

Ambassador Profiles  
Name **Thomas Reap**

Occupation: **Production Engineer**



What were your interests when you were at school?  
**Music, IT and Electronics (and taking things to pieces and helping people fix their computers and building new ones.**

As a student were you able to take advantage of any STEM type activities outside the usual school timetable?

**No, STEM was not available when I was in school. However, towards the end of the year careers advice was given and help was provided to find a suitable apprenticeship upon leaving.**

What are your roles and responsibilities in your workplace now?

**Aid in the design and manufacture of new and existing products, with an influence on production integration. Other roles include dealing with supplier technical issues, developing intranet software that links into our MRP systems and maintaining the swimming pool!**

Why did you decide to become an STEM ambassador?

**I think it's key to let the younger generation know that there's alternative ways to obtaining a good career without taking the academic route upon leaving school. Technology is a rapidly growing subject in terms of new designs, more complex architectures and leading edge manufacturing. I think it's key to get young enthusiastic people in this environment as they will play a part in tomorrow's technology. Lots can be learnt from working 'on the job', instead of attending lectures and many people have learning styles that obtain more from this method (such as myself).**

What do you feel are the positive outcomes of being a STEM Ambassador?

For yourself?

**Im glad an organisation has been setup to get students involved in technical and scientific spaces. Having been in engineering since a school leaver, im glad to be taking part in a group dedicated to showing students the technologies out there, even so close to home.**

For the pupils taking part in the activity?

**It shows the students how to accomplish technical tasks, and allows them to see the range of engineering businesses within the local area, giving them an opportunity to see what they could be involved in upon leaving academics.**

*For the teaching staff accompanying the pupils?*

***It opens the eyes to the teaching staff who (more often than not) have been in academics since leaving school themselves (to become teachers). It can spark of new subjects in the lesson plans, and give them an opportunity to see science, engineering and maths been used in real life situations.***

*Which STEM activity have you enjoyed the most and why?*

***As a relatively new ambassador of the STEM program, I have only attended one activity, down the dock museum. This was a fantastic day however with the groups of students really getting involved with our equipment. Having a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) fitted with Sonar's and Camera's running in the water, lots of students were keen to use the sonar to navigate to objects and then physically see them on the camera (whether it be a jellyfish or a shopping-trolley).***

*What was your role in this activity?*

***I was involved in safe deployment of the ROV and delivering a short presentation each group as they rotated round.***

*Do you think being a STEM Ambassador has enhanced you career in anyway?*

***Not as of yet, but I am very pleased that such an organisation exists. I wish I had the STEM group around on leaving school as I would of liked to know more about the companies I applied for, and got to see some of the products they were making.***

*Do you have any advice for people who are considering becoming a STEM ambassador?*

***I would defiantly recommend becoming an Ambassador. It's key to get young people into the workplace, especially since the cost of further education has hit an all time high! Its often difficult for families to support there children through university, which means over the next few years were most probably going to see a rise in pupils leaving school and not going into 6<sup>th</sup> form college, or FE type courses. By showing pupils there are different routes to obtain a good career (one that gets you paid for starters....) especially in the technology space they may not feel so compelled to sign up to further education that has no interest to them. They will be involved in going to work and being sponsored for further education in a subject they enjoy and one that's useful to their career.***