

Bosch 125th Anniversary Interviews Worcester Bosch Employees

Sue Bayliss

With 23 years of experience at Bosch in Worcester, Sue Bayliss has seen her fair share of changes in a fast-flowing business.

Her roles have included working in wiring on the shop floor, testing boilers, a supervisor and a senior team leader's position in which she used her experience to restructure the Worcester factory.

Sue, 52, said: "Around four years ago, my boss asked me if I wanted to take a change in direction and work as a training and development manager, looking after internal projects, in which I could match people to roles which best used their skills. It's about giving them the confidence to develop their careers."

Having started in 1988, did Sue expect to be at Bosch more than 20 years later?

"There's a saying that if you've been somewhere more than five years, you will be there a while. If you're not enjoying a job, then get out – I've enjoyed it, so I've stayed. You definitely get out what you put in – Bosch will give anyone a chance to shine."

Zoe Coombes

It was necessity which brought Zoe Coombes to Bosch back in 1999.

Having just graduated from university with a degree in textile design, she needed to make ends meet.

She said: "I was broke and the plan was to move down to London, so I joined a recruitment agency and did temp work working on the boiler assembly line. I liked the company so as I had a foot in the door, I was lucky enough to get a job in marketing. Bosch then sponsored me to do an HNC in business at the local college, two evenings a week, which was fantastic."

By 2006, in the face of the changing world of social media, Zoe, now 33, got a new role to look after online marketing for Bosch.

"And it's a change that's really ended up suiting me – I have got a lot from the HNC and have had a lot of productive training from Bosch, especially in online work. It's one of the most exciting areas of the business – there's always something different happening and Bosch is at the centre of things."

Tim Davies

Tim Davies first got the Bosch bug in 1999, when he spent a year with the firm on a placement during university.

"I was seconded to the production engineering department while I was studying at Sheffield Hallam – Bosch had a link with the university through a graduate who came to work for the company. It was an eye-opener for me - it was a big company with lots of different areas to work in. Bosch sponsored my final year at uni and I joined the firm full-time in September 2001, working on new product design."

By 2004, a typical Bosch window of opportunity beckoned when Tim switched to the research and development side of the business.

However, this appetite for change saw Tim take on a totally new opportunity in 2007.

"I moved to Turkey, to Manisa to work for the boiler factory there as group leader in the development of condensing boilers. It was a fascinating time – culturally very different to the UK, and the pace of life outside work was completely different. Among the many

training courses on offer by Bosch, is an Insight into Cultural Training course, based in Paris, which stood Tim in good stead for working overseas.

"I extended my time there and spent four very happy years in that environment."

The travel bug hasn't left either – after returning to work in Worcester in 2011, Tim is making frequent trips to China to establish production of boilers in his role as assistant to manufacturing projects and strategic planning.

"I've spent 64 nights in China so far this year for work - it promises to be a huge market for us – to put it in to perspective, the first six months of 2011 saw ten million cars sold across China, so the potential for boilers is immense."

Mitch Cogger

Mitch Cogger remembers joining Bosch in 1999 well.

"I had been working at another UK engineering firm, when I became aware of a position at Bosch, working for the purchasing department. I was responsible for a number of commodities including stampings and cable which I enjoyed."

In 2004, Mitch was tempted to another aspect of Bosch's business.

He said: "I was asked to become a project manager in research and development. I was reluctant at first, but it was a new challenge and I learned new skills so I was very grateful for the push."

Training in all aspects of people management and motivation via Bosch, the role stood Mitch, 39, in good stead for his next challenge.

"In 2007, I was asked to move into product management, where I started looking at renewable products, which was absolutely fantastic. The market for these is huge and I've travelled to sites in countries including Sweden, Germany and the US. Bosch has given me the opportunity to get a view of the whole business. My advice to anyone who wants to work at Bosch? Go do it"

Dan Cottrell

After studying at Aston University, Dan Cottrell was keen to pay off his student debts.

With a degree in IT for Business, the graduate was keen to get working.

Dan said: "I began at Bosch as a temp on the assembly lines with the boilers. I knew Bosch was a good company to work for."

From there, Dan, 28, moved on to administration and now works to ensure the production lines work as smoothly as possible.

With ten staff under him, he works to improving Bosch's delivery flexibility.

He said: "Bosch gives plenty of opportunities to progress. I've had a really wide range of training opportunities, especially the BPS100 course, which teaches you how to have a lean factory. It is an exciting company to work for."

Neil Martin

When Neil Martin was 17, he was unsure about a career path.

Having dropped out of college, he noticed Bosch's site in Worcester.

He said: "I knew I wanted to earn my own money and it looked like a good place to work – I simply put an application in speculatively."

Neil duly got a letter inviting him for an interview – that was in 1992, and he has been there ever since.

"I started on the shop floor in what was known as the copper shop where I stayed for five years. But a new challenge beckoned – which is where Bosch's family atmosphere came to the fore. I knew I wanted a change, so I went and spoke to Carl Arntzen, who was

head of customer service at Worcester. He gave me some valuable advice about how to achieve my goals. He suggested I look at a role with our technical helpline.”

This soon evolved into a job as technical contracts manager, before Neil became sales support manager in November 2010.

“Bosch has a good, long-term strategy - it doesn’t have to serve shareholders. If you’re willing to work hard, the opportunities are there.”