

Recycling/Engineering Manager

Ben Hirst is Recycling/Engineering Manager at n2s

How long have you have been doing the role?

- I have been working for n2s for 13.5 years and overseeing the recycling activities for over 8 years. Five years ago, as the company started to see significant growth, I also started to take on the Management of our Field Engineers that are working in customer premises recovering WEEE and cable for reuse and recycling.

How did you get into the role? Did you come from a different sector?

- Previously to working in the recycling sector, I worked in a managerial role in retail. This was whilst I was studying at college to work towards being a Vehicle Technician. However, after two years at college unfortunately I was unable to find an apprenticeship to achieve my NVQ. I decided to take a couple of years away to rethink on what career path I was going to pursue. In the interim I decided to train as a FLT driver and in turn started at n2s as the company FLT driver. I then found a great interest in how ethical and positive recycling was and how regulated the industry is, this then led to me deciding I

would like to learn more and build a long-term career in the industry.

What qualifications or experience and /or specific training did you require for the role?

- I completed my Level 4 WAMITAB certificate to gain my TCM role within the industry. I think one of the biggest things you need to gain is experience in material grading and segregation. I was very lucky to have a great mentor in Jack Gomarsall (the founder of n2s), who used to sit on the board of the BMRA.

What skills do you need for the role?

- You need to have a high attention to detail when it comes to breaking down equipment and segregating the materials to ensure health and safety is at the forefront. Continuous improvement and always engaging as a team are very important in the industry, listening to the people that are carrying out the tasks, encouraging them to come forward with any ideas they might have.

Who would this role suit?

- The role would suit anyone who



would like a multitude of different challenges, not only every day but throughout the day. One of the big positives I get through the role is knowing the work you are carrying out has a positive environmental impact for the future generation.

What advice do you have for anyone looking to start a Green Career?

- If you are considering a career in recycling, then now is a very exciting time to join the industry with some very innovative new treatment methods coming to market.

Metals recycling is a £7 billion sector and comprises an estimated 2,000 businesses and employs over 15,000 people. It is an established globally competitive industry that provides essential raw material from recycling for metals manufacture, which in turn enables a significant reduction in use of energy and virgin resources.