

Spotlight on Brittany

Wendy - Integration

Adrian Hello Wendy. I understand that you have been working at "Croc Tissue" in Pontivy. How did you manage to get that job?

Wendy To start with I got on a formation through pôle emploi called C.L.P.S and when you're on the formation you have to go and find 'stages' which is work experience. I did two of my 'stages' at Croc Tissue and when the formation finished they rang me up and asked me if I'd do holiday replacements for the summer. But I'm hoping to go back in the end of, well at the end of December.

Adrian What were the biggest difficulties you found getting a job in France?

Wendy I didn't really find it difficult because obviously as soon as I finished the formation they rang me up so I didn't really have to find it. I was.....

Adrian And the language, did you speak French before you came?

Wendy We took two years of private French lessons before we came to France. It was basic French, restaurant French.

Adrian Where did you do that?

Wendy In England, at home, it was one to one.

Adrian So tell me a little bit about what you do at Croc Tissue.

Wendy Primarily I'm a machinist and then I'm a sales person. Depends on who's on holiday. But I become a sales person and then secondary a machinist.

Adrian So did you have quite a bit of experience in the work when you were in England?

Wendy In England I was an upholstery machinist. I'd not worked in the shop before.

Adrian No.

Wendy It's the first time. Part of the formation is to better your French. She came and said that I wasn't speaking enough French, machining, because obviously I know how to do it. Would they give me a go in the shop? So that's how I got to

do both the jobs and if you can get away with a good smile and being polite you can get away with anything.

Adrian So did you get nervous when you got your first full face on customer?

Wendy Yes. (laughs)

Adrian I can imagine.

Wendy Yes. You know the word for an item in the shop but then like in England there's also probably another word people will call it. And then when they come in and ask you for that and you can look blank for about a couple of minutes before, you know, you have to go and ask and then they go its such and such and you go I know that, but it's...

Adrian Did you find them welcoming, both the customers and the rest of the staff?

Wendy I had no problem with any of the staff or any of the customers,...

Adrian Great.

Wendyand a lot of the French customers commented on how nice it was to see somebody English working. We came to France so the first thing we wanted to do was to learn French getting put into a work place automatic ... well ideally automatically, it makes your French better.

Adrian Thank you very much Wendy.

Wendy That's OK.

Adrian That's all very good.