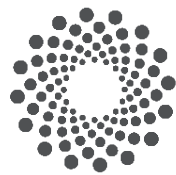




CNet Training
An Uptime Education Company



BLUEPOINT
TECHNOLOGIES

CLIENT STORY

Bluepoint Technologies Ltd



Network Cable Installer
(NCI) Apprenticeship

Specialist IT data infrastructure organisation, Bluepoint Technologies, employed its first apprentice and selected the Network Cable Installer (NCI®) Apprenticeship program, provided by CNet Training.

About Bluepoint

Bluepoint Technologies designs, delivers, and supports a fully integrated, high-performance data infrastructure service. The company's expertise has been developed as a British engineering team, working with pioneering manufacturers across the world, innovating through design and technology and leading the way in ongoing professional development.

Bluepoint's approach is bespoke and client-first, which was one of the key contributing factors to the company choosing to employ an apprentice. Managing Director, Kathryn Aves, explains, "We recognised early on that by going down the apprentice route, we would have the opportunity to train and develop an individual to our specific business needs, hopefully leading to a loyal, skilled employee who would be able to make a valuable contribution to the business."

Company Priorities

One of Bluepoint's priorities as a business is to invest in its staff with continuous, comprehensive professional development, to ensure every member of the team is fully trained to industry standards. This was therefore an important consideration for Kathryn in choosing an Apprenticeship provider, as it was vital that the apprentice would benefit from the same access to high quality education.

"At Bluepoint, our engineers are all trained to Certified Network Cable Installer (CNCI®) level as a minimum, and most have more advanced knowledge having undertaken higher level programs from CNet Training," says Kathryn, so it was a natural choice to select CNet's Network Cable Installer (NCI®) Apprenticeship. Kathryn was impressed from the outset with the content of the Apprenticeship program, "The training and certifications that are made available for the apprentice to complete are of a standard that would normally take an individual a few years to achieve rather than 12-15 months. We particularly liked that CNet's NCI® Apprenticeship program offers a lot of hands-on training alongside the theory and learning on-the-job elements – a powerful combination that enables the apprentice to develop practical skills specific to this industry."

Employing an Apprentice

With the decision made to employ an apprentice, Bluepoint approached Melanie Taylor, who was already known to Kathryn, with the offer to get involved. Melanie had spent 15 years as an Apprenticeship Officer for the Construction Industry Training



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Kathryn Aves

Managing Director,
Bluepoint Technologies



Board, working as a mentor for apprentices and being responsible for the liaison between employers, colleges, and the apprentices themselves, but was looking for a new job opportunity.

"We had evaluated the specific needs and goals of the business, and therefore built a really good understanding of the skills and knowledge required by the apprentice," explains Kathryn. "Although Melanie didn't have prior experience of the digital infrastructure industry, she was equipped with a technical mind and a keen desire to learn which we knew would give the best chance for success."

For Melanie, the initial draw was the hands-on aspect of the Apprenticeship program. "My Dad had his own plumbing and gas business and I used to go to work with him, so I've always been willing to put my hand to technical tasks. The practical aspect of the Apprenticeship program appealed to me the most in that sense. I'm a visual learner – through watching someone carry out a task and having them explain the reason why, it just clicks. I find it easier to learn by doing. You do make mistakes but that's all part of learning."



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Kathryn Aves
Managing Director,
Bluepoint Technologies



The Road to Success

Following some background reading and research into the industry, Melanie decided that the opportunity was too good to pass up and began the NCI® Apprenticeship with Bluepoint. Because of her background, Melanie had an acute knowledge of the commitment and communication required to make an Apprenticeship successful and was excited to undertake one herself.

Melanie began by shadowing one of Bluepoint's existing employees and, over the duration of the program, was able to gain a broad scope of experience, working alongside many different colleagues and learning on-the-job. Melanie loved the diversity of the work she undertook, "Learning on-the-job meant I worked with whoever I was assigned to that week – whatever work was going on, I slotted in. It was fantastic exposure to the industry and the roles that are available." Alongside this on-the-job learning, Melanie undertook significant training in a classroom environment delivered by CNet. "From the Certified Network Cabling Installer (CNCI®) program, covering both copper and fibre optic cabling, and the Certified Integrated Infrastructure Technician (CIIT®) program, to health and safety training, security cameras, Wi-Fi, confined spaces, roadworks – the list is long!" explains Melanie.

Bluepoint found that the day-to-day running of the Apprenticeship program was straightforward and managing the schedule didn't phase Kathryn, who explains, "The delivery plan issued by CNet at the start of the Apprenticeship allowed us to know when Melanie would be required in the classroom, so we were then able to plan works with others to give Melanie ample opportunities to learn on-the-job. We noted works completed as we went along on the online Apprenticeship portal - it was very easy for us to cover and manage."

Career Ambitions

Kathryn was impressed with Melanie's commitment to finishing the Apprenticeship program, "It's great as we were one of the early cohorts so we are very proud of Melanie and her achievement, especially being the first female to successfully complete it."

Melanie credits the support Bluepoint gave her for her success. "To begin with it was daunting as there was a huge amount to learn, however, the incredible support and training I got from everyone at Bluepoint was invaluable throughout. They showed me everything from fibre to copper, start to finish - I was involved with everything, it was amazing." Being a female in a male-dominated industry gave Melanie more motivation to succeed, "As a woman, it can be extremely intimidating to work in such a male-led industry but that's just meant I've been even more determined to learn, so I can walk into a job knowing exactly what I'm doing. It's been as much about building my confidence, as I want to have self-assurance and ability in everything I do."



Learning on-the-job meant I worked with whoever I was assigned to that week – whatever work was going on, I slotted in. It was fantastic exposure to the industry and the roles that are available.

Melanie Taylor
Apprentice,
Bluepoint Technologies



The Apprenticeship has ignited a spark in Melanie to pursue a lifelong career in the industry, "I absolutely love the work and the industry. The Apprenticeship gave me the freedom to learn from every person I worked with, and the ability to observe them and absorb knowledge. I'm really pleased with the skills I've already acquired but I just want to further myself as much as possible and keep on learning."

Employer Commitment

Bluepoint's experience running the Apprenticeship program puts them in the ideal position to be able to advise other companies who are thinking of doing the same. Kathryn stresses that "Employers need to have the ability to provide a structured training plan." She adds that "Being on-site and learning hands-on, as an employer you need to be committed to creating a supportive work environment for the apprentice to ensure that learning and growth is achieved for the individual."

Melanie's experience of the Apprenticeship program has been a positive one. "I'm completely behind Apprenticeships, they're a great way forward because you're learning, working and getting a wage at the same time." She continues, "They give you an opportunity to get the certifications and qualifications you want while you're furthering your career – there's no downside at all. If you have a really good employer who trains you and puts the effort in, then you will excel in everything you do." Melanie concludes, "Bluepoint did that for me and I really appreciate what they have given me."

Bluepoint are already committed to continuing their Apprenticeship program. "Melanie was our first apprentice but certainly won't be the last as the training obtained through the Apprenticeship is beneficial for all parties concerned," says Kathryn. "Furthermore, the support from CNet and the fact that there is a ready-made delivery plan to follow, meant the process was very easy for us an employer. I would definitely recommend it."



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Melanie Taylor

Apprentice,
Bluepoint Technologies



Network Cable Installer Apprenticeship

Program Information

The Network Cable Installer (NCI®) Apprenticeship was developed by CNet Training in collaboration with major installation companies. It is the UK's first government-funded Apprenticeship for network cable installation and is the ideal choice for employers wishing to take on an apprentice within their business.

Employers will benefit from the support of CNet's dedicated Apprenticeship team, a comprehensive plan to follow throughout the 12-15 month Apprenticeship and a detailed timetable of professional development activity for apprentices.

Apprentices will learn to complete both copper and fibre cable installation projects and demonstrate the highest levels of skills and expertise in network cabling infrastructure. Those who undertake the Apprenticeship will gain the knowledge and skills to confidently install,

test and certify copper and fibre cable installations whilst working to the correct standards and best practices. Apprentices will also gain the desired levels of competency and confidence to install Smart Building technology such as wireless access devices, VoIP telephony, CCTV cameras, door access controls and biometric security systems.

The NCI® Apprenticeship is suitable for new entrants to the cabling industry, as well as those already working within the cable installation environment wishing to improve their skills.



Global Leading Technical Education for the **Digital Infrastructure Industry**