



# Banburys

## Barnstaple and Tiverton

Arthur Banbury, one of the founders of the Barnstaple department store that bears his name, would be proud of the quality of service that today's staff gives their customers.

And he'd undoubtedly give at least some of the credit for that to Banburys' Group Personnel Manager Jan Moore and the training she's arranged for her staff through North Devon College.

"A lot has changed since Mr Banbury and his partners set up their first store in 1925, but dedication to customer service isn't one of them," says Jan.

That's why she brought in the college to help staff gain NVQs in warehousing, storage, customer service, retail, and catering for Banburys' stores in Barnstaple and Tiverton. But arranging staff training in two busy department stores that put their customers first is easier said than done – and sending staff off to college simply isn't an option.

"Our staffing is lean and we can't have lots of extra people to cover for them just in case they're needed," says Jan.

"So the college send the assessors in to us, in our workplace. That's always at our convenience – and if it's not the right time for us, they back off and come back again."

The approach is working for Banburys, with Jan reporting, in what sounds like an echo of the fictional Young Mr Grace, that the staff who have received training have "all done very well".

"We're making the best of the staff we have now," she says. "They have all been encouraged and gone along at a speed that suits them. They feel there is a value being placed on them and the job they do, and because it's on-the-job training they feel more deeply about the service they're providing. They ask themselves questions they wouldn't have asked before and have a big sense of pride that they've obtained a qualification at the end of the training."

"A lot of people come into this business without any qualifications at all, and it's lovely to watch them progress. I think they get hooked, and there's a feelgood factor in doing something well. That does have an impact on Banburys that benefits customers. There's a difference in the way our staff present themselves, and they're thinking more about the job they're doing."

**"I'm taking full advantage of the funding that's out there. That's where the college comes into its own"**

Jan says the response to the opportunities she's offering has been excellent, with three people in a store she's just visited saying they're interested in more training.

The flexible attitude of North Devon College's tutors has also made her working life considerably easier.

"The assessors don't intrude into the workplace at all, which is very important in the retail environment, and if I need any information or want updates on how the staff is progressing, I have easy access to it."

"I'm also taking full advantage of the funding that's out there. That's where the college comes into its own. If I had to sit down and work through the bureaucracy attached to funding, it would be a nightmare, but they sort all that out and I just sign my name. They also tell me what training's available and then they work out how to get people through it. That's why I'm so impressed with the college."



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