



making physics matter



Phizzi professionals

John Jermy

School

Educated at a small, rural Grammar school, I performed poorly in exams. I achieved average O-level results, mainly sciences and core subjects. I left two weeks after starting A-levels to take up an apprenticeship where I could do similar qualifications one day a week at technical college.



What next?

As a trainee chemist in the sugar industry, I not only worked in laboratories, but spent time in the factory doing jobs as diverse as demolition, welding, and installing three-quarter ton steel pipes six metres above the third floor of the factory. A takeover bid meant they closed a number of factories and I was made redundant.



Why physics?

I was not good at remembering facts, so I preferred subjects that used reasoning and figuring out an answer. I enjoyed finding out and understanding how things worked and physics, being mostly common sense, fulfilled this. Physics gives us rules that allow us to quantify what we experience around us from a subatomic to beyond a galactic level.



And now?

I became a science technician at independent school King's Ely until I could get back into industry, but I found the role suited me well. It gave me the opportunity to help develop ideas for new practical lessons and to teach and run clubs in design & technology and photography. One of my students became a professional celebrity and fashion photographer. I helped another make his first guitar for a GCSE project; he later handmade guitars retailing for thousands of pounds.



Physics in practice

Although my main role is providing equipment for practical physics lessons, I develop and make new apparatus, train teachers how to get the best from experiments and demonstrations and advise other school technicians online and at local meetings.



Advice for young scientists

There are far more careers in science than you imagine. They are vital, but you are rarely aware of them or who scientists are. Success is not always about exam results or being famous. Helping or inspiring others is of far more value

