

LIFT-OFF FOR A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES



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As managing director of TechFest, and a board member of DYW (Developing the Young Workforce), inspiring pupils and opening up career prospects across STEM and other industries is extremely important to me.

It's exactly this that piqued my interest in supporting the LIFT-OFF event. Organised through Aberdeen City Council, LIFT-OFF, which took place May 31 to June 1, aimed to change the thinking behind senior pupils' futures.

Instead of it being an unnerving thought, the event helped pupils unlock aspirations and get them excited about their interests, homing in on skills they didn't realise were so resilient.

It was an absolute privilege to be asked to be a speaker on day 2 of the event. My presentation was formatted in a way to motivate and reassure pupils, focusing on their own skills, so they are aware how robust they really are, even when things feel tough. The aim was to show how they can use these abilities in the future, opening a world of possibilities for a future career. All that is needed is a positive, can do attitude.

Figuring out what you want to do when you finish education can be challenging but throw in a global pandemic that completely disrupts the education system, and the outcome is even more tense.

I felt it was vital to share my own experience as a young adult and how my own skills from then have shaped me into who I am today and created the opportunities I get to take part in. Sometimes when we are younger, we mistake our strengths for weaknesses, and I wanted the pupils to know, that these are talents, that will be beneficial as they enter work.

Using examples of how sociable I was as a young adult, which was not always appreciated in classes, I showed how this has actually benefited me in the working environment, helping me form strong relationships and even unlocking prospects, such as speaker slots.

At TechFest, we are extremely passionate about supporting the young workforce, helping them unlock their potential and raise awareness of careers they never thought possible. In today's society, there is so much more opportunity, meaning it is entirely possible to turn your hobbies and interests into your dream job.

The LIFT-OFF event was timely and served as an opening to encourage pupils who have faced an unexpected number of challenges, that they are exactly where they need to be.

I hope to continue to remind pupils that your skills will get you to the most amazing places. Be proud of who you are and what you have achieved. You do not need to aspire to have skills you don't already have or be someone you're not.

We learn so much from the younger generation and I am continuously in awe of the resilience they hold and how well they adapt to change. They truly are the future of our workforce.

