

What I learned from teaching schoolchildren about DVLA

They say never work with children (or animals). But Nicola Braun, of DVLA Vehicle Business Services, proved this wrong recently when she visited a class of local schoolchildren to tell them all about DVLA.

I've always been nervous about public speaking as I'm quite shy by nature. But when I was asked to give a presentation about the agency to around sixty 10 to 11 year olds, I jumped at the challenge!



How it happened

At my daughter's parents evening I was having a chat with her teacher when he asked me where I worked and what my role was. I explained [about DVLA and what we do](#) and talked a bit about my role in Vehicle Business Services.

He was really interested and asked if I'd like to present to year 6 pupils (including my daughter!) about my place of work and career. I immediately said yes. It's something I've always wanted to do – as well as helping the children to develop and learn about something new, I knew I'd learn a lot from it as well.

Getting started

I got the clearances I needed from work to go ahead, then I started on my presentation. I made sure I included the kind of stats and numbers which would help to keep my young audience's attention. For example, did you know that [last year](#) we issued more than 11 million driving licences? Or that our contact centre took around 14 million calls from customers? I felt it was important to get across the scale of what we do.

Presentation done, next it was on to the tricky bit...



New teacher nerves

Soon, it was 'Presentation Day'. That morning I felt sick with nerves, thinking 'Oh my gosh! I've never done this before, I hope I do well...' But as soon as I went into the classroom, my butterflies went. I introduced myself and began my presentation.

The children really seemed to be paying attention, as they were scribbling away and making notes of my slides. I had to slow down so they could capture all the information I was relaying.

I think it's important to teach children about staying on the right side of the law as early as possible, so I mentioned this in my presentation. Maybe the bit where I talked about the 'consequences of not abiding by the law' did the trick, as they gasped when I told them they could get a fine of up to

£1,000 for not taxing a vehicle!

Any questions?

I was keen to make it a two-way presentation. I wanted the children to feel part of it, so we had a question and answer session next.

I was asked plenty of really good questions. “Do you enjoy your job?”, “What did you want to be when you were in school?”... When I was asked “How long have you worked for DVLA?”, I answered “17 years”. I got a “Wow!” for that one.

The most popular question I asked the children was “What type of vehicle would you like to drive?” Nearly every hand went up. From Maseratis to limousines, I must say that they had great taste in vehicles!

When I finished and left the school, I was on cloud nine with a real sense of accomplishment. I’d faced up to my fears of speaking in front of large crowds of people, and spread the word about DVLA into the bargain.

The verdict

Was it worth it? Definitely! Not only did it help my confidence, but I hope I gave the children some tips on how to abide by the law when they grow up.

I would say to anyone thinking of doing something similar, if you ever get the chance to do something like this, give it a go. Chances are you could be speaking to your future customers, stakeholders or even colleagues.

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