

Martin McAlorum MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd



Apprentices are essential and vital for the future of the Northern Ireland construction industry and can be an invaluable asset to any company.

One person who knows all too well the benefits that an apprentice can bring to a company is past Skillbuild NI winner Martin McAlorum. Martin competed in Skillbuild NI in 2001 and was a winner in 2002. He went on to achieve a gold medal in carpentry in the SkillBuild UK competition in 2002. He also competed in the WorldSkills competitions in St Gallen, Switzerland, June 2003 finishing 12th in the world.

Reflecting on his career to date Martin commented, “I started at Newry and Kilkeel College in 1999 where I took up a carpentry and joinery apprenticeship. In my first year I was selected as the best trainee in my year and was asked to represent the college at Skillbuild, the UK finals and then WorldSkills. The on the job training that I achieved through my employer at the time combined with my college training and the experience I gained at Skillbuild was second to none as it helped to test my ability and gave me the confidence to know that I had chosen the right career path.”

Since competing in the WorldSkills competition Martin has gone on to set up his own business MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd. Now in its eighth year, MMA Joinery Specialists Ltd provide work for approx 20 sub-contractors and 5 full time staff and a big part of the business plan is to recruit apprentices.

Martin comments “From my own experience I know all too well the benefits that an apprenticeship has to an employer – it’s definitely a win-win situation. Being at the training stage an apprentice is more inclined to be open to the employers’ methods of training which becomes an exercise in cost effectiveness for the employer – it means that there will be less time and money spent in re-training.”

Martin continues to be loyal to his apprenticeship roots and every year he is invited back to Skillbuild to provide mentoring to apprentices.
He added

“As a former WorldSkills competitor in the carpentry trade I am invited back to Skillbuild every year to the NI finals to help with the marking process in order to find a winner. As a past competitor I am able to speak to the competitors

and give them an insight as to what the judges are looking for. This helps the competitors to focus on their training especially areas for improvements.”



Martin McAlorum assisting a joinery Skillbuild competitor of which MMA Joinery is a co-sponsor.