



## Sir John Lawes Interview Skills Day

On Monday 7th July, I visited my old secondary school, Sir John Lawes in Harpenden, to volunteer for their interview skills day for all students in year 12.

The purpose of the day was for students to develop their interview skills, strengthen their confidence and to network with industry professionals who were acting as interviewers for the day.

Two weeks beforehand, students had to submit their CV and cover letter for a fictitious Trainee Team Leader role at M&S. This being the job they would be interviewing for on the day. As an interviewer, I was given these documents to review so I could make notes in preparation for the interviews and for the feedback session to follow.

On a glorious Monday morning, it felt a bit surreal doing the same walk to school I did for seven years. It is fair to say it brought back many happy memories. Once signed in, I was guided to the sixth form centre (it has barely changed since I was there) where I got to meet other interviewers and some of my old teachers too. Sixth Form Personal Development and Careers Lead at the school Mr Gilfeather gave us a quick run-through about how the day would run and how the students had prepared.

After a short while, we were shown into the sports hall where we each had a dedicated table to interview the students. Once we were settled, students were then allowed into the hall and were advised to sit by their group number which had been assigned to them. Each interviewer had a group of 6. Just before we got going, one of the teachers gave a small speech reminding the students of the importance of body language, eye contact and confidence.

After this, we then got to start the interviews. Questions were already provided to us by the school, however we were encouraged to throw in some of our own to try and challenge the students and to make the interview seem as real as possible. My group were an absolute pleasure to interview and all did incredibly well. All were different in their own way, some confident, some nervous, which was completely understandable given how for many it was their first ever interview.

Time flew by and before long, the interviews had finished. The next part of the day was a networking session where students were given time to walk round and chat to the interviewers. This was an exercise designed for students to ask us questions or advice surrounding our career or about the industry we work in. As someone in marketing, it was great to have students come up to me and say they were thinking about pursuing a career in a similar field. They really took an interest and asked a lot of questions which was fantastic.

To round off the day, we were then put back into our original groups. We had time to sit with each student we interviewed and provide feedback on how their interview went, their CV and their cover letter. To finish, each interviewer had to award the student in their group who they felt deserved to get the Trainee Team Leader role.

It was a brilliant day which I thoroughly enjoyed. All the students I had interactions with were really engaging, and in return I could sense they were taking every bit of advice on board too. I fully look forward to volunteering again next year and helping the next generation on their journey.

*Elliot*

**Elliot Ashby**  
Marketing Executive



**View more about the day with this video from Sir John Lawes**