



SHANNAN CUTTING

ON-CALL FIREFIGHTER AND FIREFIGHTER CONTROL,
DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Advice for applicants:

- turn your weaknesses into strengths
- be prepared for hard work
- be an inspiration to yourself and others

I've strived to help others from a young age and have always thought highly of firefighters and the work they do. So when my local fire service started recruiting I couldn't apply quick enough. I wanted to make a difference both in the community and to myself. Previously I worked as a healthcare assistant, so knew I had useful skills to offer including good communication and problem solving.

The recruitment process was challenging and rewarding. It identified my strengths and my weaknesses and empowered me to succeed. The problems I faced, like my dyslexia, turned to strengths due to the support and flexibility of my trainers and colleagues.

Being open about my disability has helped me massively. I've been able to rely on the support of others, therefore taking a lot of stress off my shoulders. And my willingness to educate others on the importance of getting the support they need is something I am very passionate about.

My job is incredibly rewarding. Not a day goes by when I don't see the best of humanity. I get to be the voice at the end of the phone to help calm those who have nowhere else to turn or give lifesaving advice to individuals going through potentially their most traumatic moment. I am inspired to be the best I can be both in my work and when I'm off duty.

My friends and family are extremely proud of me. They have so much admiration for the time and dedication I put into my work. I have the determination to reach my goals and at 22 years old I am able to see obstacles as positive aspects of growth.

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I'm now a dyslexia mentor and want to use my positive outlook to transform the lives of others and help people who want to contribute to the emergency services. I wear my uniform with pride and strive to help the service improve - whether that's giving talks on dyslexia or welcoming change and supporting the service through that.

I have never looked back.