

Resource 1: Case File

Jesse's Perspective



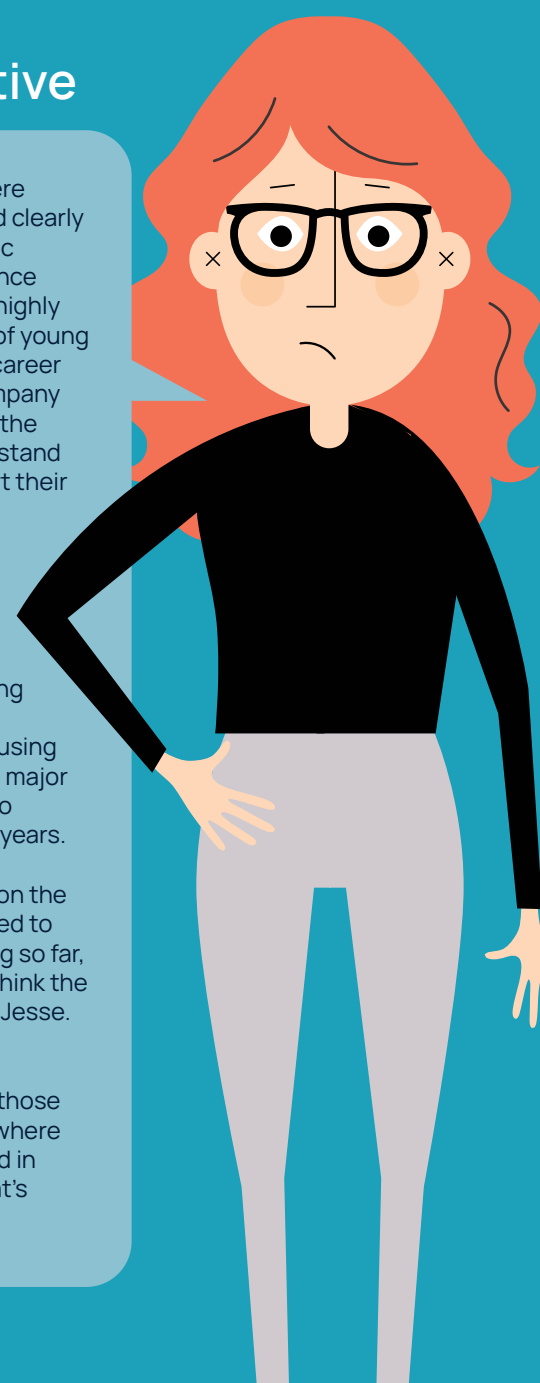
I saw a job advertised to become an apprentice accountant. I really liked the idea of working in a big financial firm, and there were lots of work benefits, like getting an experienced mentor. The pay and holiday allowance were also much better than I expected!

I was excited and told all my friends I was applying for it, but when I read the small print, I had to have grade 7 or above in Maths GCSE, have passed at least five other subjects, and have work experience in either retail or finance. I got a 5 in Maths, and I haven't had any work experience like that. I really wanted to, but when my school did work experience, I ended up at a nursery looking after little kids, and I've only had a paper round since then.

I didn't want to miss the opportunity, so I added some details into my CV and application form that weren't totally true. I said I got grade 8 in Maths – I mean, no one really checks, do they? And I said I'd worked in a shop in town; I put my friend's details down as a reference in case they phoned, and we agreed what they'd say. My mum works in a shop, so I know what it's like, I just haven't actually done it myself.

It just wouldn't be fair for me to miss out on this opportunity because of a few minor details; I'm sure anything I don't know I can pick up when I get there!

Employer's Perspective



When we got the application through, we were really impressed. This was someone who had clearly worked hard at school; both in their academic studies and in gaining valuable work experience for a role like the one we were offering. It's a highly competitive apprenticeship – there are lots of young people who want the opportunity to start a career in finance and to work for such a trusted company with global brand recognition. We try to give the apprenticeships to young people who really stand out, and who need that extra support to start their career.

But as soon as Jesse started, something wasn't right. The mentor I assigned to support Jesse raised concerns about Jesse not knowing how to speak to clients, especially on the phone, and sometimes being very shy or unhelpful. Jesse also seemed to struggle with some quite basic calculations using percentages to work out interest. This led to major errors on our clients' accounts, and we had to apologise to people who have trusted us for years.

Jesse is expected to carry on learning while on the job and is completing online courses. I decided to look up the exam results they've been getting so far, and those suggest we have a big problem. I think the learning and the job role are too complex for Jesse.

I'm so disappointed that we've wasted this apprenticeship and can't help thinking of all those who missed out on the role. I can't work out where we went wrong – but I have a meeting booked in with Jesse tomorrow, so we can discuss what's happened.