

Name: Matt

Served with: British Army

Company: Bombardier Transportation

Current Role: Commissioning Technician

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I joined the British Army in August 2000, I was 16 at the time. I was an infantry soldier, rifle platoon and combat medic. The six years I spent in the Army were an amazing experience that I will never forget. I was part of a very close knit team and the decision to leave the Army was certainly a difficult one. The main motivation for wanting to resettle came from a personal perspective. I was frequently deployed to different countries and I wanted to be closer to the girl I married, as it was hard for both of us to be apart for such a long time. From a career point of view, I also wanted a new challenge and thinking back I am glad I made that decision.

In the army, I was attached to the Royal Engineers, where I have learned to perform mechanical repairs on vehicles in pressured and hostile situations. When I started to think about a career change, I started to work with a resettlement advisor and I have taken steps to improve skills that allowed me to get closer to the civil engineering side. For example, I took Engineering Courses focused on railway tracks.

I live in Derby and of course Bombardier has always been one of the main employers in the area. It was also massively advertised in that period. I have friends who work at Bombardier, so I wanted to try my luck and secure a position with the company. I started as a contractor and subsequently became a permanent employee, my current role being that of a Commissioning Technician for the Elizabeth Line project. I am lucky to have found my niche, it is a very rewarding job.

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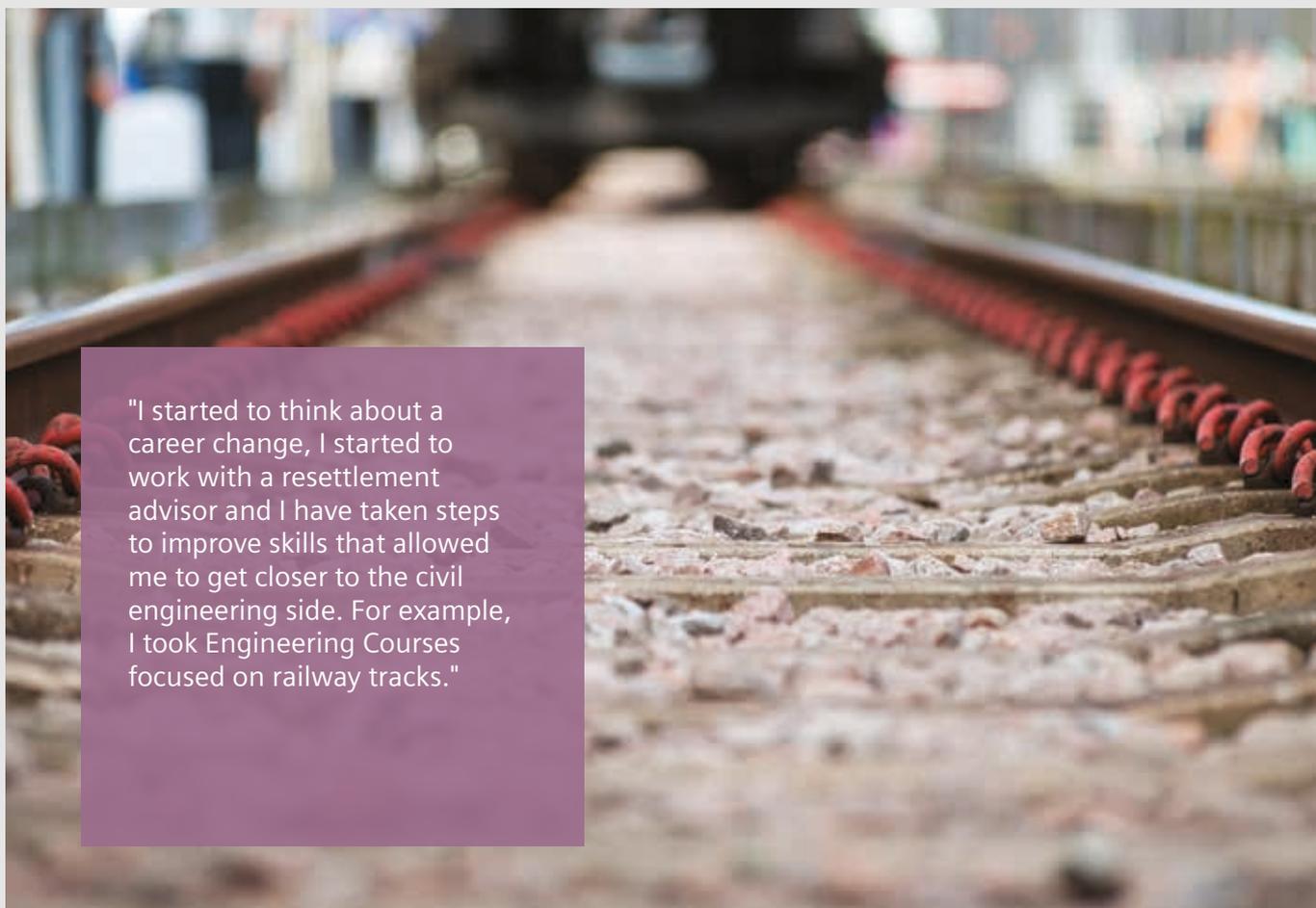
The interview process with Bombardier was quite challenging. When you interview with engineers, you know they want the best people for their team, so in the beginning you might feel intimidated by that thought. But once the conversation advances you start to feel more comfortable and you can show what you are really capable of.

In my opinion the rail industry is a very different environment compared to the military. People have a different way of thinking, but I have learned a lot and if you keep going you will see that you can achieve so much. Both the team and the management have been very welcoming during my induction period, and I have made friends quickly. I have found ex-forces colleagues that I can relate to, but also colleagues with non-military background who were very interested to hear my stories, therefore it was easy to develop good working relationships.

The company made sure that I received the right training, and that I had the right development opportunities. They supported me with my NVQ level 3 and I got the chance to improve my electrical maintenance and fault finding skills. If you work hard and do your job you can surely have a good progression. For instance, I have been a Modifications Technician and a Warranty Technician before, and I have worked around several depots in the London area.

If I had to give a message to people thinking about resettlement, I would encourage them to aim high and keep pushing themselves. There are so many opportunities in this industry - you can learn about yourself, have good people around and develop a fantastic career.

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