



For more info on APL Manufacturing, check out [APL.co.nz](http://APL.co.nz)

**APL began in the Waikato in 1971 and the family-run business has grown to become New Zealand's largest manufacturer of aluminium windows and doors.**

All their products are designed and tested right here in the Waikato and are made specifically for New Zealand's unique environment. APL is future-focused business and has a passion for research and development, driving them to generate new and innovative products and processes.

A love of LEGO®, sweeping floors in the school holidays and a school science fair has led to a career in Product Development for former Matamata College student Patrick Roskam.

**WHAT KIND OF CHARACTERISTICS OR TRAITS WOULD MAKE SOMEONE GOOD IN THIS ROLE?**

- **Systematic.** You know you have to follow a process. If you don't follow a process then you're probably not going to get very far.
- **Willingness to learn** I think is quite big. Especially when you're young, you don't actually know everything and take all that advice from all the people surrounding you.
- **Attention to detail** is also important. You have to make sure that what you're doing is good. And having a good work ethic.

To find out more about this sector, profiles of young people like you in the industry, and career tools and tips...

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**PATRICK ROSKAM**  
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER

The FutureForce® Crew sat down with Patrick to chat about his role...

**WHAT IS A PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER?**

APL has a range of products so I help with the development of different products such as window handles, the door handles and help manage their life cycle and other stuff on the side, it's quite a broad role.

**HOW DID YOU GET THIS JOB?**

I've sort of morphed into this role, I've been over here for 10 years now. I started when I was 13, I'd come in my summer holidays I'd work along the CNCs. I'd wash them all down do like real basic tasks- you know, sweep the floors, make sure they're all working and slowly from there each holiday came back and upskilled and then it led me to this role now.

**WHAT GOT YOU INTERESTED IN THIS CAREER PATH?**

As a kid I always liked the Lego Technics, even though the box set said ages 15+! I was always interested in building those bigger models - I didn't care about the regular Lego bricks, I just like the Technic stuff. I always had an interest in building stuff and knowing how things worked.

**TOP CAREER TIP**

**"DON'T PASS UP ON OPPORTUNITIES AND BELIEVE IN YOURSELF. AND IF SOMEONE KNOCKS YOU DOWN DON'T JUST FALL OVER, GET BACK UP AND FIGHT."**

**WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR ROLE?**

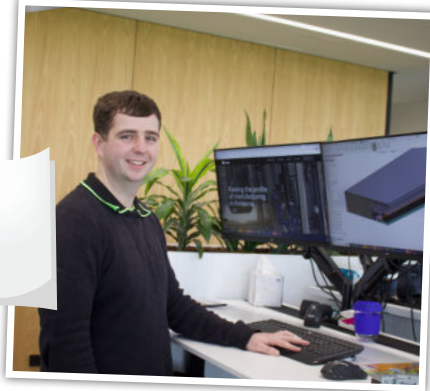
My days are never the same, it's always something different. Variety and problem solving and always new challenges that pop up and you have to adapt and change how your day is going. Especially at APL Manufacturing, we're trying to drive innovation in the sector and always come up with new things to try and make not only our customers happy, but also our manufacturing processes more efficient.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST WORKING AT APL?**

I like the team environment and the values that we have. We're a very close-knit family even though we're such a big company. We're like a little family here. There's great work ethic, everyone is trying to achieve something.



**PATRICK ROSKAM**  
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER



**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES THAT YOU HAVE FOUND?**

I think age is a massive part, sometimes I might have some more experience than some of the new people but I think some people see age first and not take you as seriously, even if you might have good ideas. You have to stick it out but do make your position known. You can't be quiet and sit in the corner and not say anything. As long as you stay true to yourself and express what you think, I think it's quite important you back yourself and have that self-belief.

I found team work to be a bit challenging. When you're at school, yes you do team work but it's a completely different environment and you have to manage different departments especially in such a big company. Sometimes you find it challenging to try and manage your ideas different people's ideas and find a mutual agreement. Project management was also something I found hard and managing all the different people in the team and all the different personalities. No one can really teach you what's the best way, you just have to learn on the job. And if you make a mistake don't be embarrassed by it, just learn from it.



**TIPS & ADVICE**

**WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE ENTERING THE WORKFORCE?**

It's not really related to engineering but more broadly, networking is very important. Especially in New Zealand, it's about who you know and like what you know. That's how I started here, from people that I networked with and who knew me.

**WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR NETWORKING? HOW SHOULD YOUNG PEOPLE PUT THEMSELVES OUT THERE TO FIND THOSE OPPORTUNITIES?**

I think first impressions are really important. Turn up clean. And be who you are, don't try and be someone that you're trying to be. You've got to come across as genuine, if you're not genuine then people can see straight through you and your opportunities aren't as far. And obviously take every opportunity that comes at you, don't hold off because you never know if it might come back.

**ANY ADVICE FOR PEOPLE DECIDING ON WHAT THEY WANT TO DO?**

Stay true to yourself. Don't let other people influence you or your decision on where you should go or what you should do. Stay genuine. Because in my instance there were a lot of people like say "Oh you should go to this university because it's better than other universities," or "don't go to Wintec, that's not your place."

Our school was very university driven. There were a lot of people- friends that like did one year of university and dropped out because they were forced to go university. A job isn't a 9-5, it's a passion. You want something that you're passionate about and that you can sustain over a long time.