

# CLEAN START



**REIMAGINING CAREERS**  
IN THE CLEANING INDUSTRY

## FROM CLASSROOM TO THE CLEANING INDUSTRY

**Daniel Cross, as of 2021, is UK Marketing Manager for Tennant Company, Chair of the CSSA Marketing Executive and Co-founder of the FM North Networking Club, but before entering the cleaning industry he has been a PR executive, has worked in television, spent several years in construction, and is a qualified teacher where he taught EYFS and primary school children.**



## CASE STUDY

Here Daniel explains why it is ok to not have a plan when you begin your career journey and how changing careers has given him the skills and experience for his role today.

When I was in high school I wanted to be a solicitor. I did my work experience placement at a law firm in Middleton and after 2 weeks it just didn't interest me at all, and that's when I realised if I'm going to work every day I want to do something fun and exciting.

I studied Media Communication at University and that's when I first heard about Public Relations, so I reached out to a local Manchester PR firm and again got myself some work experience. This was an amazing experience and I was hooked. It was such an exciting and fast paced role, so once I graduated I got a job as a PR executive at a firm in Preston (and to this day I am still good friends with my old boss). In this role I was involved with events, producing television commercials, and working closely to build up relationships with press and customers.

For me, progression meant leaving the agency and getting a more secure role in-house for a company, so I left to take on the role as Assistant Marketing Manager for a major UK engineering firm. Working in-house for a company is not



as varied since you are only dealing with one client, but the role was still exciting and you still get involved in the full marketing mix; from writing case studies to producing videos for social media.

During this time, despite being happy, I had a number of family members and friends who worked in education, and one thing I noticed was the amount of holidays they were getting. I was invited to a career event at a local sixth form where I was immediately offered a place on the PGDE teacher training programme, along with funding and most of all a paid role whilst I studied.

At the time this seemed far too good to be true so I accepted and left my full time, in-house marketing role.

After completing my training (as I taught BTEC Media) I was offered a role at a Primary School teaching the youngest children. I will never regret this diversion into teaching, and thoroughly enjoyed my time at the schools, but ultimately I was just not comfortable, didn't enjoy going into work, and missed the thrill of marketing.

It took some time to make the transition back into business and marketing from teaching as most of my interviewers were confused as to my complete change of direction, but after my interview with Vaclensa, I was given a chance to prove myself and my skills.

Since 2015 Vaclensa was bought by IPC, Europe's 3rd

largest cleaning machine manufacturer, which was in turn purchased by Tennant, once of the worlds leading cleaning machine manufacturers.

When I joined Vaclensa I had never heard of a scrubber dryer, and now through hard work and dedication, I have become Marketing Manager for Tennant in the UK, which covers marketing activities for Vaclensa, IPC and Tennant. Marketing is a role which you will find in almost every company, big or small, and it is a skill which is transferable to almost any industry, from machine manufacture to service providers.

My time teaching was hugely beneficial to my role now, despite seeming worlds apart. Through teaching I learnt to become highly organised, better at time management, and learnt just as much from the children as they learnt from me, especially on subjects like social media and current trends (kids are far superior in this area than adults).

Throughout my career journey I have come to understand some key points to success:

- Work experience is vital – despite how confident you are, you still have room to learn from others and broadening your knowledge (especially in marketing) is essential.
- Create friendships not just contacts –the FM North networking club has brought in some great leads and business for my company, but it is not a formal event, it is a meeting with friends from the industry
- Be prepared to work – even now I work hard and support my team as much as they support me, don't ever think your level or job title makes you better or superior to those you work with

The cleaning industry has not only given me an exciting and rewarding career, it has also given me security and a career path which hopefully I will remain on for the rest of my life.

