

Interview: Peter Stringer, Managing Director of Jewson

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Peter Stringer tells us how he worked his way up through Jewson, and why it's the people in the industry that make him #loveconstruction.

"Whether they be colleagues, customers or suppliers, the building industry really is a people business"



How did you get into the industry?

Like a lot of people I meet in the merchant industry – completely by accident!

Upon leaving school, I took on a temporary job as a labourer for a building contractor whilst I was considering my career options.

I subsequently applied for the position of a trainee for International Timber and was fortunate enough to be given the position, (and for this privilege went from earning over £60 per week to less than £30 per week!).

After completing my training I went to work for Jewson – which was part of the International Timber group of companies – as a sales trainee and I have progressed through the business since then, spending time with other Saint-Gobain companies along the way including Graham and Minster.

What is the best thing about construction?

I don't think I could narrow it down to one – for me there are three.

Firstly, it's the people. Whether they be colleagues, customers or suppliers, the building industry really is a people business, and I have both met and worked with some tremendous and some "interesting" people along the way.

Without doubt all of my greatest learning has come from the people that I have worked with, or for.

Secondly, it's the variety and the pace. The variability in challenge and opportunity can be undoubtedly demanding at times, but it is also very exciting and the learning is significant.

Finally, it's the career opportunities – there are very few industries left that I can think of where you can join at the bottom of a business and, providing that you have the requisite skill, determination, and attitude, you can make it to the very top; and I don't think we market this enough.

If you could change one thing about the industry what would it be?

Make it 100 per cent safe for 100 per cent of the people 100 per cent of the time.



How should we encourage young people to join the industry?

We need to be more proactive and shout about the tremendous opportunities that the industry offers, and accept that this is not just the responsibility of our HR teams and our training teams but the responsibility of us all, and so we should spend the appropriate amount of time and energy here.

Peter Stringer is managing director of Jewson

Link: www.cnplus.co.uk/home/love-construction/whether-they-be-colleagues-customers-or-suppliers-the-building-industry-really-is-a-people-business/8666516.article?blocktitle=Latest:-projects-and-innovation&contentID=10791#.U9t7nPldXTo