Interview 11 – 5 August 2019 by Skype

DT: So this is an interview with participant number 11. Could you just confirm for the tape that you're happy for me to record this, please?

P11: Yes, I am

DT: Great. Thank you. So can I take you back a couple of years and could you talk me through your placement search andthe process that you got you got you to your placement company?

P11: Okay, umm so I started by placement search, umm in second year towards Christmas time, just after Christmas I started. Umm so where I looked at my placement was on Mycareerhub. There was also another website, I think was my my student placement or something like that, umm which came up with so many different opportunities, all with all sorts of small businesses, right from the small, smaller businesses locally in Bournemouth and Bristol where I live, right up to massive global companies with the potential to work all across the UK. Umm, for my, for my placement at the minute, I actually wrote to, umm, I suppose it was the sort of recruitment coordinator and explained my situation, umm said how I needed a sort of minimum placement of 30/36 weeks, Umm I was hopefully, you know, as much as I need to get something out of the business, the business was pretty sort of keen for me to be a benefit to them as well.

So I just explained all of this, explained what I required, umm sort of, how to have them, how the company will report back on how well I'm doing and any feedback given back to the university and then from there, I was brought in for the careers open day, umm with, it was with school leavers apprentices, as well as graduates, I was the only placement student there, so I was put in with the graduates, graduate group. So we had, we had a Career Open day there, we spoke to a couple of directors about the company, how well they're doing, their approach to working and tried to get out what I suppose they wanted, as a placement student as a stereotype of a placement student . So how they sort of see placement students. Umm so then, I sort of had a an informal chat with both sales directors, face to face about, you know, how I how I wanted to get into XXX and how, so how passionate I was, it's been more of an informal interview. And then we had some activities in the afternoon as well, just about team building and things like that, umm and then, yeah, so I've been away and then that same night, I got an email through to say that I've been accepted and they’d like to bring me in for an interview. So that a couple weeks later, I went in for an interview, again, with both sales directors, umm spoke about my aspirations as well as how they think that companies will sort of grow and grow from here. I seem to do well in my interview I suppose, as they decided to take me on (laughs). Umm I started in September, I had a two week/ three week induction, sort of a generic induction with XXX. Umm health and safety, I also did a day in production as well. So I was on the bottling line, umm so I was putting all the stickers over all of our bottle ciders, I was on the sticker machine. So I did that for half a day. So I was they just, they had a machine for the stickers on and it all went wrong, so I just took them out and put them all properly. I think that that day, I think we did about 75,000 bottles (both laugh). So no, yeah, just a generic induction just to give you a taste of all sides of the business. So for me going out and sales, if I can turn around and say, I worked on the bottling machine. I worked for the bottling to put the stickers on it really gives a bit more credibility to the business and how everybody likes to get involved in that, you know, just everything see behind a glass on the glass door. You are involved in.

DT: Yeah, fantastic and actually, I'll come on to induction in the moment. Did you write to the, just the one company or did you want to lots of different companies?

P11: So through my placement search, there was a couple of sort of big companies, so I had a telephone interview for SAP. It was like entertainment, sports or social thing and then, umm I had a couple of rejected applications, unfortunately. But from there, for me it was going into a company that I could really feel passionate about and I could really relate to. So being, umm, being Somerset born and bred, always been sort of a big part, big part of growing up, especially towards university as well. Umm, yeah, and then also from there, I also wrote to Bristol Rovers to their commercial director because I've been a Bristol Rovers fan and again, it was something I could relate to and I felt quite passionate about and really determined to go in there and work as much as I can. So if, he then invited me in for you know, another informal chat, at the stadium's like, a little stadium tour, met a couple of the managers, met the commercial director. Again, he (pause) had done his placement at Cardiff or Brighton Football club. He had a lot of experience about what he expected from a placement. But then he was asking me from a personal point of view what I wanted to get out of it and then in potential after my fourth year, what I could see myself coming back and doing it at the club. So So between us, I had the XXX interview first and then I went , well, yes and then the Bristol Rovers interview and then XXX got back to me before Bristol Rovers did, but then Bristol Rovers also said, we've got, we've got a position for you if you're interested and I had to turn round and say sorry, I'm already working for XXX (laughs). But I still I still sort of keep in contact with the commercial director, I’ve met him a couple of times through XXX. They are a big sponsor of Bristol Rovers. Umm, so I could sort of go in and talk to him about, you know, if he was interested in anything more XXX related. I also get a couple of tickets (laughs)

DT: Always a bonus yes (all laugh), so essentially, you wrote to two companies that you were quite interested in and were lucky enough to get offered a placementin both.

P11: Yeah, yeah. (DT: fantastic). So also, there was also, umm just thinking about it. So as well as, throughout the summer, I worked for a catering company called XXX, near where I live and so they do all sorts of weddings, and conferences , up to sort of like a big sort of Conference Centre. So I worked for them at part time at weddings and things just as like a bit of a Saturday job to get some extra money. And then, I was also the boss there, So they said, I think we could probably put a position up for you for your placement if you're still interested. So I’d be learning front of house stuff, how to present yourself in front of clients and customers, umm and then also sort of a bit more kitchen work. So I suppose eventually learning how to cook, but you know, the correct sort of how to act in the kitchen, you know, with cleanliness, and personal hygiene and safety, and then also admin work as well. But I suppose it was to do, a bit of marketing in the office right up to you know, you've got, I suppose I've used the term loosely, sales when talking to customers face to face about it and then also learn a bit of background, how to, you know, push through the mills and things like that. So yeah, like, say lucky enough to (laughs), to keep my options open, which was positive. But a hard conversation saying, Oh, sorry, but I have already got a placement.

DT: Yeah, no, but a nice position to be in. So then, you started to tell me that you you had a two week induction? So there was a mixture of some sort of formal things ad then you had that half day or in the production? (P11:Yeah). Did you, was there any sort of informal elements with the team or did you learn about the job role itself?

P11: so to, so I had a two week general induction with health and safety. Umm like I said, I was in the was in the bottling for half a day, I also went out with the delivery drivers who deliver Umm kegs locally, to to the local pubs, umm to really sort of give more, give yourself a better understanding of how the company works, I suppose. I spent a day in marketing, as well learning about social media and how to portray the company on social media. Umm and after those two weeks, I had another I think, was another two, three weeks of just sales. Umm so I went out with various sales reps all across the UK, umm just to get an idea of their sales approach. Umm, as you probably know, our XXX is massive in the southwest. So the sales approach in the southwest is more about maintaining, umm is a lot of merchandise, is more about informing about, sort of the distribution on how to get more products into store. Umm and then you go up to Manchester, where some people have never heard of XXX, which was a big culture shock for me. So it, that was more as a sort of your more direct selling. So it doesn't sell itself, I suppose like it does in the South West, it was just more about informing the customers - this is the product, this is the apples that go into our cider, this is the sort of the benefits that will bring to your store and your site arrangement. So hopefully that yeah, it was it was also more about informing them about the products rather than informing them about how you know, how to get it in I suppose, how big a distribution and how to, how to sort of get the volume in rather than how to yeah, get get , specific products in that you feel will fit into that demographic, up north somewhere like that. I found it a big benefit because then when I started going out into my stores, I was a bit of both, so some of my stores are in the southwest, in towards Bath/Bristol way and then some of my stores are in Reading, and sort of all across Wiltshire where, yeah, it's all sales in Bath and Wiltshire, but and you go out to Reading and again, some people have never heard of it. So you're getting sort of two aspects of the job really, which, which is good. I sort of chucked in at the deep end, but I think I've learned massively from it.

DT: Good. Excellent and so after those first couple weeks, what, how were you feeling about the company and the job role?

P11: Umm, so, the job role specifically, when I approached XXX, I didn't actually have a job role in mind. I just said, “this is what I like doing. I like being in front of customers, I enjoy customers service and things like that”. And then they said, Okay, well, you know, I think we can see you in sales. So it just went from there. I didn't, I didn't Yeah, like I said, I didn't know what I was, I say what I was applying for, but I kept open, and when they said you're going to be in sales. Then okay, that seems quite interesting thing because my mom was in sales as well. She always tell us so many different stories, and how much she enjoyed it. So, yeah, for the job role for me, as soon as I started, I thought, yeah, I quite like this. Of course, it took a couple of months to settle in. Umm because I've never done sales or anything, like sales etiquette, how really to get through to managers and how. But the team around me was so supportive in, (pause) sort of doing that, I suppose. If I had any problems, or even if I needed my manager to come up for a day to sort of introduce me to them, more than happy enough to support guidance, like got was second to none.

DT: That's good. Were there any sort of managers or sales people who you particularly admired during that initial period?

P11: Yeah, definitely. So I still, so I try and I try and speak to most of the team every week. In particular, the rep from Bristol, umm, Ben he used to have my area, so he did a bit of a Bath and a bit of Reading, before I took over and then he had to go back to Bristol to cover somebody on maternity. So yeah, he (pause), for me, he's the main person that if I had any sort of problem, he'd be the first person to go to so he isn't actually a manager, he's another sort of representative, still, but he is always you know, he's always happy to help me. So he's come out with me a couple of times, he's invited to be, when we've gone to like sort of quite corporate hospitality things, just need to get an idea. Again, how to convey yourself, because how you convey yourself in hospitality may be different to how you convey yourself in stores and things. Umm, but saying that, if I could I, could probably pick up the phone and speak to anybody if I had a problem, and they'd be more than happy enough to help. There's a few different ones, so there's also Lewis who was the, who's the rep for down in Cornwall, his approach, he is very direct, because although he's in sort of towards the Southwest, umm Cornish rattlers is quite a big umm competitor of ours, especially down in Cornwall and so he needs to be, you know, he needs to be direct, and I always feel if, I’m going into a store that I'm not, you know, in Reading, I'm not really getting much away and I feel like I need to have that more direct approach, approach, he will he will, he will ring me, I’ll ring him and say, this is, I need to be more direct with the store, what can I say? How can I go about it and he's more than happy enough to help, he actually came out with me for the day as well. Just for a day in Reading because he is recognised in our team as been quite a direct seller, the, the bloke to go to I suppose if you need a classic salesman (laughs).

DT: So um, tell me a little bit more about the job role then, what you do on a day to day basis?

P11: So basically for me, so I've been given a patch to do and I get 40 stores to do a week. So I usually try and do sort of eight to 10 stores a day. So these are your big sort of Tesco, Morrison's Waitrose, Sainsbury's, you know, your big massive company. So, for instance, I'll go into a store and I'll ask to talk to the store manager or the grocery manager and just say, so it's a in October, November time, and I’m supposed to come out, with more about introducing yourself, but you're saying, you know, I saw your point of contact, here is my card, if you have anything, XXX related, you have any problems, you need a for for me, I'm here to help you. Umm (pause) we have a different philosophy in XXX when it comes to sort of supermarket reping. So as you probably know, you get other reps of companies that go in and talk to Managers and say, why haven't you got this? This needs to be out and they score them down and if they haven't done, what they say they do, it goes back to, let's say, the umm competitor head office, and then the competitor head office will then approach the store and say, Why haven't you done this and then they can sort of get to trouble from Tesco head office. So especially going in, reps have quite a negative sort of stereotype. So it's overcoming that really, but then once you start going and you just help out and just say I’m here to support you, I'm more than happy enough just to come in and put stock on shelves if you want me to and that will be it. But if you do want me to come in and do stock takes and tell you how I feel XXX should look like in your store, and then I'm more than happy enough to do but I don't want to be the pushy Rep. It gets you into trouble, if that makes sense and usually that's that's really well received, I think, quite a unique way of going about it. I haven't seen any, any other company, regardless of any other size of company, of any sort of company having that sort of approach. So yes, it's just more about support in merchandising. Umm, at the moment, we're doing sort of a big convenience blitz, so Mr. Smith corner shop, you might get in you don't know if he’s stocking XXX at all. So your, is a lot direct, since you're directly selling from the boot. So you'll go in and say I'm taking XXX, heres my card. Umm, I've got you know, XXX four pack here, it's all offer, would you like to stock it, this is the proper offer term, this is what I can bring to your store. Umm if you pair it up with you know, another one of our products that we do a deal, here is you know, pens and lanyards and any any other sort of free POS to push it through. So it's a lot more direct, to two ways to sort or direct approach which is going your ways, going your way, but when you can't sell for love or money it is a bit down heartening you know, it's good. I enjoy it. It's a way to test yourself.

DT: Absolutely. So you're literally on the road every single day going around all these different stores?

P11: Yeah, yeah. So, (pause) okay, yeah, so I say so 40 stores, so I've been given a company car and a tablet, phone and a laptop as well, just to make sure that all of my admins up to date. But yeah, so usually, I'll be doing (pause) 500 600 miles a week. But because where I live technically isn't my area, usually, if I was to come back, say, after university, they say okay, we want you to go at North and see what you can do in Newcastle, then see ‘ll then move up North. I just because just because it's a year, they sort of gave it and say, you know, here's an area, go and test yourself go and explore see what you can do really? So yeah, it's a lot of driving, but it does reap the benefits (laughs) hopefully.

DT: How did you feel at the start, because some people might have found the idea of going out and selling quite challenging?

P11: So definitely, so obviously it came with this, umm (pause) I say negative but I could sort of expect it really, was, it was a learning curve. So going in umm and just from what I do now from what I did start of my placement in stores is complete different. So like I say October/November time, (pause) you go out, you’ve got to have a bit of confidence, you've got to go in and you've got say a piece you say ,” I'm Jake, from XXX, here to support your store, here is my card. Have you ever thought about stopping any XXX or anything like that”, to now where I'm going into stores, and the grocery manager knows who I am. So he's a bit more relaxed with what I'm doing. I'll just let him know what I'm up to, sort of in the store that day. I be on some packaging, preparing, something like that. Yeah, it, it came with its challenges at the start, it was more, (pause) ca, like I say confidence going in whereas now it's just maintaining the relationship. But like I say, the support I had from everyone was massively, I kept, like, (inaudible)

DT: Yeah, that's lovely

P11: Yeah, exactly because like you say some people go in, and they get given something to do and they left a struggle, and especially in XX as well, because it's still sort of a relatively small company, you, you have that sort of unique bond, with, with your manager, they know how you work, whereas I'm not saying that bigger companies aren't successful when it comes to reping and things like that. But there could be sort of 60/70 sales reps in your team, and they might not have enough time to go and speak to every single one and let them know how they are feeling. Being the, the only placement in the business as well. Everybody wants to know, sort of about University, regardless of what team they're in. They just want to know they want to help out. And that's sort of, sort of so not XXX really, everybody wants to chip in and help you out. They're more than happy enough to come in up to you to chat, not just about work - about the weekend, just to make you feel welcome, I suppose

DT: that's really good. And do you have targets them? You mentioned you have to go to 40 stores? Do you have sort of monetary targets as well, you have to sell so much?

P11: No, not at all, that's what makes us different from, umm other sales company. So other sales companies will have you need to, you need to make this much money in a store in three months or something like that. But luckily, because XXX is naturally growing anyway, we're just sort of helping them widen them along. Umm (pause) which I feel that especially with the relationships or not going in and just offering to support, I feel that if you went in, and there was a bit of pressure that you have to sell something in us in, in a big supermarket, it ruins that relationships. (DT: Yeah). So we don't, you know, obviously, (pause) the managers will sort of come out with us and see how well we're doing, there's no direct, you know, we don't have to directly log, everything we've done, we have like a customer relationship log on Microsoft now, where just saying what you've done in the visit, so that when you come back to the store, the next week, you can see who you've spoken to the week before, if they asked anything to bring when, it's fine, really? Oh, yeah.

DT: Do, umm, have you had the opportunity to sort of change or improve any of the processes that you, you had at the start? Or is it different because you've almost taken on that role from the start?

P11: Umm so, what in sort of systems wise, and how we're constantly improving and things like that?

DT: Yeah. Because I think with other students who are maybe more of an admin role, they get the chance to sort of say, Oh, well, actually, you could do this in this way and it would be far quicker, for example.

P11: Yeah, yeah. I understand. So again its the benefit of having a relatively small sales team in the office, in sorts of things, because the managers are with you so much more, any sort of little problems or little sort of nicks that you feel will improve like your day to day help is sort of much appreciated, because, because of our, our sort of approach is unique, always looking for people to help out, you know, so many people in our team have previously worked for PNG, or Britvic or Coca Cola. So they've got sort of an understanding of how a sales team should work. So now, that will not be not for sort of feedback on what we can do as a team or so what we could do better or anything like that. For me, personally, I haven't (struggles to find words), because described as a bit of a sponge. So I'm just absorbing as much as I can. I haven't gotten feedback on how I can feel the systems can do any better, because I haven't done anything like this before, this is completely new to me. But if I was to have an idea, it would be you know, be well, good reception from the managers. If its a good idea or not (both laugh)

DT: how do you feel about the company now that you've sort of been here on your placement for a while?

P11: In what respect? Is it? Am I happy with? Am I happy like to go back to it and things like that?

DT: Yeah, absolutely.

P11: Okay, so yeah, so (pause), umm, yeah, so I'm, I’m just, I really enjoy working for the company. So I can directly relate to going into stores, you just, you feel really passionate about it. Because you've got that backing behind you and you feel if you do have a problem, people are more happy to help you out. So of course, I would love to stay. Umm there's the potential to work part time at university, like I mentioned, just to work sort of two or three days a week, because I want to remain in the business. So then when I can, when I come back and say, you know, I've worked in the business, two years, I've got bit more sort of experience of it all. Umm, sdo yeah, so as well as working part time, well, now, I’m more than happy to come back after university and even on a different path somewhere up north, just, just, just to experience it really, you know, in the southwest, like I say, we are massive, to going up, you know, going up to Newcastle for me. Yeah, that’s an absolute challenge, but I’d be sort of more than happy enough to sort of do because I feel so. So I feel so passionate about it all if that makes sense?

DT: And why do you think you feel so passionate about the company?

P11: Well before, before actually meeting the team, umm you know, like I say, XXX is massive in the southwest, its what everybody drinks, of course from the age 18 and above (laughs). Yeah, it's just, you know, it's local, to me, it's about half an hour away, it's a great company before you can even see, the products they do is really good. And so many people have said to me, it must be so easy to sell it because it's just such a great, such a cool product. You know, that new product development we've gotten in the pipeline, and already sort of currently innovating the products we've got, that yes, just they're just quality product. So you can really push for it and you you've got the backing, you know, (inaudible), you can say, that's second to none, this is a great product, it might not be your cup of tea at this, you know, this brand might not be what you expect, because it might be you know, a dryer cider, but then if you prefer the sweeter stuff, this is what we can do for you, so try some of this. So we like to say there's there is sort of a cider for everybody. Every sort of cider drinker, there is something for it. So if you have that in the back your head, you can talk more or less sell to anyone (laughs)

DT: I know, you are almost selling to me here (laughs)

P11: I'm sure I'm sure I can do so (laughs).

DT: Umm, so this should be an easy question, actually. Because you've had to complete your Mahara portfolio, what sort of new skills and competencies, do you think you've sort of improved and developed over the last year?

P11: So going into the company, I feel I, I sort of had the confidence of being that sponge, so going in, and just working as much as I can, just to immerse myself in the company, uur in the company, and just working life in general. So you know, having like a daily routine, get up and going to work, you know, just talking to you, talking to your colleagues and things like that. Umm, so yeah, it's just I just feel that, you know, it's all about immersing yourself into it. Yeah.

DT: And so do you feel even more confident than you did at the start?

P11: Yeah. So. So from now, so it was all about confidence. And then now its, over the past year, it's learned about particular soft skills competencies. Umm so, you know, really, it comes down to what to say and what not to say and things like that. So I put in my Mahara, you know, three months in, umm, I'm chucking myself, and I'm getting involved in that and everything. Now, it's really about sort of turning the screw on, how to be, a sort of how to be a great salesman in the industry, if that makes sense. Sort of specific to the company, rather than, you know, just, just sort of picking up tricks, tricks of the trade. I think. For me, that was the main thing. Umm, so its all about the sales, it's all about, it's all about toolkit. So you know, the more you talk about the more credibility you'll have with store managers.

DT: Yeah. So I should imagine communication skills, umm develop even more, and I guess listening skills as well. Oh, yeah. Because you gotta be able to respond to their requests.

P11: Yeah, yeah, definitely. So one store you might go to, I don't know, you go to Tesco in Reading and I'll have an idea of what they, how they feel, what will sell due to the customers that shop there, and you go down the road to another, I don't know, another Tesco in Reading and they'll say, you know, we've got a completely different set of customers to what they do on the road. This is the Cider drinkers, you know, we feel we have, what brand would you recommend? What do you think will be a benefit to our shop. Umm and even even, you know, so even to me, a little project for me is working out Reading Festival. Because my area is reading, I think everyone's already working out what will be the best stores, stores will be hit by the punters I suppose the people going into the festival and how I feel we can be a benefit to the store. So speaking to the store manager in one in one Tesco in Reading, which is close to the site, they're going to be saying all right, so we're going to have a load of people coming in, trading up on cans that could be coming in with sort of 10 packs. They just want it in bulk, what can you do for us, you know, handing out freebies and things just to push your brand a bit more and were actually in the festival, to then go to the Tesco down the road that says no, we don't get hit by you know the festival punters. But we have the locals that move. They don't they don't want to be in the way of the punters and they'll do they'll move store. So then it's then catering for one, one store, the customers moving over to another store and their Cider drinkers.

DT: Hmm. Interesting.

P11: It is, it is. You know, a year ago, I wasn’t thinking, what I'm doing it the minute, I didn't know, I'd be to another minute. It's just, it's just bad. Yeah, it’s good, it’s such an enjoyable job actually.

DT: It sounds like it. And I'm so pleased that you're really enjoying it. No, it's great. So, have you have very much a chance to work with senior people in the company, the sort of managing directors?

P11: Yeah. (pause) So when I said, what I’d like from a company, it was, I need to, I need to go back to university with something to write about my dissertation, just XXX then turned around to me and said, you know, we might have something for you, can you go out and looking forecourts, so do as much research you can on forecourts. I'm on the regular contact with the account manager that looks after forecourts, so you know Shell, BP other fascia’s and Spa -things like that. Umm, so I took a wedge of research that I can take back to university through the help of account managers and if I if I was to say to an account manager, do you know I'm not doing very well in this Tesco. Can you come in and sort of help me out and talk to the managers and explain a bit more about, you know, how we feel we can be a benefit to the store. The Tesco, the Tesco account manager will come in and sort of try and talk them up because he'll , he'll know more about distribution and just the way Tesco system works than me. So by going in, in the store manager will say, okay, so this rep really cares about my store because I can tell he was struggling but he's brought in somebody to help him out, to inform me about you know, a bit more about it and then I can pick up more information from the account managers come in and then go into my next store, next Tesco and say, no, this is how it works.

DT: Yeah, that's good, then, huh. So if you could change one thing about your placement, what would it be?

P11: (laughs) The million dollar question. (long pause) Umm, honestly, I don't think I would change anything about it. Like the support I've got is immense, a job I love, the brands I love. Umm there just isn’t anything really. I'm not just saying because someone’s across the office (laughs).

DT: I didn’t realise that (laughs).

P1: (laughs), no there is nothing.

DT: Wonderful. Oh, that's really nice, though and this might be a loaded question as well, given the surroundings,

P1: Don’t worry, I am in an office on my own, I can just see them.

DT: So do you feel valued by the company?

P11: Umm, yeah, yeah, definitely. Especially going into a job that I've never done anything sales related. Going in, I'm just, the sheer amount of support I've received. I just feel so welcomed into the business and, umm (pause), you know, if I if there was the potential to go an work in Bournemouth whilst at university, (long pause) it makes before, because are even considering it, just make it so welcome. For me, like I say, not doing this job before, it's just it just feels, (pause) feels nice (laughs).

DT: That’s good. So what do you think your contributions been to the business? So you know, when they're talking about you, when you back at uni. What do you think I would say?

P11: So we're, we're still sort of actively recruiting for people to join the sales team and because they never had a placement student before I was sort of, I say, the guinea pig I suppose. I was bought in just, just to see, you know, what these placements students could do, if that makes sense. But I, I've been told that is, is something they are they are looking to consider. So they are looking to bring in, they are looking to focus on not just sales Academy at the minute, purely recruiting people just to join, just to join both sales teams, whether that be you know, apprenticeships or graduates like I say placement students, they are actively sorts of register to really join the sales team for

DT: excellent, and do XXX do anything to reward people when they do well. You know, things like Employee of the Year or that sort of thing?

P11: Umm, so that, we don't have like a sort of a commission based thing or anything like that, umm but I don't know, being praised things or massively praised by managers, umm but there's no, you know, there's no, there's no, you know, like you say there's no employee of them offering things like that, you get sort of shout out in like the, in the XXX like, in the sales team group, just to say, you know, so and so's done well, how much money they've made or something like that. But in terms of like, monetary value or any other sort of the recognition, there's not, there's not a lot. Umm, its mainly because you're regularly in contact with managers, they will tell you, you know, how well we're doing our own, you know, some stuff you can improve on, there's not, there's not like a, you will have a six month appraisal, but to be honest, you're in constant contact with managers most weeks, and they can see how you're doing and what you need to improve on. So the six month appraisal is just, you know, sort of kick it on from where you've done in the last six months of what you see yourself doing in the next six months, so future plans, things like that.

DT: Okay, yeah, that makes sense. So, um, as you know, my research is about psychological ownership. What does ownership in the workplace mean to you?

P11: (long pause) So, yeah, ownership in the workplace for me is purely how welcomed and you are welcomed into the business and how you feel you have a place and a role within the company, umm if that makes sense. (DT:Yeah). Yeah. So, you know, there is no direct ownership its how, how people perceive you, how people make you feel welcome. Things like that I suppose (laughs).

DT: Ok so can you can you think of any examples of anybody who's shown ownership at work, either one of your colleagues or yourself?

P11: Umm, so (pause), when we first, when I first joined, it was, in a sort of October, November time, we had a sales meeting, we have a sales meeting every month, just to catch up on some of the month activations and things like that. Umm and for my first sales meeting, I know, we had a bit of a social as well. So we had sales meeting during the day and in the evening we just, you know, just went out, just went out for a couple of informal s, I suppose – just, just, just to get away from work I know, I understand that your colleagues but they can be sort of your, your friends as well, if you, you chose them to be. So yeah, so it was just, just settling in and just the company around because there's any sort of 25/30 people in our team, you can sort relate to nearly every single one and everybody was more than happy to come in and ask me about uni and how so going so even from that point on, that was my first sales meeting. I feel like I made so many friends and contacts from there and so that the next few weeks until the next sales meeting, got you know, you can you can ring ring people and talk to them, it doesn't even have to be about work, just about the weekend, if they've got anything plans coming up, that make making plans with them, you know, just to laugh it's just so informal, but in a positive informal way chatting to colleagues and things

DT: Hmm. So do you think you show ownership for the job or the company?

P11: So, (pause) So yeah, so I feel like I've made I felt like I've been successful in my year, I’ve made my patch mine if that makes sense. Yeah. So I've gone into, you know, I’ve gone into all these sort of 40-50 stores and can, can name off a load of managers and what they want and you know, just having your chat with them, you can like, they tell you about their kids. It's just anything like that, just a bit of informal chat. Umm then you might but then again, owning owning your sort of patch, I might then go down into XXX patch in Cornwall and he can tell me everything, he can tell me everything about his managers, it’s really sort of, but specifically about your area, how your area will differ, sales wise and attitude wise towards XXX, compared to somewhere else.

DT: Umm. So how do you feel when you have to give up your patch that you owe?

P11: Yeah, I was thinking about it last week, umm, I've got a couple of holidays because I've already got, I’ve only got two weeks of formal working left umm, and you know (pause), I've been going in since October/November time and you learn so much about people. To think that, you know, you hear so many stories and have a good laugh with everybody, to think that your, not in an emotional way, I won’t start welling up, but you're never going to see those people again, if that makes it. Well, you may do, you may cross paths again, but everything that you bought for, worked for over that year, that’s the end of it I suppose. (DT: Yeah. Yeah). Which is a bit sad, and then I know, and even even people in stores, and and even people, colleagues and things, you know, if they choose to take me on part time at university, and obviously I'll keep in contact with everybody. But umm, if it's not meant to be and I come back a year after uni, its still a year I’ve missed out gossiping and everything. So, no, I'm going to be quite sad when I leave.

DT: Yeah, no, I can understand. What point in you placement, do you think you started taking ownership for your job?

P11: So, umm (pause) so like I say, sort of the run up to umm Christmas is more about introducing yourself and then over Christmas, we have this philosophy that you go and help out the stores. You help, I could say favourite stores, but you could help other stores that you feel you get the most away, the best relationships you had, you could help up over Christmas. So we have, we put aside two weeks on the lead up to Christmas where, for instance, I'll only do two stores a day. So I help out in Tesco XXX because I had a good relationship with a manager there and wanted to give something back to him. Umm and so I said, “Hi, Matt, blah, blah, you know me, I’m XXX from XXX. Thank you for you know, being really, really listening to the XXX way and sort of being receptive to how are you feel about the store should look. Thank you for that. So I'm here to help out for the morning on anything”. So I was stacking, she was doing chilled, staking cheese and milk for a whole morning. And then you go to the next store up the road and you know, and you say “hi, Darren, thanks again. Thanks for receptive to me”, so I fill up the crisps or go an fill up the turkeys, something like that. So not many other sort of represents, other reps do that help out, probably when the store needs that the most you know, Christmas is the biggest time of the year for store and they they need the extra pair of hands and they are, really, really receptive to that, that thank you lots and then when you go out in after Christmas, they understand that you've helped helped massively so then they're more likely to do stuff for you, if that makes sense, to get an extra display or a pallet in, anything like that. Really.

DT: Clever. Do you think there are any downsides, negative sides to having feelings of ownership?

P11: (long pause), Umm, omm, I feel, not me personally, because I've been working for a year, but (pause) its probably the same in every company. If you feel that somebody who's been in the job, somebody or yourself has been in the job for too long and they feel you know owned into the business, umm they might get complacent with things, they might not work as hard as they have previously because they're sort of get used to their, their in their in their own ways. They don't really have any drive or motivation to push for anything further if that makes sense?

DT: Yeah, no, that makes sense. Do you think you felt ownership before this job? So you mentioned your part time job before or your studies or any hobbies?

P11: Umm,so yes. I play, I try to play football, not necessarily successfully (laughs). But yeah, so away from work, I tried to immerse myself into, even at university, tried to organise myself into different societies. So like playing football, football team, I suppose that's ownership being welcomed into the football team. Umm, for the manager approves all the players that have been there a bit longer than you, welcome to into the club, umm go into the gym as well, me and meeting new people at the gym and start to train with them. They they're sort of taking ownership and let them train, you may you may notin raw terms, be as much as sort of gym junkie as them, but they're more than happy to support you. Umm, but even, I worked at my local Tescos, in during the summer last year. Yeah, last year before I started at XXX and again, they were such a lovely group to be around, they're more than happy enough to come in and support you. As long as you're polite, and you sort of work as hard as you can. Really, they just want to see, you know, are you a bit of a grafter you know? Are you worth the money I, if that makes sense. But you know, just trying to be as social as you can and try to talk to a colleagues as you can so that they accept you, you know, not get away with stuff but you know, they're more likely to be a bit more lenient if something goes wrong or something like that, because they know that your your, you know, you’re a worker and very polite and your stuff like that.

DT: Yeah. No, I can see that absolutely. Have you ever felt ownership or maybe starting for ownership for your career. So where you're going to go in the future?

P11: Yeah, so (pause) I think I could see myself working at XXX for the next 5-10 years, because I've just felt so I so umm happy with how I am, how I am over the year. I could just see myself doing it for the next 5-10 years and if the progression is there, and they choose to sort through workshops and things like this, then and yeah, I'm more than happy to stay for 10 years, but again, I don't want to be doing like I said about negative action, but I want to be doing the same. No job 5-10 years, because you might go stagnant as well and I might not be performing as well as I should be or have been previously.

DT: Excellent. Right I that's all of the questions. So I'm going to turn off the tape recorder