


Tips for anyone considering an apprenticeship

12 February 2025  Kelly Eddy

In September 2023, I began my journey as a graduate solicitor apprentice at Browne Jacobson. Now, a year and a half in, I want to share some key lessons that have helped me navigate the legal apprenticeship. Whether you're just starting or considering this route, here are my top tips to help you make the most of your experience.

1. Understand the value of time

Time is one of the most important currencies in the legal profession. As an apprentice, tasks will often take longer than expected, and that's completely normal. It's easy to feel frustrated when those around you seem to be working faster, but don't compare your progress to theirs.

Instead of asking, "*why is this taking me so long?*" focus on getting it right. Your colleagues would rather you take the time to complete a task accurately than rush and make avoidable mistakes. Be patient with yourself—you'll soon notice how much your efficiency improves. Even small wins, like drafting an email better than you could a few weeks ago, are signs of progress.

2. The power of speaking up

Asking for help isn't a weakness—it's a strength. At the start of my apprenticeship, I felt overwhelmed, taking on more than I could manage because I thought long hours were the norm. I worked weekends in silence, hesitant to admit I was struggling.

A turning point came when I missed a deadline after underestimating the time required for a task. When I finally spoke to a colleague, they reassured me that asking for more time or clarifying expectations was completely acceptable. This lesson was invaluable. Communicating openly helps manage workload, prevents burnout, and ultimately benefits both you and your team. Remember, you're not alone; your colleagues are there to support you.

3. Finding the right balance

Balancing work, study, and personal life can be challenging, but it's essential. Initially, I focused so much on work and studying that I neglected downtime. It wasn't until a long weekend break that I realised how much I needed to recharge. Stepping back, reading a book, and spending time with family reminded me that rest is just as valuable as hard work.

Now, I make it a priority to schedule activities that help me unwind—whether it's a walk in the woods with my partner and our dog or simply switching off for an evening. Prioritising self-care helps maintain productivity and motivation in the long run.

An apprenticeship is a journey of both professional and personal growth. Learning to manage time, speak up when needed, and find a healthy balance has been crucial in shaping my experience. If you're considering an apprenticeship, remember: progress takes time, support is always available, and taking care of yourself is just as important as succeeding in your role.

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