

Mentors making & experiencing a life changing difference



Meet Duncan Tannahill

Duncan began his career as a graduate trainee with Ford Motor Company which ultimately took him into the motor industry and a successful career with Lex Service plc where he ran a regional group of six businesses. He realised that hard work, integrity, constant learning and a desire to do well were the essential ingredients to success. He became CEO of Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and founded a business consultancy. Duncan now chairs for one Scottish SME and serves at Board level across a number of organisations and charities.

Duncan



Register to become an MCR mentor.

Mentoring benefits everyone, but it starts with our young people...

Why did you choose to volunteer with MCR Pathways?

I chair the Charities Committee of The Trades House of Glasgow which funds good causes across the Greater Glasgow area and supports individuals who need a helping hand in life. I also serve on the Grants Committee at The Merchants House of Glasgow which does similar, added value work. Seeing the cases and individuals we support motivated me to do more and MCR Pathways inspired me to engage with young people to help them gain a strong foothold in life before leaving school. Over my life I have seen too many young people being constrained by their environment and prevented from achieving their true potential in life.

What was it like getting ready to be a mentor?

I met two MCR programme graduates at an event and was so inspired by their stories that I committed to get involved. That was the easy bit! The MCR induction and training gave me the theory on what was to happen next but the reality of working with a young person was a steep learning curve. It would be fair to say that, despite my age and experience, I was apprehensive and felt a degree of responsibility for what lay ahead.

Early mentoring sessions were hard work but persistence started to produce results. To begin with my young person hardly spoke and most answers were monosyllabic. But as the trust grew, so did our relationship and wee bit by wee bit change started to happen.

What changes have you seen in your mentee?

Working slowly at first with my young person gradually allowed him to grow in confidence and start asking better questions which helped him understand his career options. As trust grew between us, so did the fun we had in our sessions. Best of all was watching him figure out what he really wanted to do in his career and then witness his attendance at school improve from 70% to 97% and his focus on studying advance. I guess my contribution in all of this was being a good listener and helping to engage and inspire my young person to want to achieve his true potential.

What do you gain from mentoring?

Satisfaction. While the process took time, I learnt to be patient and it was rewarding to see baby steps grow and enable my young person to get the college place he wanted. Sharing knowledge and helping a young person to achieve a good start in their career is a great feeling and will have a positive impact on them and society.

What would you say to others about mentoring?

Just do it! The rewards are fantastic and you will also learn new skills along the way. And it is fun.