



worldskills
UK Alumni

Luke Griffiths: Cabinet Making

Competed in:	WorldSkills Calgary 2009 – Team UK
Awarded:	Medallion for Excellence
Home town:	Chichester
Region:	South East
Date of birth:	09/08/1987
Age at competition:	22
Employer:	Cimitree Furniture; Chichester College (Associated Lecturer)
Learning provider:	Chichester College

Qualifications

- City & Guilds Level 2 Making & Installing Furniture, Distinction
- City & Guilds Level 2 Machine made Furniture, Distinction
- City & Guilds Level 3 Handmade Furniture, Distinction



What was your route into Team UK?

Luke's journey to WorldSkills first began while he was studying at college,

"I started competing regionally at the SkillBuild competitions in 2005. I then made it to the nationals that year and came third, so I decided to enter the following year as I was determined to win."

Following his success at a national level Luke worked his way through the tough selection process to become part of Team UK.

Why did you choose to get involved with WorldSkills?

"Initially I had no idea that I could go as far as I did, I thought it was just a national competition, which was fine as I loved competing anyway. It wasn't until after the national competition, when I was told I was eligible to go to WorldSkills, that I realised the full extent of the competition. It just went on from there."

What training did you undertake as part of your journey to WorldSkills and what impact did this have on your life?

Once short listed for WorldSkills, Luke received over 12 weeks of world class technical training;

"It was amazing! There is no way I would be as good as I am now without the technical training. At the time it was really stressful having to balance my life, work and preparing for the competition. Organising and planning everything was difficult to juggle, but there was always someone there to help me."

What was WorldSkills like?

"It was incredible and the scale of it was overwhelming. Everyone had told us how big the WorldSkills competition was, but it's not until you see it for yourself that you appreciate what they are talking about."

At the opening ceremony Luke was chosen to represent all WorldSkills competitors and read out loud the WorldSkills oath.

"There is no way I would have done something like that before all my training, but at the time I knew I could do it and I'm glad I did as it was an amazing opportunity and a real honour."

What did you have to do during the competition?

The cabinet making competition is broken down into four modules with the overall aim of building a cabinet within 22 hours. The first two modules involved marking out and preparing the cabinet components, the third module was the construction of a hand-cut dovetail drawer and the fourth module was the final construction of the cabinet.

"Any part of the module that wasn't complete by the deadline meant lost marks; timing was everything so I had to plan mine very carefully. In industry, you would get about 60 hours to complete a similar project so that's an idea of the standard expected at WorldSkills."

Who inspired you during your journey to WorldSkills?

During Luke's training he was introduced to Gary Tuddenham, the WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007 UK competitor and gold medallist in cabinet making.

"Gary is fantastic and he was a huge inspiration to me throughout my journey. I first met him during a training exercise at Silverlining [the company Gary works for] and we had a chance to talk. He told me about his WorldSkills experience and then helped me with my work. It was great to get feedback from someone that had done so well at the competition and I found myself ringing him weekly for help and advice with my training."

What did being part of Team UK and competing at WorldSkills mean to you?

"It was incredible to part of Team UK! I felt on top of the world being there with everyone watching me. I was so proud to be part of the team and wearing my Team UK jacket was a real honour; I'm still wearing it to work now!"

Having had such a great experience in Calgary, Luke found leaving the team at the airport to go home difficult;

"Saying goodbye to everyone was horrible. I built connections with the team that you just don't get with normal friends. We had all had this amazing experience that we will share for the rest of our lives."

How did it feel to receive a Medallion for Excellence?

In day one and three of the competition Luke featured in the top five competitors but it all came down to performance on the last day.

"It was a massive relief when my name was called for the Medallions of Excellence. I remembering shouting 'come on!' as I knew this meant I had achieved the WorldSkills standard."

What has competing done for you both personally and professionally?

"Professionally the competition has set me up for an amazing career. The one to one training that I received is unlike anything you would get at college or in the work place. Without the experience, I would probably be two or three years behind where I am right now."

Luke has also noticed a big change in his approach to life;

"I'm much more driven and proactive. I'm always looking for new challenges and experiences to embark upon."

What is the dream?

For the next couple of years Luke wants to knuckle down at work and continue to develop his skills and then take his career around the world.

"I want to work abroad and experience how they make furniture in different countries and learn from others."

Eventually Luke wants to open his own workshop and pass his knowledge and skills on to others by doing some teaching as well.

Would you encourage others to get involved in WorldSkills?

"Yes definitely, without a shadow of doubt! It has been a fantastic experience for me and it's something that anyone with a skill should seriously consider."

What do you think of the event being held in London in 2011?

"It will be exciting to see the event in London and it's a chance for the UK to top Canada's efforts as a host nation. I'm looking forward to helping out with the next Team UK and with the event in 2011. This is a real opportunity for us to build awareness of skill competitions and have a positive impact on the public's perception of skills."



For more information about the WorldSkills, UK Alumni, contact the UK Skills communications team:
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