

# Learning from others to progress into leadership

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Learning from people around you who have different skills and experiences can make all the difference

News 4 mins watch

Temporary Sergeant Katharine Robinson started her policing career in Hampshire Constabulary as a member of police staff. Here she had the opportunity to go out in a police car to shadow some officers. She knew then that she wanted to become a police officer.

Katharine first started to consider leadership after delivering a presentation and getting good feedback. She realised she could inspire other people and make a difference both within the organisation as well as externally.

After moving into another department, a senior manager suggested that Katharine apply for the [Fast Track programme](#).

## Application process

The application for Fast Track is quite long and detailed, with lots of different sections. Katharine approached the application by concentrating on individual tasks and taking it one day at a time.

She started by putting all her energy into the paper application. This resulted in Katharine successfully getting a board with the deputy chief constable who runs the Fast Track within Hampshire.

Katharine credits the support she had from her colleagues for helping her progress her application and push herself out of her comfort zone. She says the 'encouragement from colleagues meant the difference between going through the whole process and not even starting it.'

*Don't underestimate what you can achieve. I think I spent a long time presuming that I needed greater breadth in policing before I approach leadership. I want people to know how far they can push themselves.*

**Temporary Sergeant Katharine Robinson**

Hear more from Katharine about her personal journey to leadership and her advice to anyone considering starting their own.

**Video Transcript**

I went to university to study art and, on leaving there, I had this really strong feeling that I needed a vocational route to go down. And I started some work with some housing associations and the council before going to work for the police as a member of police staff. And I remember really very clearly my first boss one day sending me out in a police car for the day and he said, 'just go and see what else goes on in the organisation' and that was it.

There was a very specific moment when I delivered a presentation and I've never really done a lot of public speaking before. And some of the feedback I had from that presentation made me realise I could make a difference and I could inspire other people to really help people within the organisation as well as externally. And it was just one person's comment of, 'if you can do this as a PC, do you have any idea what you could do in a different rank?' And for me that was the first time that real leadership light bulb went on.

So I set myself two PDR objectives for the year, one of which was to move departments and one of which was to think about promotion. And I think part of that lateral move was what nudged me even better into promotion. It started simply as a PDR objective and a senior manager that I'd worked with heard that this was one of my objectives and suggested fast track to me.

I remember looking at the application process and thinking this is really long and this is in quite a lot of sections and I think, for me, if I was going to approach it in any way, it was going to have to be very compartmentalised. I would have to not get overwhelmed by the whole process, not get too far ahead of myself and take everything a day at a time. So I very much believe that you can only do your best for the bit that you're working on. So there was no point me worrying about my inspectors' exam in a year's time. I put my heart and soul into my paper application, which resulted in me getting a board with our DCC who runs the fast tracks within Hampshire.

I think the support I had from colleagues to keep nudging me forward at that point made a real difference, at a point where I just thought 'I should self-select out here'. And I think that was the first point at which I really looked at how to push myself out of my comfort zone, how to, you know, step up to a stressful board situation whilst quite a lot was going on at home. But I'm really glad I did because I think it was that encouragement from colleagues that meant the difference between going through the whole process and not even starting it.

I think my biggest piece of advice would be, don't underestimate what you can achieve. I think I spent a long time presuming that I needed greater breadth in policing before I approach leadership and I think, for me, I want people to know how far they can push themselves.

Have the humility to learn from others to ask for help. I think, for me, there's no greater way to learn than looking to those around you who've got other skills, other experiences that we can all learn from.

## Find out more

[See if the the Fast Track programme](#) for serving police constables suits your potential and strengths.

## Workshops

You can join our workshops for more information and guidance about the application process. The workshops take place across three days but you will only need to attend on one day. Contact your force's Fast Track single point of contact (SPOC) to book.

Upcoming workshop dates run from:

- Tuesday 22 to Thursday 24 March (online)

## Tags

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