



Ruth Badger

I caught up with *The Apprentice* star Ruth Badger at the Molineux in Wolverhampton for a quick chat about her experience at school and on the show and her plans for the future... >>



Could you tell me more about your experience on The Apprentice?

For me The Apprentice was the biggest competition I could ever face. I went on The Apprentice for two reasons:

- 1) I am the most competitive person there can be in business and I wanted to prove to myself really what I could do
- 2) I wanted to get as close to Sir Alan Sugar as I could, and I exceeded both goals so really I got everything I wanted to

Sir Alan Sugar looks really scary. Is he really like that?

Umm...hmm... let's get things into perspective, Sir Alan is the way that he is, he's not one person for television and then somebody else. I worked for him for six months, so actually I worked alongside him every day and he's no different, he's very focused, He knows what he wants and is a shrewd businessman but that's the reason I left a very good job and got into the competition for him - but ultimately is he grumpy - absolutely! (Laughs)

Do you think you should have won The Apprentice?

If I was a viewer from Sir Alan's perspective - no, I was gutted that I didn't because I don't like losing but realistically he wanted someone who he could train in business. He said to me every single week "what are you doing here? Why did you apply?" and he never sort of understood the reasons why I did. So did he make the right decision? I actually think he did. He couldn't have paid me enough to keep me! (Laughs) It's true!

I understand that you've got two businesses. Do you have any plans to open a firm or business in Wolves?

Yes I will do, the reason I went to Manchester was because my job took me there, I've got different opportunities there that I haven't got in the Midlands. To answer your question directly, will I come home? Yes, Will I have a business here? Yes, it's my next plan for next year which is 2008, I've already bought the limited company and ordered the branding for the Midlands business.




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What are your plans for the future?

Erm...if I'm being brutally honest I have no idea! I've got two businesses which are doing fantastically well and I've got a TV show which they are pushing me to start filming next year, but there's one thing for certain: Wherever I am, whatever I'm doing I'll be living life to the full and I'll be making an absolute fortune!

What were you like at school?

Erm...I was a passing visitor at school, I actually went to Wodensfield Junior in Wednesfield and then went to Our Lady and St. Chad's in Fallings Park.

I had a bit of an issue with school...was I a problem? No, I wasn't one of the kids that was on report or expelled but I was always someone who pushed and challenged. The biggest thing for me about school was what did it do for me or at that point - what it could provide for me and I knew what I wanted to be, I knew at the age of 6 what I wanted to be and it wasn't anything academic - it was to be a millionaire. I knew at that point I would never get that much money if I studied.

Do you think schools have changed since you were in school? I'm not implying that you're old or anything!

I left school in 1994, I've got 3 GCSEs; an E in Maths, C in R.E, and B in English Literature. I wouldn't like to be in school now because I just think that (sighs)...I just don't know what it would offer me, I think it's very good that they're putting enterprise back in school.

Do you think work experience is important?

Yes, it's vital, it gets you into your working career, I've got this saying in work, which is a 9-5 brigade, if you want to earn a lot of money, you've got to work at it and you're not an adult until you've gone to work.

If you're in work at the age of 13, 14, 15 do I think you're an adult then? Yes if you can do it because when you're in school it's what your mates are doing to the left and what your mates are doing to the right - when you're paying a mortgage, getting married and supporting your family - believe me your mates aren't there then! That's when you actually stand on your own two feet - when you go to work.

Is there any advice you can give students who don't know what they want to do?

Well I'll tell you the first thing - that's no different from me, if people ask what you want to do, don't think you've got to know, you've just got to know how to get there. If someone says I want to be a train driver and they know exactly what they want to be - even if it's a teacher, then they're very lucky because not everyone knows what their true vocation is.

I've done a lot of what I call 'stepping stones' jobs; don't get desperate when you get your GCSE result and you don't do well. Realistically I'm an employer- I've got a lot of staff and taken interviews. We get a lot of CV's but it's personality - most importantly it's the attitude. If you demonstrate a 'can do' attitude in any job you will earn a fortune!

By Joyti Sharma

