



From Logistical Problems to Customer Interfaces: the technology career making a difference



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Understanding the needs of customers and commerce can make a world of difference to the logistical needs of companies like Asda, helping to guarantee that products efficiently journey from the point of origin to the shopper's home.

Asda is one of Britain's leading retailers. Dedicated colleagues serve customers from Asda's network of stores and online services, including supercentres, superstores, supermarkets, Living stores, petrol filling stations and depots across the UK.

More than 18 million people shop with Asda every week and 98 per cent of UK homes are served by www.asda.com

Asda Logistics Services is the hub of activity for Asda Stores, with a team of over 12,000 logistics colleagues in 39 operations around the UK handling 1.5 billion cases of food, general merchandise and clothing every year.

Can you tell us about yourself and why you chose a STEM related career?

Technically, I didn't realise that my career was in STEM until I got to university, that's where I learnt more about logistics and supply chain management. The degree that I chose to study was categorised under engineering and applied science. My dad used to be a HGV driver and that was my first window into logistics and the transport sector.

How would you explain the role of logistics in everyday life?

I would say the role of logistics involves a lot of operations! It is about getting goods from where they're made to the point of consumption and solving any challenges that might be faced on the journey, such as lead times, demand not being accurate and so forth.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

When I was younger, I wanted to be lots of things! I wanted to be a chef, a doctor, or a pilot. As I got older, I wanted to be an operations manager, supply chain manager or something similar. I still have those goals now. I think the way I want to attain those goals is by enhancing the current skills that I have by ensuring that I understand more of the data side of things so that I'm better at that role because data is crucial to operations and supply chain management.

What does your current job involve?

I found the company back in early 2022 through a networking event. At the event I got talking with a recruiter who asked me what I might be looking for in a role in case they may be able to help me in the future. I went on to explain what some of my aspirations were, and then true to their word they reached out to me about a role they said would be a good fit with my experience. The role was Technology Change Manager and is my current role!

I work as part of a small team in solution design. We basically design all the solutions and systems that are used across the wider part of the business, that could mean capturing requirements to improve waiting times in stores for example. Also testing and analysing the system being created so my role is essentially technology based.

Are there any experiences that you found particularly valuable in the early stages of your career?

Going on warehouse tours helped me understand processes more and gave me firsthand experience of the logistics involved. So, before studying some of this content at university, I was

able to understand what we were talking about in some of the course modules. It was also good to take part in extracurricular activities, as they gave me something to put on my CV when I had no practical experience!

What is the most exciting thing you have done at work?

I think the most exciting thing that I've done at work was when I first started, and it was helping my colleague to design what a new button would look like on a touch screen. It was to enhance the customer experience using service kiosks which allow you to use the machine to register your presence in the store, to then notify you to collect your parcel in a more streamlined way.

Who is the most inspiring person you have met or would like to meet?

My mentor, Bethany, is someone that is very inspirational to me since starting out in my university journey and being able to watch her progress on her journey. It showed me that as women in business we're very capable of achieving, especially as the sector can feel quite male dominated at times. Women shouldn't be scared to reach out for the career they want and attain the same respect and achievements.

What has been the biggest challenge and greatest achievement of your career to date?

I would say my biggest achievement is having gotten this job before graduating so by the time that graduation came, I went straight into employment. It's also boosted my confidence in networking and public speaking. I believe in myself a lot more. I wasn't a public speaker before but now I put myself out there more. It's one of my biggest achievements because all it took was just talking to someone and I was given a great opportunity, just look where I am now.

I would say mapping out my career was a challenge originally. I'm the kind of person that knows what I want to do, but because the profession has so many options available, it was difficult to make a choice at first.

How does your work impact the world around us?

My work impacts the world around us because it allows for millions of customers to collect their parcels in stores and return them whilst also

shopping for their groceries. It's now easier with less waiting, creating convenience.

What positive changes do you think could influence the learning environment?

I think that starting hands on experience much earlier would be helpful. If secondary schools and colleges could have facilities where they allow students to experience what working across different industries is like, it will give young people real life experience and knowledge to plan their career path.

What advice do you have for young people looking to navigate their career path?

I think my top tip is to network – jobs can be created for you. Believe in your skill set – even if you think you're too young to be a manager, you're never too young! Get as much work experience as you can, and speak to people in all positions across companies to learn from each other. Be open to opportunities as that's the best way you're going to learn what your strengths are and what the best fit might be for you.

Enjoy the journey!

Suggested further reading:

Asda has lots of career opportunities for young people from apprenticeships to technical roles to recent graduates there are many different roles for you to discover. Find out more [here](#).

Find out about my mentor [Bethany Windsor](#).

For students: Find out more about [Generation Logistics](#).

For students: Find out more about [Solution Design](#)

Shantel studied through the Novus programme, who help provide students studying business, logistics and supply chain degrees with guest lectures, mentoring and career coaching and industry placements. Find out more [here](#).

For teachers - find excellent curriculum relevant lesson plans and activities at: [Generation Logistics | Education Hub](#)

