

Careers and Skills – DRP Group – Transcript

Gary Woodman: Interviewer – CEO of the Worcester Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP)

Dale Parmenter: Interviewee – CEO of the DRP Group.

Gary Woodman: Hello my name is Gary Woodman, I'm chief executive of the Worcester local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) and welcome to this episode of the Making Connections Skills and Careers podcast series from the Career's Hub Team. Can you tell us a little bit about your company and what you do there?

Dale Parmenter: Hi I'm Dale Parmenter the CEO of DRP and founder of the organisation. So DRPG has been going for nearly 40 years now. We started in the film industry making films for corporates and then we progressed into live events because we were making a lot of films for live events and exhibitions and then as the digital age came we were moved into digital so we could incorporate digital programmes on websites and use the videos we were making but also digital for live events as well. And then to general communications so anything to do with internal external communications with employees or with customers that's what we do. We employ around about 350 spread across Worcestershire into London and into Germany as well.

Gary Woodman: And can you tell us a little bit about the sector and industry that you work in and why it's such an exciting place to work and develop a career in?

Dale Parmenter: So, our sector is very wide and varied and we cover several sectors because it's split into the video and film world, it's split into the digital world and the events world and the comms world and we cross all of those sectors but more importantly it's the sectors we serve. We pretty much serve every sector. So right from the financial sector to engineering to retail to aerospace and to construction we serve every single sector because every single sector requires some sort of communication, whether that's to their employees or to their customers.

Gary Woodman: what are the roles that currently exist within your business and how wide in terms of variety and skills are they?

Dale Parmenter: We have a mixture of specialists from video producers through to event organisers through to digital expertise and comms specialists and strategists and visionaries and creatives. So, we designed the content from the ground up and then we put the right solution in. So, we are a true multi-channel organisation. Because we are a very varied business, we've got lots and lots of different roles across our business.

So, in the one end you'd expect to have things like IT, accounts and finance, HR, secretarial and clerical but also, we've got our creative team that come up with those mad wacky ideas. We've also got the design team that start to bring it to life. We've got the video team which includes camera people, editors, sound people and directors and producers. Then we've got our events people where we've got event organisers so maybe in logistics or in creativity. We've got technical people who make it all happen. We've got construction people so, in the in the build the exhibition stands on the stage sets and the stages. Then we've got a digital people who are looking at that new technology that new digital age and how we can bring that alive through websites and through apps and through engagement we're going to print team here on site and then we got our communication team that work with their clients on their strategies and their vision to bring them alive so whether that communicating with their employees or their customers and how effective that can be. So, that's really important that that team then drive through the rest of the business. So, we've got a host of different roles and responsibilities across the whole of business.

Gary Woodman: And how would a young person enter into your organisation and then what's their opportunity to grow through the organisation?

Dale Parmenter: So, the entry points into the organisation are wide and varied. So, starting with work experience and that's just getting a taste of who we are and what we do. Then we've got a very active apprenticeship scheme where, we will take people in across all different roles and we will train them, and we've had a very very low falloff rate over the years that we've been running it. The majority of apprentices go on and become more senior people within the organisation but we also take on graduates and then there are general entry routes into the organisation where we will advertised for a role it could be in a junior role and could be a more senior role, if you've got some experience. So, it's a wide varied way of getting into the organisation but the apprenticeship scheme is hugely successful for us.

Gary Woodman: Do you think it skills or qualifications that employers are looking forward for potential employee?

Dale Parmenter: So, when we look at potential people coming into the organisation and their qualifications, clearly, they need to have a basic skills Maths, English, Science maybe IT but from that we can then train. So, if someone hasn't done so well in their exams are we too upset about that, no. We look at the person because for me the most important element is attitude. Attitude to the workplace fitting it with the culture having a can-do positive attitude is far more important than maybe having a piece of paper the GCSE on it. So, being enthusiastic being willing to learn is absolutely key and maybe having some natural aptitude for a certain role. That is vitally important to show that through.

Gary Woodman: What would be your top tips for people today?

Dale Parmenter: Top tips for any young person wanting to get into our industry is engaged with us. Try and get some work experience, tailor your CV, show what you've done outside the education process. We want to have a look at sport at hobbies maybe charity work you've done that all adds to the mix when we look at you as a person. Understand the industry, do a little bit of research look at on our website, our history, where we've come from and prepare questions if you come for an interview. Prepare questions, don't just sit there and say no I've got no questions even if you know the answer it doesn't matter. It shows that you're willing to engage with us so ask some questions. asked some searching questions actual difficult questions we don't mind because that shows that you've got communication in that spirit to go forward into the organisation. What's really important when I see a young person coming into to our organisation is I want to see a confidence I want to see a self-belief. I want to see someone who can communicate effectively and appropriately and maybe can present themselves absolutely. Can turn up on time and time keeping is vital certainly in our organisation because we run programmes that come to the second at times but also who can work as a team. Who can fit in with the team and demonstrate that great attitude of can-do, nothings a problem and fitting with our culture of anything's possible?

Gary Woodman: Do you have any open days or events when young people could come and see the work environment because it's very different from school or college and therefore getting them to come out and see environment and where you do your work I think is very important. Are there any opportunities for them to come and see that?

Dale Parmenter: We often hold open days tour groups of young people round and showed him the studios working show them the creative area is coming together we also hold recruitment days again when you come in spend a few hours with us and meet the team and we also do talks where teams

of young people can come in and have a talk from at one of our people or we will visit an educational establishment to school or college and give a talk at round a certain element of their business so just get in touch

Gary Woodman: And what skills do you think will be in demand for the future particularly thinking of things like digital and the changes and the changes that we are going to see in the way we work after COVID?

Dale Parmenter: Show in the future certainly roles in the workplace will change as AI is playing a bigger and bigger part across organisations in the creative industries. I was at a conference only last year where the speaker said it's the rise and the rise of creative industries because AI struggles to actually replace people when it comes to creativity. So, in our sector of creativity and design and putting these very exciting programmes together, very difficult for AI to compete. So, I think in the future we're going to see more and more companies like ourselves being set up more and more use of technology more and more use of remote working as well so, I think there's an exciting future within our organisation across our sector as well for people coming into that sector.

Gary Woodman: If you're a young person listening make sure you go to the skills for Worcestershire website where you can find a range of support on offer to help you decide the career pathway for you. So that's <http://www.skills4worcestershire.co.uk>. Thanks for listening.