

Emily Horner

Level 5 Operations Manager apprenticeship programme

UK POWER NETWORKS



BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Why did you choose to pursue an apprenticeship?

I wanted to build my confidence in management, improve my presentation skills, and gain a deeper understanding of how to manage different personalities.

What specific skills have you learned during your apprenticeship?

I have learned emotional intelligence, project management and tools that can help guide you through a project, how to be more self-aware, and how to be better at delegation.

What projects or tasks have you been involved in?

I have managed the project to update a work pack document, which is used throughout our department, as well as with internal teams and external contractors.

How has the apprenticeship helped you understand your chosen field better?

It has shown me that there are different ways to handle situations and how to adapt to achieve the best outcomes from my team members. I have also gained more knowledge in financial management and become much more confident in delivering presentations, not only to my team but also to the wider organisation.

“This apprenticeship has helped me apply new skills in real time and grow in confidence throughout my professional journey.”

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

What challenges have you faced during your apprenticeship?

My time management at the start wasn't great, and I will also say I overthought a lot of it - mainly the assignments, as I just wasn't used to writing them.

How did you overcome these challenges?

Practice makes perfect! I now plan my weeks in advance. I use the time-blocking method in my Outlook calendar and colour-code my calls and face-to-face meetings, so I always know what is coming up. I also found that once I completed my first assignment, I was able to understand what was required, recognise the key words, and gain more confidence in knowing that what I was doing was correct!

What support did you receive from your mentors or colleagues?

A few of my colleagues were also on the same apprenticeship, so we were able to discuss different projects and perspectives. Julie, the Skills Coach, was also absolutely amazing at keeping my confidence up and giving me a gentle nudge if I fell behind. ►

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

How has the apprenticeship impacted your career prospects?

During my apprenticeship, I actually changed roles, and I feel that my confidence resulted from the skills I learned throughout the programme. It gave me the assurance that I am capable and that I can succeed.

What are your plans after completing the apprenticeship?

I am still learning. I completed the apprenticeship in July, and in September I started a new engineering course, which I didn't have the confidence to do before.

“The programme gave me the assurance that I am capable and that I can succeed.”

Can you share success stories or significant achievements during your apprenticeship?

Within six months of starting the apprenticeship, I got a new role. I went from not hosting meetings to leading my monthly team briefs with a team of 15 people and then went on to present to the entire EPN Projects team consisting of over 70 people.

I have gained insight into academic writing and completed all seven assignments, which again is something I had never done before.

I won 'Motivational Manager of the Year' in May 2025 at our regional awards and, most recently, won the 'Ginny Baker Apprentice of the Year' award.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

How has the apprenticeship contributed to your personal growth?

I feel that I understand much more about all aspects of my role, from something as simple as how to structure my day to presenting in front of a large group of people.

How has your confidence changed since starting the apprenticeship?

I have received feedback from my mentor, colleagues, and manager that my confidence has grown throughout my apprenticeship journey, and I truly feel the same way.

FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What advice would you give to someone considering an apprenticeship?

When I first started, I had a wobble - I felt overwhelmed - but I will say, trust the process and plan, plan, PLAN! Make sure you carve out time in your days and weeks, and always ask if you're not sure.

How do you feel the apprenticeship has prepared you for your future career?

I believe it has helped me gain insight into project management and has also shown me how using different models can effectively guide your team toward achieving success.

What are your career ambitions for the future?

I would like to gain a better understanding of the engineering side of the role and hopefully progress further. ■