

MEET SEWA, A LEVEL 6 CHARTERED MANAGER DEGREE APPRENTICE AT MICROSOFT

Tell us a bit about your role.

I currently hold the role of Integrated Industry Marketing Manager at Microsoft, responsible for the Retail and Financial Services sectors. In this capacity, I support my manager in implementing marketing activities aligned with these industries.

What is a typical day like?

A typical day for me involves engaging in various marketing activities, such as preparing reports or organising events. I usually start my day with a one-on-one meeting with my manager, discussing the projects at hand and planning our approach. Following that, I meet with key stakeholders to assess project progress. The rest of the day is spent working on tasks, such as speaker briefings and site visits, to ensure the successful completion of projects.



Why did you choose to do an apprenticeship?

From an early age, I knew I wanted to pursue an apprenticeship. This realisation dawned on me during a week-long work experience with Thames Water, where I had the opportunity to shadow various apprentices, including quantity surveyors, data apprentices and civil engineers. Their passion for their work and the balanced lifestyle they embraced left a deep impression on me. Driven by this experience, I decided to embark on a civil engineering apprenticeship after completing my sixth form education. The idea of combining practical learning with work deeply resonated with my preferred learning style, allowing me to better grasp concepts.

How did you end up choosing to apply for your apprenticeship?

To equip myself for a career in civil engineering, I selected physics, chemistry, and maths as my A-level subjects. I dedicated myself to applying for various civil engineering apprenticeships from December 2021 until March 2022.

However, my trajectory took an unexpected turn when I stumbled upon the Microsoft Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeship. While not directly related to civil engineering, the job description perfectly aligned with my long-term goals outlined in my 10-year plan. This revelation piqued my curiosity, prompting me to apply to Microsoft even during my A-level exam season. The joyous news of securing the apprenticeship with Microsoft arrived at a crucial moment - it coincided with the day I completed my final A-level maths paper, providing me with immense motivation to give my best in the exam.

How did you find your apprenticeship?

I discovered my current apprenticeship through 'Get My First Job,' but I also explored other avenues like LinkedIn and alternatives to attending university to explore various opportunities. Interestingly, my school wasn't actively promoting apprenticeships, so I took it upon myself to educate a few teachers about the benefits they offer. I wanted to make them realise that not everyone learns the same way, and university may not be the right path for everyone.



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How do you balance working with learning?

My training provider is QA, and all of my lectures are conducted virtually. I have one study day each week. To be honest, maintaining a balance between work and study can be challenging. However, I've found ways to make it easier for myself. One of the key strategies is open communication with my team. I make sure to share my assignment timelines with them so they know when I can fully dedicate my time and when I might need more flexibility due to upcoming assignments or essays. This helps manage expectations and ensures smoother collaboration. Additionally, I set aside dedicated time each week to focus solely on my assignments. Sometimes, it's a complete study day, which I typically do on Fridays. Other times, it might be the first half-hour or hour of my working day, during which time I focus solely on my assignments and avoid answering any emails or messages. This allows me to stay focused and make significant progress on my coursework.

Who or what inspires you?

My parents have been my biggest inspirations, and I've witnessed first hand their unwavering determination to provide for me and give us the life we have. I'm truly grateful for their sacrifices and hard work.

What is your proudest achievement and do you have any goals?

One of my proudest achievements during my apprenticeship was hosting an event entirely on my own. Though it felt daunting at first, I stepped up to the challenge. The response from my team and the attendees was overwhelming. They expressed how proud they were of me and praised the success of the event. It was a moment of great pride for me. Looking ahead, my ultimate goal is to purchase my first home once I complete my apprenticeship. It's a dream I'm determined to turn into reality.

What would your advice be to students, parents and carers about apprenticeships?

My advice regarding apprenticeships is to take the time to educate yourselves about this option. It's essential to understand that apprenticeships are a valid and valuable next step in terms of education. Not every young person needs to follow the traditional path of going to university. Explore various opportunities and consider what aligns best with your interests, skills, and learning style. Remember that apprenticeships offer a practical and hands-on approach to learning, which can lead to rewarding careers and personal growth.

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Find out more about the Black Apprentice Network and their mentoring scheme for future apprentices here:

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/the-black-apprentice-network/>



Discover more about apprenticeships:
www.amazingapprenticeships.com



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