

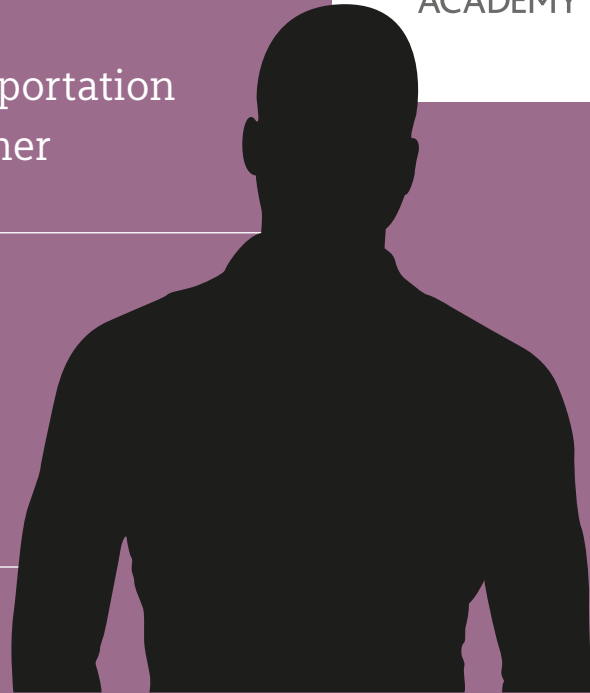
Name: Colin

Served with: Royal Air Force

Company: Bombardier Transportation

Current Role: Technical Trainer

"In terms of my integration in the team, I can say that I managed to settle in quite quickly, the people in my team helped me out whenever I needed their support."



I joined the Royal Air Force when I was 18 - it was all I had ever done in my professional life. I was 43 at the time when I decided to leave the RAF. Besides wanting to be closer to my family from a geographical perspective, I also felt the need for a new challenge.

When I started to think about resettlement, I initially considered the off-shore industry. I had taken part in different Career Transition Partnership courses and I knew there were opportunities in that sector. But then I was approached by a recruitment agency about a Team Leader role available in Bombardier in the Seven Kings depot, to work on the Stansted express project.

My brother-in-law had worked in Bombardier Transportation previously, but I didn't know much about the company before joining. I heard there were many ex-forces employees in the rail industry, so I knew that some of my skills could be transferable.

My interview experience with Bombardier was positive, the atmosphere was relaxed and the interviewers were accommodating. As a final interview, I had the opportunity to walk around the depot and meet one of the Operations Managers. I noted there were a lot of similarities between how the depot staff operated and how we worked in the military (for example in their work ethic, the way the teams were organized and worked together, and how they approached tasks). This gave me a certain level of confidence to continue and take the final step towards this new chapter in my life.

Continued overleaf >>

Even if I had not gotten the job, the interview would have been a good learning experience. The only aspect that I was a little cautious about was the fact that my background was focused on mechanical aspects, whereas the role I was interviewing for required an electrical bias. The company provided me with the necessary training and I took part in conversion courses with external providers, so in the end it proved to be a good learning and development opportunity, rather than a hindrance.

In terms of my integration in the team, I can say that I managed to settle in quite quickly, the people in my team helped me out whenever I needed their support.

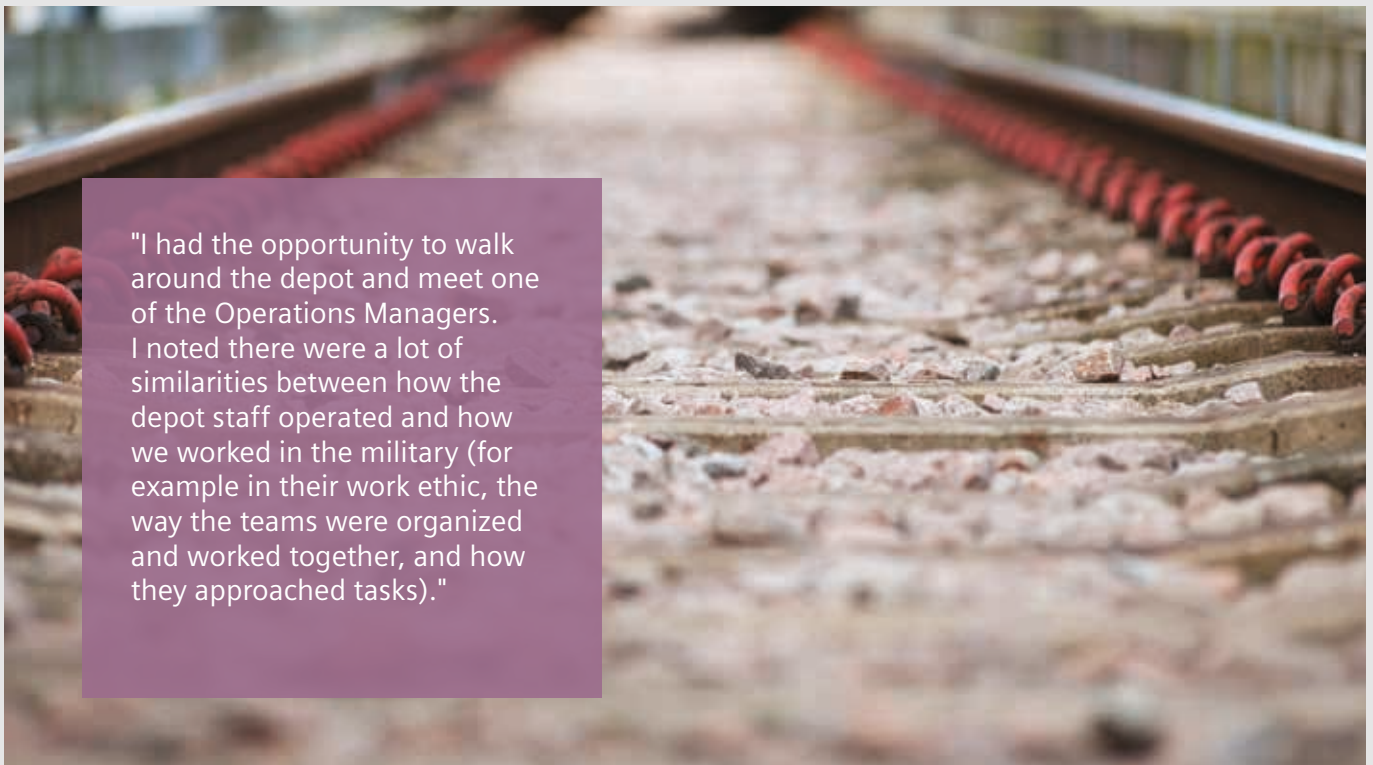
My greatest achievement so far in Bombardier is having been part of the team that managed the most reliable train fleet in southeast England.

As a takeaway from my experience and a message for military people looking to resettle: don't be frightened, there are good training opportunities and there is support available. In the military, we are used to a certain level of job security, so it is only natural that we are seeking the same when we think about resettlement. The rail industry is going to have a good future so it can be a good place to look for this, as a proof I have the colleagues who have worked for the company for a long time. Besides the opportunity to see the big picture on important rolling stock projects in the UK, Bombardier also offers the possibility to be part of a worldwide footprint and a truly international context.

If you believe in your experience, the rail industry is a good opportunity to progress and to develop as a person.

My advice from a practical perspective would be to make sure that you have a well-structured CV that can be understood by non-military people. Present yourself in a professional manner and clearly list all the tasks and responsibilities that you have had.

Colin



"I had the opportunity to walk around the depot and meet one of the Operations Managers. I noted there were a lot of similarities between how the depot staff operated and how we worked in the military (for example in their work ethic, the way the teams were organized and worked together, and how they approached tasks)."