

## Management Trainee Graduate – Nick Bolton

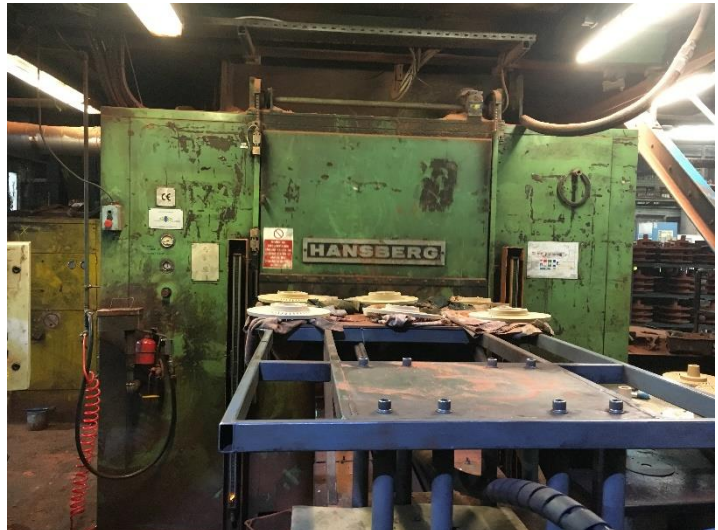
### Joining MAT Foundry Group

After 4 years of living in London, me and my girlfriend relocated to Dorset to purchase our first house and I was recommended MAT for a new career. As I had graduated with a Business Administration degree from Plymouth University, MAT employed me to gain experience in the commercial side of the business, with the intention of giving me a permanent role and job title after the two years.

Before I started my first placement or even stepped foot into the office, I was tasked with completing two full weeks of hands on experience in the Eurac Poole foundry itself. The two weeks would be split into four quarter periods; shadowing supervisors and working an operator shift in the Core/Fettling Shop, Disa, Electric Melt and the Machine Shop.

Those two weeks were designed to give me a snapshot of the manufacturing process at Eurac Poole and the different department roles in the foundry. Although I wouldn't self-describe as an expert, the two weeks did help build a solid understanding of each department and the process involved from scrap metal to final brake disc product.

After my introductory two weeks in the foundry, I was initially placed within the Purchasing team. For the first few months the majority of my time was spent working on purchasing/procurement projects within the MAT Foundry Group, specifically Eurac Poole and MAT Ueckermunde for the Head of Procurement at MAT; Shaun Lindfield.



[Hansberg core making machine I worked on in the core shop.](#)

Alongside the Group work I would shadow the Purchasing team at Eurac Poole, learning the day to day responsibilities of the Buyers and understanding the procurement processes at MAT. Both Steff and Steve were very helpful and aided me to understand the software used, the different categories and how spend/budgeting was monitored and implemented for each category.

Additionally, I would also be given ad hoc requests from different departments, such as writing the company Modern Slavery Statement for Eurac Poole. As a result of the statement, a modern slavery section has been implemented in the company new starter guidebook and is a part of the purchasing departments mandatory training.

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I was also given access to the MAT website content management system (CMS), and learnt how to edit and create content. I was given full training from our digital marketing specialists and website provider Intergage; this was all done in a one on one session under the tutorage of a specialist and gave me the confidence to use the CMS comfortably on my own.

## Purchasing Role

After the completion of my first 4 months at MAT, I was given responsibility for a number of accounts for the Purchasing team at Eurac Poole, including; Workwear, Office Requirements, Waste Disposal and Safety & Environmental. I would become the first point of contact for any queries and take control of general account management for any suppliers we had an existing relationship with.

One of my first and possibly extensive tasks, was to source a new supplier for the foundry's workwear. This included a request for tender from multiple suppliers for the new contract; this was my first introduction to the tender process and gave me first-hand experience of a fundamental procurement facet.

Being involved in the process was, in my opinion, the best way to learn and I was grateful MAT trusted me to work on such a big project. We eventually decided on a new supplier and the process took over 6 months to implement, gaining extensive negotiation experience as a result.

Alongside the larger projects, I was also tasked with the everyday account management associated with the Purchasing department. This included any ad hoc request for items or equipment needed by other departments. This could include office equipment, Pearson skips for fettled discs, cantilevered platforms, safety boots etc.

During this period, I was able to supplement the day to day with further procurement training, specifically negotiation training through an e-learning programme. MAT are always happy for me to request any training I feel would help improve my performance in the role; this encouragement made me feel a lot more comfortable and supported in the role.

As I became more confident with the procurement aspects of the role, I was given additional marketing tasks. Initially these tasks were smaller ones that Shaun wasn't able to dedicate time to complete, such as managing the social media channels of the company and proofreading any blogs Intergage produced. However, as I was able to complete these tasks relatively well, their complexity and frequency increased.

One of the more complex tasks was to complete a recruitment marketing plan, to attract talent to the MAT group. I wasn't given any direction for this task and it was up to my own discretion how best to attract new talent - we ended up planning a highly targeted campaign, utilising industry publications such as foundry planet magazine and coupling this with LinkedIn and other digital platforms. The freedom given to me on this task was really refreshing and it is currently still in progress, as we analyse the results of the initial plan.



One of our graphics we created for the recruitment marketing plan.

## Future

Now that I've completed my first year, my role has now changed for my second and final year on the Management Trainee programme. As I had started to take on more marketing tasks and found some relative success, my role has evolved into a hybrid procurement and marketing position. MAT don't have a dedicated marketing team/ job role and it's an opportunity for me to really push this aspect of the business and make the role a permanent position at the company.

I will still be working on purchasing projects for the MAT group, but my time will likely be split 50-50 between marketing and procurement. The new role will see me visit the other MAT sites across Europe and potentially the rest of the world, depending on how well the marketing aspects of my role progress.

I personally would recommend the Management Trainee Programme to anyone who is self-sufficient and wants to build their own career. I've been given more freedom in this role than any other I've previously been in and the opportunity to travel to different countries will only help build my professional working acumen.

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