

CASE STUDY

MAKING WORK WORK | SUMMER STEM WEEK FOR FEMALE STUDENTS

Inspiring young women from diverse backgrounds to look at engineering as a career choice, Hydrock hosted a STEM-focused summer placement week in August 2022.

About Hydrock

Hydrock is an engineering design, energy and sustainability consultancy working in the built environment sector.

Hydrock's purpose is to be a force for good. The company's impact is in shaping places, communities and infrastructure to be climate resilient, sustainable and of value to their users and owners.

The issue

The engineering and construction sector is well-known for facing two inter-linked issues with respect to resource.

The sector is a visibly important part of the UK economy in terms of infrastructure development. However, the sector suffers from a significant lack of available resource which also extends into a lack of diversity, both in terms of gender and race.

This situation is improving, but inspiring a healthy cross-section of future generations to recognise the amazing and diverse opportunities available in the sector is still a constant challenge.

As a leading UK-based employer in the engineering design and energy sector, Hydrock



has a role to play in showcasing the creativity, sustainability and digitised nature of design and construction as a career choice.

What Hydrock did

Hydrock's team in Cardiff hosted a week-long STEM-focused summer placement for eight young women aged between 14-18 from diverse backgrounds and schools in south Wales. The programme introduced the students to the concept of the workplace, and what engineering looks like as a career.

Led by Hydrock's early careers coordinator in their People Team, the initiative reached out to a wide range of schools which made the programme so powerful because the students didn't know each other when they first turned up for work at Hydrock's office in Cardiff. The students also committed a week of their summer holiday to attend this event.

Led by the female engineers in Hydrock's office in Cardiff, the week was structured around a series of workshops that rotated through Hydrock's different practice areas. The students experienced how to design a new future community from a perspective of energy and sustainability requirements, transport





and mobility access, understanding ground conditions to support buildings, and the structural and services design of buildings.

During the week, the students met one of Hydrock's female board directors who talked to them about career choices and paths, and the Hydrock team also helped the students with cv writing and interview practice.

IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES

- Positive influence on eight diverse, female students interested in STEM
- Real-life experience of what it is like to be a female engineer
- Opportunity to meet, watch and talk to female role models in the workplace
- Demonstration that there are many career opportunities for females in STEM
- Successful programme for Hydrock which can now be replicated across their UK office network



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WORKING WITH BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Through Hydrock's membership of BITC, the company has drawn on BITC's experience and advice on structuring an effective outreach programme for schools.

Recognising the importance of reaching schools in more disadvantaged and racially diverse areas around the company's office network, BITC has helped Hydrock to establish a strategy and communications programme to reach these types of schools.

BITC's advice helped to shape the programme into a full week-long set of activities which offered the students a much more immersive experience in the world of work.

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