

Knowledge
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Partnerships

Graduate Case Study

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Associate Profile: Toby Middlemiss

Name: Toby Middlemiss
Qualifications: BEng Hons Manufacturing and Computer Aided Design, MSc Motorsport Engineering and Management
Current Role: Application Engineer – Components
Location: Milton Keynes

“KTP is a great way to get into your chosen career path and get an excellent job at the end of it.”

IN MY KTP I...

My KTP with Oerlikon Balzers Coating UK Ltd and Cranfield University was to create market leading product performance in coatings technology to enhance input to the motorsport market. Part of my role was in research and development to improve coatings performance and to help grow the motorsport business through improved customer relationships. I produced and developed tests for trials to improve performance, with data from live on-car and dynamometer tests to provide knowledge of the best application for certain coatings. The increased knowledge and expertise gained during the project enhanced the relationship between Cranfield University and Oerlikon Balzers UK Ltd and increased the likelihood of future collaboration.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT WERE...

The best part of my KTP was being allocated my own budget for personal and professional development. This enabled me to attend some great training courses, such as a week's training on Diamond like Carbon (DLC) coating at the company's head office in Liechtenstein. Through my KTP I was also entered into the Bright Sparks Award 2008, of which I was a finalist for the Best Interaction Between a HEI and Business. I thoroughly enjoyed being able to take ownership of an important project to the company and it was extremely beneficial to have the budget and company input to help achieve the best possible results.

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A KTP ASSOCIATE IS...

I received a lot of encouragement and backing from the University, Oerlikon and the KTP Office. Attending training modules with other KTP Associates was a great support network, and gave me the opportunity to share my experiences with fellow Associates. Taking on a KTP gives you the challenge of responsibility, and the potential to gain some real personal and professional achievements. Being an Associate is a very high profile role, particularly when it is necessary to update stakeholders in the project, such as the Managing Director, Managers and Supervisors, on progress. The budget to spend on training and development to enhance my basic knowledge from my MSc has been a particular advantage of the KTP.

FROM KTP I HAVE LEARNT...

The KTP allowed me to learn an extraordinary amount. At the beginning of the project I didn't have any real experience in the industry, but after just six months I understood the necessary technologies used to progress my project. In essence, I went from a zero knowledge base to an absolutely huge knowledge base, which included an understanding of the different aspects of coatings technologies and what worked well. This allowed investigation in several areas, including surface characterisation, friction testing, surface profilometry and best coating practices with a good depth of analysis.

LIFE AFTER KTP IS...

At the end of my KTP I was offered a full time role with the company as an Application Engineer. It has been brilliant to move into an area that I am really interested in.

I WILL RECOMMEND KTP BECAUSE...

Having the KTP on my CV is a great achievement, knowing that I was directly responsible for a two-year project that was critical to the needs of the business. A KTP allows you to achieve something different and more significant than you would from a regular job. It helps you stand out from the crowd.

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