

# Outward Bound Apprentice Experience

## Lauren-Faye Joyce

My name is Lauren Joyce, an apprentice Service Advisor at Hatfield Audi and I took part in the Audi Apprenticeship Programme Outward Bound course in the Lake District in June 2016. This is part of the Audi apprenticeship programme that all new apprentices attend and is designed to challenge you and help you grow as a person and an employee.



## Going underground

One of the many highlights of the week was the day we went caving. This was the day I was given the role of Service Manager, when I had to make sure all my team were in check and safe and treat other apprentices as customers for the challenge.

Once in the cave we got to a part called the 'cheese press', a passage in the rocks that was a real squeeze to fit through, but I was desperate to give it a go and managed it, by controlling my breathing and remaining calm. I took away not only the courage to try more challenges, but to never let a difficult moment ruin my day. Life's too short to ponder on the negatives - you have to embrace the positives!

## From puddles to peaks

After the exhilaration of caving, I have to admit that the puddle-jumping challenge set by George, our instructor, seemed a bit of an anti-climax at first. As service manager, I had to lead by example and jump across first. Only when I fell short did I realise that the water would come up to my neck! So, ironically, this was the most memorable experience with the team and a great laugh!

Next was the mountain climbing task, taking on Mount Helvellyn a 3,120ft behemoth! My greatest achievement was the rock climbing up to the summit. The view was breath-taking and looking down felt surreal. After this, I was put forward for mountain orienteering on the last day. Teamed with two others we climbed another mountain to locate tokens placed there by our instructors. Though a struggle, we worked as a team and found them all. But it didn't stop there - a quick dash down the mountain and it was onto the final challenge - raft building, again great fun.



## Do what I do

Looking back on the week, the most intense challenges I faced were climbing and swimming, being scared of both of them I knew if I could overcome these I'd have a different outlook on life.

I've never had the opportunity to manage a team so I needed to take the role seriously. In my role at work I want to get stuck in and get my team motivated. I believe in never setting a task you can't do yourself, and want my team to say: "Lauren's just done it, so I'll be fine."

Ultimately, I've developed personal skills that I will carry with me throughout my career at Audi. I've proved to myself that I'm not a wimp and I know I have the confidence to put my own ideas across instead of holding back and keeping my head down. Outward Bound has taught me that everyone has a voice and everyone is equal.

## Lessons learnt

The Outward Bound week has improved me as a person and employee. Before I went, I wasn't thinking too much about my future but now I'm planning ahead with my Vocational Learning Advisor. I've learned that once you gain experience, you can progress into management or work directly for the Audi brand.

I've also learned some valuable life skills – for example, to take an interest in other departments such as parts and sales, remembering that their roles are just as critical as yours and that we're all part of the same team.

So back at work and my personal life, I will develop my 'remain calm and collected' attitude. This will help me view difficult challenges differently and remember that I can always ask for help if I need it.

## Going the extra mile

Customer service was a huge part of the Outward Bound week and going 'above and beyond' for customers is most important being part of such a prestigious brand as Audi. My goal is now to believe in myself and aim for management, to lead by example and inspire confidence in my team and my customers. There are high expectations in this job which I now believe I can meet.

## 'Can't' is a four letter word

If I take one thing from the Outward Bound week it is this:

**"I WILL NEVER SAY I CAN'T BECAUSE I KNOW I CAN!"**