

TLI Connect

Making choices to change

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Three year 12 graduates have made a smooth transition from school into the world of work thanks to Followmont Transport and the GenR8 program.

With over 650 staff and a fleet of more than 600 vehicles, Followmont is the largest independently owned transport company in Queensland. Followmont's Human Resources Administrator, Tegan McFarlane, saw the benefits for the business in hosting school students for this 20 week structured work placement. 'We've been able to expose our business to a new market of eager young people and show them the opportunities and diversity to be found in the transport and logistics industry'.

The Yellow Brick Road

Sandgate State High School graduate, Chris Knight, has been offered a diesel mechanic apprenticeship with the company after standing out from the crowd during his GenR8 experience. 'Before this, transport and logistics was just a truck cab to me. But once I opened my eyes it was a brand new world and I embraced it. Followmont were the yellow brick road for me'.

Chris admits he was on track to join the youth unemployment lines at Centrelink in 2014. But the GenR8 program gave him a viable pathway. 'I was excited to come to work. I was trying to drag my bed here! Followmont gave me holiday and weekend work. My motivation and confidence came straight up and I got a real job out of it'.



Chris Knight and Tegan McFarlane

Open Your Eyes

Sam Damen from Bracken Ridge State High School is using his experience at Followmont to apply for work in other warehouse environments. 'GenR8 opened my eyes to new things and new challenges like filling out consignment notes, checking dimensions of freight, labelling dangerous goods and picking and packing customer orders'.

When asked what advice he might give to next year's year 12's considering GenR8, Sam doesn't hesitate. 'Go for it! You're still in school but you get to experience doing a normal shift, turning up on time and learning new skills. You're better off having some idea of what direction you can go in rather than no idea at all'.

Really good pay... straight out of school

Alex Gallagher from Wavell State High School had already completed a Certificate I in Engineering when he came across GenR8. 'I had a gap in my timetable and was looking for a good option when GenR8 was advertised in the school newsletter. I thought even if I don't end up with a job here I can get a qualification out of the program'.

As it turned out, Alex did get the job and has been offered ongoing casual work at Followmont. 'It's really good pay for me straight out of school. There are a few guys who work here that go to Uni during the day and work here at night'.

'We've been able to expose our business to a new market of eager young people...'

The final word on the impact of GenR8 goes to Chris Knight. 'Prior to GenR8 I was stuck stacking shelves and making sandwiches, then this shining beacon of hope came along and now I'm trying to capitalise on the opportunity'.

The GenR8 program is run by the Department of Education and Training. If you are a transport and logistics business interested in finding out more about the GenR8 program, please contact TLI Connect at TLI.Connect@tmr.qld.gov.au or on (07) 3066 0785.