

**PETER THOMAS**

**UNDERGRADUATE PLACEMENT STUDENT  
TO DEFENCE ACCOUNT MANAGER**



In the below interview, Peter tells us all about his 12 month placement as an Undergraduate Placement Student with Centerprise to returning to the business and ultimately holding the post of Defence Account Manager after graduation.

**What university did you attend and what course did you do?**

I attended Portsmouth University and studied Business Studies.

**As an undergraduate, you completed a one-year placement with Centerprise, what did this role entail?**

My role as Chairman's Apprentice saw me reporting directly into both the Chairman and Group CEO at Centerprise. The role involved shadowing the Chairman and CEO to a variety of internal and external meetings, taking/distributing minutes during those meetings and undertaking ad hoc projects on behalf of the Chairman, CEO and various other Board Directors.

**When you returned to University post-placement, what additional skills, knowledge and experience did you take from your experience with Centerprise?**

Outside of the core business skills and diverse experiences that I obtained during my time at Centerprise, I developed a clear sense of drive and ambition. This drive and ambition saw me achieve a First Class degree with the highest average mark of anyone on Business-related degrees in my Graduation Year. Prior to my Placement, I was achieving 2:1 grades in coursework and exams.

**When re-joining Centerprise in a permanent role, what was your role/s at Centerprise and how long were you doing it/them?**

When I returned to Centerprise, I worked as a Business Development Manager for the Centerprise Group, assisting the Group CEO with recent Group Company acquisitions. I was in this position for 1 year before transitioning into a Sales role within the Defence Team. I was in my role as Defence Account Manager for 4 years.

**What was your biggest success at Centerprise?**

My biggest success at Centerprise was winning a £6m+ MOD Contract, which at the time was one of the largest single orders received by the Company. The deal also assisted Centerprise in achieving the highest level Partner status with Dell EMC.

**What was your favourite part/most challenging aspect at Centerprise?**

The ability to take ownership of the full sales cycle, whilst having all of the support required to be successful was both my favourite and most challenging aspect of working in a Sales role at Centerprise. Being given the responsibility to manage all elements of the cycle gives you the chance to develop a wide range of skills but also means that you must take ownership for any shortfalls.

**What sort of scope for progression and development was there at Centerprise?**

I always saw the scope for progression and development at Centerprise. In my Sales role, I looked to take ownership of new and important Defence customers, which is something I saw as progression. I didn't concentrate on promotions in title, but rather looked to take on more responsibilities within the role. I was also selected to be part of a Leadership and Management Programme which gave me a great insight into different business functions and the role of Senior Management in each of those areas.

**What advice would you give a potential undergraduate joining Centerprise on a placement?**

Take on as many responsibilities within the role as you can and network!

**What have you learned at Centerprise that has stuck with you the most?**

I would definitely do it again.