. And this is what ownership is basically take ownership of your role, how would you like to be treated if you were so that you may work in the print room, you as though you run a printing business, and if you, if a colleague comes to you and says any four documents printed, get accurate to the because all that's going to do if you do a good job running your business properly, you're going to get commended and basically your business will improve it, your CV is going to improve, chances you've been promoted is going to improve. And he saw from a totally different light as to why he was actually there. And and I think it helped him a lot. In the end, at the end the meeting he said, you really changed my outlook on business and the way I look at doing business, you know, and although you are employed by the company, your particular job can be run as though it's your business, how would you run your professional business and by being professional, the way you talk to people, the way you do things So that's what you know, I think was ownership, its owning your business, only making it yours Yeah. within limits, there are certain limits, obviously, you can't just take five years off. But it did happen in the company I worked for years ago, when we had to help make your mark. But that's what it's I think that's what ownership is. It's it's owning what you do making it yours making it represents your own business. Yes, I think that helps, you know, mentally as well, you know, you're not going to work for somebody else, you can do it for yourself, you growing your business to grow your future.

DT: So nice way of putting it and do you see students feel ownership for the organisationas well, which is a slightly different slant?

PDA2: Some of them do. Yes, some of them do. That, once again, it's the students that are doing well and and really buying into the company, you know, those that are good, basically different roles within the company after graduating, you know, they would they would definitely be like that. But yeah, I'd say I'd say, yeah, a large portion of them, do you see ownership of the company, they like the companies that work for, we tend to see that, which is always interesting, you know, I always look at life as and then working as though is, you know, I've worked for few companies in my life. And it's one of two companies that I didn't even know existed until I walked in the door, got your job, you know. And that happens. And and then probably these companies the student didn't know existed until they walked in and got to and got the job. And, and yet, when they come out, they love the business and they want to go into it. And I mean, the other student do marketing for a battery company car battery company and he didn't even know it existed until he got the job. And yet, at the end of his placement, he was Mr. battery. And he had done such good work, it was incredible and he was going back, he's been taken on, going back after University. It was like the perfect placement. And that's, that's good. So yes, I think they develop ownership of the company over their placement, you know, a large portion of them do, not all of them but a large portion.

DT: And what do you think companies do to help facilitate those feelings, feelings of ownership? Do you see anything? Or do you think is the onus is on the individual?

PDA2: No, no, I think they do that, there are certain companies that begin to do that and by doing that, you've got companies that are put them in charge of a certain department and that's given them authority and given them power. The student did work for Beko and they were basically a beacon of fridges and all that and, and his job was to have a one floor the building is is basically on the display floor. And that will be some kitchen as a kitchen. And he was charged with that. So that's going to give them ownership. That's not really it's it's kind of you buy into because it becomes yours. And once it becomes yours, you look after it don't (DT: Yes), or most people do and that's that's a good way that companies do it. They given them projects, you know, you give student a project becomes easy as ownership becomes proud of it, you know, and he always you'll sees everything, the magazine on the papers and again, tell his friends. Yeah, that's that's mine. So that's what companies do, I think and that's, that's a great way of getting students to buy in and, and take ownership and be proud of what they do with the company. Gives them something to put their name to.

DT: Yes. Yeah. Do you see very much team ownership, so almost a collective we do this in our department?

PDA2: Yes, occasionally? Probably. Probably less so than the individual ownership. But there are certainly your teams, Microsoft has teams, people work in teams, Amazon has team. So yes, you do definitely still get the team as well, for sure. But I think the the private personal ownership is more is more of that. Yes, team stuff. But yeah, you do get to you get to, but not as much with you. Definitely.

DT: One area of ownership, which seems to be coming out from the interviews, which I'd never considered before. Is what almost terming career ownership. So owning their own careers. Have you noticed that at all?

PDA2: Umm Yes, yes. Yes. Yes and no.You have students that are very career focused, and are thinking, career ownership would be long term thinking, wouldn't it? I have a student now who works in Canary Wharf, definitely career ownership. I mean, she knows what she wants to do. She's got a really good job. She's basically doing a dissertation on her role there. And she's really thinking 15 years down the line working for the company and Canary Wharf, and that's, thats career ownership, she's taking control of her career. She's doing what she needs to do to maintain career. And she she realised she was going for it. Career ownership as well tends to change while students on placement, you have students that go into placement with doing a certain thing. And they'll come out, and I'll interview them best talk to them. And they'll say that they're in the business buildings, marketing, for example, or something like that. And I'll speak them and say, Well, what are you going to do when you come out? And they’ll say, I am going to go to school teacher which was very interesting. So yeah, complete opposite. You know. But, yeah, I think you do, I think Career ownership, you do get it, are students thinking that long term? Probably not so much when they're on placement, you know, they're more thinking about this my placement done, then graduate possibly come back. Yeah. And then they go, do what they want to do. And I'm finding that the way that possibly students are changing as well, that they, some of them don't live for the long term, they realise that they are going to be changing jobs. So it's an audition, what you're going to get to do, probably, and even to the point where they are getting offered a possible grad role at the company and they're even doubting whether they're going to take that and thinking well, you already want to work, you're going to go work somewhere else. And we always said they will call it you know, the job offer, take the job offer, the money, cause once you’ve got a job its easier to find another job. And then you can you can help if you want to. And as it's just trying to get their heads around that ownership and say, focus on what's good for you, and what's good, you know, because in the day, it's about moving forward in life, and you get started mortgages and all that etc, etc. and start planning that out for you. There was some there came up with talking to managers making related to our conversation, is how we prepare our students for roles, what does that mean? I don't know, that just came up with with regards to things I talked to managers over the years, and there's students go in and it's the basics, we spoke about Excel, you know, and it's it's that sort of stuff that they don't come away from university with, they come away with units and programmes that we decided to teach them. But it could be basic fundamental skills that they could learn. We offer the courses, you know, we have the and CMI helps with that as well. And the different courses they can do, but that's something that has come up and giving them a bit more sort of worldly wise knowledge before they go into the world.

DT: So that's sort of commercial awareness?

PDA2: Commercial awareness, you know, yeah, exactly. Understanding how the real world works. Yeah, which is important. Rather than just going in and going, yeah, to ins and outs with spreadsheet, what kind of thing, I don't really actually know how to work for, which that's, but then again, that's what the placements, there for, its to teach them that, to get them going. But, but it's a bit of a steep learning curve when they first go in, it’s a shock to them when they first go into it. But they 99% of them really get their heads around it quite quickly, within the first few months and are up and running and I can go for it. So looking at that, looking at the looking at, once again, you know what students like if you offered courses, you could go over top of to get paid for placement, they wouldn't turn up to them (DT: no) It’s the unfortunate truth, but some of them would, that's something the most of them wouldn’t unfortunately

DT: sometimes you don't know you need something even though people are telling you you need it, you've got to find out yourself, haven't you?

PDA2: Absolutely.

DT: So, um, what do you think are the positives and negatives of perhaps individuals feeling ownership in the workplace? 29.54

PDA2: wasn't done, are definitely a better world, obviously, the student feeling ownership, you can have increased productivity in the workplace, you're going to have better production in the workplace, you're going to have results in the workplace, you know, better teamwork in the workplace, effectively. It's, it's basically going to benefit the company, because as I said, that hopefully that you've taken aboard, you know, it's their responsibility, they have a sense of pride in the job. And that's, that's what ownership is, as well, you know, it's affected, it's yours, you're going to hopefully do the best - most of us would put the effort in, you know, negatives of it, overstepping the mark, effectively people, they may go off on a tangent, be careful of that. It's approachability and teamwork couldn't be affected by ownership, as well. I think that, you know, you get some ownership of a product, he may go into a corner dark room, and then produce a product and come out with it and it may not be where the company wants to go, just looking at that, making sure that they are guideline that they are part of a team.

DT: Okay, so do you mean in a sort of territorial sense of, right, I'm taking this away, because I've got to organise it and not involving other people.

PDA2: Yeah, yeah, people, you know, students can do that you will be given the students because you give them you give a student a project, and you said right you are in charge of this project, they’ll take ownership of the project, go off. And if you're not, if you know, if they're not engaging with it, because they are a part of it, a cog in the machine. Yeah. So that cog comes up square and all that cogs are round with teeth, then that doesn't work. So that's the thing if you don’t give them guidelines around ownership, but they still are, they're still following the company's general guidelines as to what the company wants and the company's goals and objectives. You know, and that was a big thing we had when we launched this back years ago, was it we gave people ownership, and people went off and kind of went off on their own tangent, but we still had a big guidebook about that thick of actually, although you have ownership and you can tell nicely, this is our end goal, we have an end goal, and it's making the company needs to then convey that end goal message back to the staff, even though they have ownership and submit that as individual little pods, this whole thing's moving forward, because at the end of the day one person can't control everybody. So you need to do ownership. Give ownership because once everyon is in the same direction, it's gonna work.

DT: Do you think it's about giving ownership? Or is it that some people automatically try to have ownership?

PDA2: Both, I think the good people will try and have ownership, you know, it's like, there's, you know, people aren't scared its confidence, again, people that are confidence enough will take ownership, people that volunteering, you know, that's that's ownership, you know, and the day you got things to do, people say, I’ll do that, I’ll do that. You get your people that don't have the confidence or the knowledge, they won't volunteer, because they're scared they're gonna mess it up. So don't do it, won't touch it with a barge pole. And I think that that's important, isn't it? Yeah, confidence that ownership is taken, sometimes. And it's also given, it works both ways. You know, I don't think as a staff member can actually fully take ownership, unless it is given as well by management, you know, because it's the kind of thing in a working environment with is a pretty much two way street. And if and stop it stop, volunteered. So yeah, I'll take ownership and management will be fine, you go for it, granted. That's, that's just kind of other thing. That's kind of good management, because at least, you know, you know, where all your ducks are and what they're doing. You need to know that if your business is going to work, it's when people are taking ownership of stuff that that you haven't factored in. They're going to go off and work on something. You know, I'm going to go and build coffee cups down there. All the coffee cups. Yeah, but we’re making battleships you know, yeah. The cups got a battleship. Yeah. And I don't want to be bothered. You know? And that's, that's it says managing that ownership as well. But yeah, good people will take ownership and do try and take ownership, believe in ownership and the end is probably okay to management.

DT: What time period do you think students are starting to take ownership? So when you see them at week 12-14, all of those some examples of ownership already?

PDA2: Definitely. I think the good ones its, before that, you know, you sort of see I've yet stories three to six months, they are taking ownership, definitely after six months, you're going to take ownership to the six months, you know, they've kind of got in, got the heads around it, and they've stood out, and they’ve got a project and then running with it. Yeah, so anything from 3/4 months onwards, students taking ownership. That's, that's happening. You know, I found that, you know, students are a lot more confident, and that's coming from, you know, the university, it's coming from school, you know, my son’s, and he's doing projects, he's doing dissertations and and they've got that confidence, they've got the knowledge. And I think if we gave them ownership, they would excel, and they were they want ownership. students these days want ownership, the good ones want ownership. You know, my son, you know, he stuff he's doing, it's, it's incredible, and lucky, I've got it, and I'll give him ownership, I am very good at that and I'll say this. Now, when he wants to do something, I'll say if that’s what you want to do it, okay, yours, do it and present it back to me. And he does a cracking job. And students are like that, if you give them that ownership, do it. You'd be amazed how well they can do. Its managers letting go a little bit, as well.

DT: Yes. Um, so do you see many circumstances where students who you think would like to take ownership, but then not being given it?

PDA2: (long pause) To be honest, not really, hey, that's really good in the workplace. You know, it's if anything, it would slightly go the other way saying, we want you to do well, the students are nervous. But generally, it works. Well, it's a good balance. Yeah, I think it does.

DT: Who do you think benefits most from psychological ownership? Students showing ownership in the workplace? Is it the individuals themselves? Or is it the organisation? Or is it a win win situation?

PDA2: From a selfish perspective, and I think it's the students and hope the students really benefit from it? I think they do. I think, you know, the business, the business has been around for a long time, its the student’s first job. So looking at that picture, I would say nine times out of 10, the student benefits more from it, because it's taken out of his comfort zone, the students delivering a project, delivering equipment, building their confidence, building knowhow, a skills base, everything that we wanted to develop their development by by having ownership. The company in a way, saw it last year, and the year before and the year before. They're benefiting, definately because they're going to get an end result in profitability, ect cetera, you know, and, and have all their projects ticked off. But I think the student benefits more than the company. If it's done, if it's done properly. The students should definitely benefit more in CV skills, confidence, the whole lot, the whole lot. That's what I’d hope.. And we I think we've all worked on big projects that we are proud about Yeah, and we will never forget that. Every time it comes up conversation, you mentioned that project. And the same will be for the student, the company may not mention that project, because they've had one a year for several years, so for them its just another project.

DT: I can see that. From some of the interviews and in the literature on psychological ownership is been posited that it can also cause stress to individuals, because actually, if you take too much ownership, and you may work extra hours, or you might find things quite stressful. Have you seen that at all?

PDA2: Yeah, Yeah, it does. Yeah, definitely. You know, and I think, once again, it's we've actually not built a very intelligent built stress into our talks. It’s the first time last year, and this year, we've actually started to refer students to stress counsellors on campus. It is the world's a stressful place, work is stressful, and we all have stress, you know, I umm, I don’t know, I worry that people jump on this, the stress bandwagon too quickly, you know, it's not, not mental health, it's stress. And there's a difference, you know? So it's, it's that it's, the students are finding out, yes there is stress, any project, if I gave you a project you tomorrow, the first thing you are going to do is stress, that we all are, yes, because you staring up at the start of the mountain, still walking up the mountain, your find its not that hard to walk up the mountain and you and you know, as long as you walk slowly, be careful and you know, think about what you're doing, you'll get, you know, and it extends that process. Explain that to students. But yes, definitely, the answers yes, a stress in that you see it, you see the students and some of them handled differently. So “I’m stressed, its cool” I don’t know how to handle itl” (laughs). Yeah, that's definitely a factor.

DT: I do you think, do you see if those students who showed lots of ownership are they more likely to get stressed and have mental health problems and do other students to cope with it better?

PDA2: Yeah, yeah, possibly cope with it better. I think so, students who are showing lots of ownership and work on big projects and it's what they it's a rush for them, they thrive on that if you could just give us an expression, you know, that they enjoy that sort of pressure, and they get looking at the end result, you know. It's the students that don't show lots of ownership, and then they get a project dumped on them. They'll stress because, as mentioned, when they're not as confident and want to do it, and that will cause stress.

DT: Okay, so for companies, its is about considering the individual, essentially.

PDA2: Yeah, absolutely. And a company may just have a student that doesn't do well, with regards to ownership, and, you know, he's happy to sort of do a job qnd it happens, you know, you wouldn't think so having come to university, you think these are the achievers. Some people don't like it, you know, there are people with degrees not making that don't want that sort of profile, you know, they're different people are all different. And I think it's up to the company to quite correctly, to identify the ones that that are achievers, want ownership and give those tasks to those people. And also take people out of the comfort zone, definitely, you could try it, you know, if I, you know, managing people, you, I've done that to people before. I had a guy, when I worked and I could to see was absolutely, even though he didn't possibly recognise it himself. He was brilliant at what he did. And he needed to be promoted, so I promoted him and within four weeks, five weeks, him actively answering everything can have all your toys back. It's not me. Fair enough, that you gave me the opportunity and I think that's important is to give you the opportunity. They will be placed under the stress naturally, you know, but when they say no, then fair enough. It happens enough. Others others will rise above it. Yeah, yeah. As we go, Wow. I didn't know how to do that. Yeah. Well, that that's a nice surprise as well.

DT: Okay. Good. Yeah and how to students and the companies manage the leaving process. So when they're perhaps handing over to an other student, or just handing over work? Maria was talking about some students sort of saying, because it feels very much like their job. They don't want to hand it over.

PDA2: Yes. Yeah, sometimes it happens. Sometimes it happens. I mean, you do get you that very, very involved and they, they sort of, it becomes a baby, and they want to, they want to take it with them kind of thing. But it also depends on what's happening with that student at the end of the placement, and I think if there are coming back, after university been offered a role, and because sometimes, companies, there are interviewing processes for them to come back and get those jobs. Yes. So yeah, there's that started. But I think generally, when I would ask that to my students, I haven't really had a problem with it. And no, don't actually say anything to me. It's actually quite an interesting question, because I haven't had a student come to me. And so I did not, I do get students like, I don't want to leave, a manager saying I don't want the students to leave, but that's normal. Yeah. I've never had a student sort of saying, I don't want to hand over to another student. Thats my job my role. No, I think it's, students kind of know that if they are they coming back or not or yes, they are. They've got the job in the bag effectively. So they're happy to do that, you know, come back as a permanent member. So that's okay. But no, I haven't found that.

DT: And, obviously, some students will be working for the company and their own placement year and have the opportunity to be interviewed for graduate role. Do they often stay in the same role when they graduate or is it a new whole new area?

PDA2: From my understanding and from my experience, it's been pretty much the same role and some of them actually do continue to work for the company in their final year and they can kind of go back as well. Yeah, it generally and what happens sometimes on placement is they, won't just be working for one department. So they’ll go in and work with the finance department, work a bit for the marketing department. Normally, it's a marketing and sales, they mix them together. Do marketing, a bit of sales and then they would decide which part of the company they want to work for and in that case for come back for either one of those. So that to answer your question, maybe yes, the ego with the sales call, rather than the marketing, marketing student. And that happens in our students that are I'm doing a marketing course, suddenly discover, because marketing people, you know, compare marketing to finance person, we know, those two, but a marketing person or salesperson are quite similar, because they're both quite outgoing, you know, thinking that active, tadah Look at this. And they go well together. That's why I find students who go into marketing roles and touching on sales roles are often a market driven and so are drifting across and say they prefer the sales environment. And when the company offers a post grad role, they'll come back in the sales role, because it's more outgoing and get them out of the office, that's become big with students lately to get out of the office don't get stuck in a box, don't want to just work in one office, we’d rather be out and about doing stuff.

DT: es, I've heard that, actually, from a few students.

PDA2: Its huge now and see, the whole thing has changed. And this is why and, you know, I've grown up with it. And I started off working in a box in an office when I was in my 20s. And all that, as I grew up and work, work work. So the working environment changed, people became more, it became fresher, it became more colourful, it became more enjoyable. And companies and then people like me, who saw that change embraced most of them and, and kind of bought into the market and the marketplace. Now the workplace and, and that's what's nice, the students are so grown up in that with the, the opportunity, and the companies we go to, forth floor, it's desks and computers, because someone's got to do the work. And the floor below, It's been bags, pool tables, and coffee bars. Yeah. And you have a guy sitting under a tree, it's on a building, or laptop during work, and, but he's doing a great job. Because he’s been given the freedom, Richard Branson encourages it doesn't he, he says give them that special stuff, give a freedom, and that probably be better for you. And that's what I'm finding with students as well. And that's what I'm encouraging. That's what, that's what I've pushed with my team and the team is also keen on doing that, is a fresher way of doing it. And also, we can't be dinosaurs, you gotta change with our students. Anyway.

DT: I have heard about the podcast, and I think that's interesting.

PDA2: Yeah, it's just a better way of doing it. Because students don't read anymore. That's the problem we have and we send out documents to students, and as sure as apples are apples, they email you two weeks later, what I need to do, and we'll just attach the same email. So look read as well, we'll do a bit of downloading a video and just push play on a video, and then you guys are sorted, I know what I need to do so. But that's the way they are learning these days aren't there, you know, all the social media, everything is through their phone or on TV on YouTube. And, you know, my son at 14/15 years old and is coming out of his room you know, building computers in his room, and I said, How did you learn to do that, and he's watching a YouTube video to build a computer from scratch and that's what's happening these days. quite exciting. And that's ownership. Ownership, obviously, they want to do they've done their own research, and they're basically completing it.

DT: Yeah. So, um, that's the end of my questions. Is there anything else that you'd like to say about ownership and our students, and

PDA2: I think it's important that we do give our students a bit of ownership, you know, encourage ownership, and then we do encourage ownership, when we do we have the pre placement talk, that's one of the things we talked about, and I'll certainly encourage it, you know, ownership engagement sort of goes together. And that's, that's very, very important that we do that and, and it's a project side of things getting ownership projects has moved into that because it does make a huge difference in someone's life. If they've had ownership something and deliver something. It's absolutely brilliant. Yeah, it goes a long way to to boosting morale proving they can do it. And that's now I think it's to encourage definitely as much as possible with guidelines. Yes. Everything needs guidelines, you know, you can't just give somebody ownership of a nuclear weapon then it's gonna go wrong.

DT: Maybe we'll leave that sort of ownership. Brilliant, thank you very much.