

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING and LOGISTICS



For more info on Stafford Engineering, check out stafford.co.nz

Stafford Engineering is a successful Hamilton business with a proud history of developing world-class engineers for the future.

Established in 1986, Stafford is a multi-disciplined precision engineering company servicing clients involved in the local and global food processing, packaging and pharmaceutical industries.

Stafford started life as a machine shop and has grown to include world-class design and fabrication capability, with about 60 team members committed to keeping customers happy and business humming.



Type of person

- Being "hands-on"
- Having an eye for detail
- Good problem solving skills
- Being mechanically minded
- Basic understanding of computer programming
- Good at maths
- Able to multi-task
- Listening skills

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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DANIEL CROAD
MACHINING APPRENTICE



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

TOP CAREER TIP

"JUST GIVE IT A GO, HAVE AN OPEN MIND AND A WILLINGNESS TO TRY EVERYTHING. BE A SPONGE AND LEARN FROM EVERYONE."

WHAT DO YOU DO ON THE JOB?

At the moment I'm running a CNC lathe. CNC stands for Computer Numerical Control, so I input instructions into the computer and the controller. The machine then outputs what you want it to do. You've got to a set up the work, tool offsets and things, and write the programme. So there's also some programming involved. CNC Lathes are normally used for machining parts.

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN THIS CAREER?

To be honest it was LEGO® Technic. I was at my Uncle's house and he bought my cousin a set and he didn't like it so I started building it and took it home. I was told to go to bed but I stayed up all night making it and it just spanned from there... buying more and more sets.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED AT STAFFORD ENGINEERING?

For my apprenticeship, I started looking at places to work. I did look at Stafford to begin with, but at the time it was really hard to find an apprenticeship. Then I looked around New Zealand for opportunities and heard back from a business in Hawkes Bay so ended up going down there to work for about two years. I didn't particularly like it down there and wanted to come back to Waikato, so I reached out to ATNZ, the organisation who arranged by apprenticeship, to find another host company. They suggested Stafford Engineering, who were keen to have me, and I got the job the next week!

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WORKING AT STAFFORD ENGINEERING?

I enjoy having the independence to give things a go, and having a bit of time to try things and learn while I am doing it. Having a supportive learning environment is probably the best thing I'm finding at the moment.



DANIEL CROAD
MACHINING APPRENTICE



TIPS & ADVICE

WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU KNEW WHEN YOU LEFT SCHOOL?

Knowing what you want to do when you leave school is not critical. You just need to choose something and try it out. If it's the wrong thing you can always do something else. So you've just got to do something no matter what it is, just something. I would say not stressing so much over choosing the "right" career when you're leaving school is my best advice. Also knowing that there are many pathways other than uni.

WHAT SORT OF PERSON DO YOU NEED TO BE FOR THIS WORK?

Someone who has a general interest in engineering will be a good start! With machining, you've got to be good at working alone because you're sometimes given a task which you complete by yourself. You've also got to be good at self managing and recognising when you need to work with others or ask for advice.

It's useful if you are someone who enjoys tinkering with things and who is inquisitive of why things work or how do they work. And also knowing how to communicate with people is important because problems happen when you don't understand what is required. You've also got to have good work ethic to start with... turn up to work and be reliable.



WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR KEEPING BALANCED/MANAGING STRESS?

Learning how to study will make everything much easier. If you do an apprenticeship like this, the paperwork is much easier because you can manage yourself a bit better and if you do get good at it, then it's not that big of a workload. It takes the pressure off!

USEFUL SCHOOL SUBJECTS/QUALIFICATIONS?

Graphics & Design. Being able to draw things is a very good skill. Definitely Maths. I did calculus which was good when I was doing my NZDE (New Zealand Diploma in Engineering). Physics is key, so having general understanding how forces relate to each other when you're using different machinery. And I've also completed the Diploma of Mechanical Engineering, Wintec – Te Pūkenga.

