

# CASE STUDY

## Shirley Mutumburi, Senior Leadership Apprenticeship, Suffolk County Council



I am Shirley Mutumburi, Head of Service Development and Contracts, at Suffolk County Council and I started my Senior leadership MBA in September 2019.

After leaving school I trained as an Automotive Electrician. Having worked in the workshops for a few years I realised my 'tomboy' tendencies had worn out and I didn't find the job fulfilling. I decided to sign up for a degree and started working as a care worker whilst studying. I have now worked in Social Care for over 20 years having progressed through management and commissioning roles over the years. I am passionate about making a difference in people's lives and feel privileged to be able to serve my community. I am a social care worker at heart.

### Why did you choose an apprenticeship?

---

I am always keen to learn and develop both personally and professionally. The Senior Leadership apprenticeship seemed to be the best course for my professional development and career progression.

### How do you balance working and studying at the same time?

---

An apprenticeship fitted well with my work and life arrangements. My manager supported me to take 20% off work time to study. This was done more flexibly during the Covid-19 pandemic given the pressure of work it presented.

### What has been the biggest achievement or impact you have made since becoming an apprentice?

---

Everything I have learnt as part of my MBA apprenticeship has been useful to my role as a Head of Service. I have worked closely with my team and other service development and contracts colleagues to support a fragile care market during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has been one of my biggest achievements in my long career in social care. I have also successfully completed my MBA in Senior Leadership with the University of Suffolk.

### What do you think are the benefits of being an apprentice?

---

The apprenticeship helps you to not only gain a qualification but to also develop softer skills essential for your role. It also allowed me to develop a professional support network by interacting with other apprentices which allows you to learn about other roles and opportunities.

### What advice would you give someone who is unsure about starting an apprenticeship?

---

If you are considering an apprenticeship but are unsure, I would recommend that you reach out to someone who has been through the journey. It may seem daunting at the beginning, but it will be the most valuable learning experience and you come out with a qualification at the end. Go for it!!!