"The future is built by optimists and the best work is done in collaboration with others, so start building your network now, and be bold. Anything is possible "

DAVID O'COIMIN, CEO – DO COMPANY

How did you get started in your career?

Someone came to my school to explain what their university had to offer and I discovered the product design course. Just like that, I finally knew what I wanted to be. The next big step, apart from qualifying in design, came when I entered and won a student design prize. After that I increased my chances of finding a job by approaching numerous companies in the field of design and asking to visit to discuss the design world – not saying I was looking for a job (I was, really). Many doors opened and I stepped through.

Can you outline a typical work day?

The most typical work day would involve a few meetings, various phone calls but mostly working through designs (on paper, in CAD, with colleagues) to figure out how something can or should be made. These typical days are also offset by many days out on research trips, meeting customers and suppliers, in a factory or meetings.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The creativity, variety and travel.

What skills are important for anyone wishing to start in your profession?

Creativity, organisation, negotiation skills and attention to detail.

What main personal attributes do you think is important for your type of job?

Creativity, open mindedness, curiosity.

Do you have any tips or suggestions on how young people and adults can enter your industry?

Go to events, invite yourself to meet people in the industry, enter competitions, take part in community projects, get out there and connect with the creative world.

What career progression opportunities are available in your business/sector?

Product Design has enormous scope. Product designers often run their own companies eventually and rise to senior roles in large organisations.

Why is it important for your sector to attract and train young people and new entrants?

Designers shape the world around us. We need more people as part of this process with the core understanding of how to balance form and function.

What trends do you predict for your industry within the next 10 years? E.g. is it a growing market requiring more young entrants

We will see more automation of the manufacturing process, putting greater emphasis on the planning & creation aspect of how things get made. Digitisation of the industry continues apace. Data, Analytics and Design grow ever closer together. The big opportunities will come in tying these elements together.

General words of advice

The future is built by optimists and the best work is done in collaboration with others, so start building your network now, and be bold. Anything is possible.

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