

Inspiring through experience will help our industry thrive

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It's often highlighted how the rail industry is very male-dominated, compared to many other industries. One of the reasons this may be is that all people may not be fully aware of the roles available to them. Many steps have been taken by businesses in the industry to try and inspire young people, regardless of gender, to consider a career in rail – an industry where there is a big skills shortage. We have a duty to continue to inspire these people to bring the best qualities and skills into our sector.

We feel one of the easiest ways to inspire people is through talking about experience. I started as a guard with Northern Rail in 2001. My experience working with customers is incredibly valuable and shapes how I operate in my current role – you will see me on the trains now and again working with the team to this day. Hull Trains is a very customer-centric business and it shapes the decisions we make.

I use my own experience, as does the rest of the team here at Hull Trains, to inspire and drive those just starting with us or looking to get into the industry and talk about the range of jobs that are available to everyone. People will always have preconceptions about what jobs are available in rail and that it may be very limited, or that it might not appeal to them. Sometimes, they will not be aware of the hundreds of different jobs that they can do, from working in the supply chain through to customer service roles and that these roles are available and accessible to absolutely everyone.

When I talk to the media, I will always talk about the passion and dedication of our team and how the

strength of the business is through its people. We put a major focus on bringing in a variety of people who will bring the right qualities to the roles we need to fill. I'm proud to say that 52% of our team is women – a complete contrast to some of the figures that are seen nowadays.

More than a third of our train drivers are women too – a figure we are incredibly proud of. It's a stat that has most recently been pointed out by one of our local MPs and it is something that we will continue to champion. Many of those drivers have worked their way up through the ranks to be where they are now and have been with us for a number of years. We tell their stories to others so that they may inspire young people to consider a role where they may not have done previously.

Essentially, it's important to highlight how accessible and varied rail industry jobs are to absolutely everyone – it's the only way that we will be able to bring skillsets in that will help to continue to make rail thrive and attract those with the best qualities to the right roles.