

Stuart Reed – “I found what was missing in my career”

Stuart Reed is currently a depot manager for Fonterra, but he could have been a professional chef, if not for family commitments and a return to education which changed the direction of his career. This is his story.

In 2010, I joined Fonterra in a logistics-related role, but before then I'd already had a few different careers. At the age of 20, I moved to Rotorua to complete a diploma in hotel management, and once I'd finished that, I then qualified as a chef.

Working in the hospitality industry for just over a decade is part of my working career that I look back upon very fondly. It was crazy hours and crazy people, but a whole lot of fun. Given my partner Janine worked those same crazy hours and kids were on the horizon for us, I decided that a change in my career was needed.

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I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to work for Crean Foodservice, which later changed its name to BidFood. It was here that my experience in logistics-related activities began, learning the basics of inwards goods, outwards goods, temperature-controlled deliveries, and dealing with staff, management and customers. I liked the different dynamics which made this job very interesting, although it had a steep learning curve. It was here that I discovered



Stuart Reed, Fonterra depot manager: “Fonterra has been a land of opportunity – it provides an environment for training, learning and growing as an individual”

how important it is to surround yourself with motivated staff and to create an environment where people want to come to work. It was here that I also found my new passion – namely getting things from point A to point B.

Personal development

I moved on from BidFood to take up a role at Foodstuffs in its Gilmours subsidiary, again working within the logistics part of the business across the Bay of Plenty region. During this part of my career I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to make some small gains in my skills toolkit. Although I enjoyed my roles there and learned a lot, I always felt there was something missing in my career to give real satisfaction. I found out what had been missing when I joined Fonterra in early 2010.

My initial role was with the transport team of Fonterra at their Reporoa site where I took a position as a team manager for a group of milk collection drivers. Working with a great team, I soon found my feet and started to make my mark.

Fonterra has been a land of opportunity for me and many others as it provides an environment for

training, learning and growing as an individual. Personal development is encouraged at all levels, and I have been lucky enough to be able to take part in numerous Fonterra training and development courses over the years.

Learning new skills

Although this was great for my skills toolkit, I still had no formal qualifications for what I did day to day, so I started to look at different external courses. I needed something that not only complemented what I currently did, but also challenged me to learn new skills as well.

I eventually found the long-established Logistics Training Group (LTG), with its internationally recognised UK Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT UK) courses. I decided that the CILT UK Certificate in Logistics & Transport fitted my requirements well.

There were two key factors for me choosing this qualification: it had to fit around my busy work life so it had to be flexible; and I had to learn something new and challenging.

This course filled both these needs. At times, I certainly found the different parts of the course

both challenging and rewarding, often having to reach out to my peers or utilise the extensive online learning portal to gain a good understanding of topics. I really enjoyed the set-up of the training, as you get to feel you are running parts of the business case study that is used within the course.

Key to promotion

I have been lucky enough to be able to use the qualification to help me understand my role and the different parts of the business much better. I also feel my qualification was key to my being successful in my current promotion within Fonterra as depot manager of three sites.

I couldn't recommend LTG more highly, not only from my own experience, but I have also seen work colleagues grow and learn through the different courses available. I wish I had begun my studies earlier.

The CILT UK Certificate in Logistics & Transport is offered in New Zealand by the Logistics Training Group; for further information, visit www.ltg.co.nz