

*Written for apprentices, by apprentices*

## Highlights:

**Introduction**

**Interview – A View from the Top**

**Feature – Belated Twelve Days of Christmas**

**A word from our illustrious... er, apprentice**



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## **Welcome to the IAS Newsletter!**

The IAS newsletter has been put forward as a new venture to initiate an up to date documentation of apprentice's experiences in their placements. Each week will feature new stories, and up and coming events which may be of great use to an apprentice's development. Furthermore we hope that this newsletter will be of use to any future apprentices participating in IDEA.

The contribution of all apprentices is essential to the future production of this newsletter, so please, contribute in any way you can by sending in your stories and personal experiences.

## **A view from the top – Steve Lewis, Server engineer**

Something new this week, with issue 6 we have our first work placement interview...the lucky soul is Steve Lewis, Customer Service Direct server engineer and apprentice mentor to Ben Fosh.

### **Tea, biscuits and a chinwag**

Let's begin...

Gary Peters: What were your initial views of the apprentices during the first couple of weeks?

Steve Lewis: Very good, all in the server team were extremely positive regarding the apprentices, and in

particular Ben Fosh who works with us on a daily basis. Every one seemed to have a positive vibe.

GP: Apart from the sever team, what do you feel the perception was like from other staff around the office?

SL: Again, very positive, all the feedback I have

heard has been good. All the apprentices have been contributing effectively and have a good set of skills.

GP: Do you have any previous experience working with apprentices?

SL: Yes I have previously mentored an

apprentice, the role was very enjoyable as I was able to witness the apprentice grow and develop their skills onto a higher level.

GP: Despite the relativity small amount of time the apprentices have been at CSD do you feel they are now a part of the 'team'?

Aim high and enjoy the journey!



## WANT TO FIND YOUR VOICE?

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SL: Every one has fitted in very well, so yes all feel part of their respective teams. With regards to Ben he has been part of two teams that overlap one another (Server and internet messaging) so it has been very satisfying watching him settle in so well.

GP: In your opinion do the apprentices provide a fresh approach in the office environment?

SL: The apprentices make you think about the methods in which you work and maybe question the processes you use to complete the task at hand as they give a fresh view.

GP: As you are apprentice mentor to Ben Fosh, what has been his biggest achievement to date?

SL: I think it has to be his improving confidence and how he is now more confident in the working environment, which coming from education

can be a shock. He is not afraid to ask questions and that makes a big difference.

GP: Would you have any misgivings with working with apprentices in the future?

SL: No it is always a good thing and it is

positive for both CSD and the apprentices themselves.

GP: Why apprentices? What is it that makes them appealing to businesses?

SL: Apprentices give a different point of view, and any new point of view is good. Having

'fresh blood' in an organisation is always a good thing, and it can make the business just that bit more dynamic.

GP: What, if anything, would you do differently if given the opportunity?

SL: Maybe have more preparation time, and it could have been

beneficiary to meet with the apprentices longer than the brief meeting held. We could have learnt more about the background of the apprentices and provided them with a greater overview of the job roles.

GP: Finally, have you enjoyed reading the IAS newsletter?

SL: Yes it is a very good read every one involved with it has done well. It also gives us the chance to read about the external events the apprentices attend.

Special thanks to Mr Steve Lewis, all at the IAS newsletter are extremely grateful.



We're on the Web!

See us at:

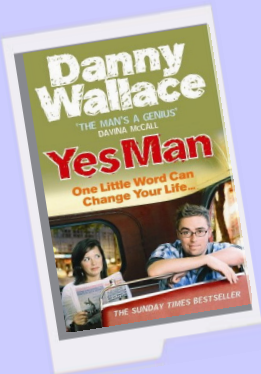
[www.ideawebsite.co.uk](http://www.ideawebsite.co.uk)

## FONZ'S BOOK LIST

### *Yes Man – Danny Wallace*

You have all heard the film, but now read the book that came first!

Danny Wallace had been staying in. Far too much. Having been dumped by his girlfriend, he really wasn't doing the young, free and single thing very well. Instead he was avoiding people. Texting them Instead of calling them. Calling them Instead of meeting them. That is until that one fateful date when a mystery man on a late-night bus told him to 'Say Yes more'. These three simple words changed Danny's life forever. Yes Man is the story of what happened when Danny decided to say Yes to everything, in order to make his life more interesting. And boy, did it get more interesting.



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## **The Twelve Days of Xmas – Gary Peters Apprentice Project**

Thankfully I am not going to recite the song, this 12 days of Christmas is all about news, CSD ICT news to be precise.

The blog is a wonderful tool, a place to share thoughts, knowledge, and potentially, problems, all without moving your mouth. With all this modern technology a blog has become a safe haven

for thousands of people, little helpings of advice, full-blown technical specifications.

No more waffle; the CSD ICT news section is the safe haven, a soft launch to test the waters. As the time of year was jingle bells and turkey, the 12 days of Christmas

seemed fitting for the project. As a budding writer I gleefully asked my superiors if I could give my two pennies worth. Thankfully they agreed, and so I was on my high horse with the title of news editor residing by my name. With editor rights access to WordPress I began writing the first entry for the 'Apprentice

zone'. After two paragraphs I realised that what I was publishing would be visible to hundreds of people, so out came the editing tools and up went the language and grammar.

A week passed and I was all set to begin the 12 days of Christmas articles, however a

small, shall we say timing issue, delayed our start by one day, so in reality it was the 12 days of Christmas plus one. I am not quite sure if I was happy or disappointed that the first two articles needed little editing, I guess I should praise those who gave me the material for the

opening. During days three and four my workload did increase, I found myself doing something that I had not done since my days of deadlines and assignment work at college, rushing around. Firstly I had to arrange meetings with very busy people, once I managed to get a decent time I had to gather a suitable

amount of notes for the write up, then I had to write them up and send them back to the team leaders for approval, only once I had approval could I click the magic button of publish.

We weren't without our problems though; I craved for more article-based entries, while others were not so receptive. As the

apprentice I dutifully bowed to their superior judgement, after all I was just grateful for the opportunity, I was not about to kick up a fuss.

Days five to ten really got me into the Christmas spirit; I took a trip to the second and third floors and was literally blown away by the amount of Christmas decorations. Pink Christmas trees!?! Sadly us on the first floor

at ICT were not so adventurous, maybe next Christmas we should hand out free pink Christmas trees for each team...?

Days five to ten also included one of my personal favourites, the eighth day of Christmas, agile development. I felt a sense of anticipation while writing this, the chance that it may have

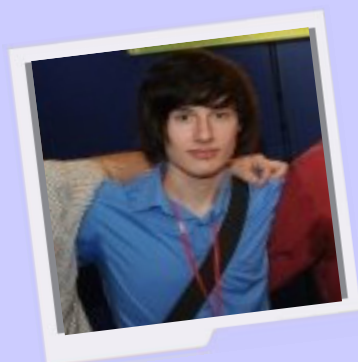
The next cohort of apprentices begin end of January, and we feel that they would benefit from our experiences in the placements over the past few months. There are some open slots where we were hoping some would be interested in attending and doing a short 5 to 10 minute talk about their experiences so far. Of course you are more than welcome to stick around for longer than that, and this would give the next batch a chance to talk to us individually.

The following are slots where we could use some involvement from us all:

- Weds 20th 13:00-15:00
- Thurs 21st 14:00-16:00
- Tues 26th 14:00-16:00

GRAPHICS:  
Ben Fosh

EDITOR/AUTHOR:  
Gary.Peters@csduk.com



been one of the better pieces on the news section. Either my fellow apprentices were being nice to my face and congratulating me, or they did genuinely enjoy the read. I sincerely hope it's the latter!

The final two days passed with no hiccups, and its fair to say the events of the past 12 days left me well and truly proud of my and my colleagues' achievements. The celebrations soon died down however, I was struck down with the

common winter cold, which was in no manner whatsoever self inflicted...

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## **They said what?** *The Illustrious "Leaders" Speak*

"Since the IDEA Scheme has in many ways turned my life around, and helped me make new goals, and introduced me to some great new friends, I wanted to give something back. It was because of this that I took up the opportunity to help organise the next Induction. Over the last two months there has be feverish emailing between many Bt and college staff, and finally a finished product has emerged that looks as if it will be a brilliant time for the next cohort. I would like to take this opportunity to give my thanks to Sue Partington and Peter Funnel for the opportunity, and also to Gary Peters and Ben Fosh, who have helped throughout. Finally, please look to the left banner at the invitation to come and talk to the next batch of apprentices. They would all benefit from hearing from those who have been there. Support the team, stand up, be counted, and take pride in what you do."

Chris Jones, IDEA Apprentice @ CSD

This week, being the eve of the second IAS Induction, we felt it would be appropriate to hear from someone who has spent a lot of time working towards the event.

Chris was one of the first Apprentices in the IAS, and has been a huge advocate of the value of the scheme. His experience with University and other education routes give him a unique perspective of the scheme, and is very proud to be a part of it.



## **Editors Comment**

For a change we decided to interview a man who we have all become very familiar with. Steve Lewis has been a trusted mentor not only to Ben Fosh but also to any of us who need the occasional boost. To all apprentices please come along to the second IAS induction, get in touch with Chris Jones!

Keep Reading ☺

*Special thanks to: Steve Lewis, Steve Day, Colin Rogers, CSD Staff, Teresa Dukes, Chris Jones, Ben Fosh*