



**Andrew
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**Senior Engineering
Project Manager**

Introduce yourself. Where do you work? What is your job role?

My name is Andrew McKinney and I am a Senior Engineering Project Manager in Almac. Almac Group is a global leader in advancing human health. We provide a range of expert services across the drug development lifecycle to pharmaceutical and biotech companies, supporting them in finding treatments for patients. I work in Almac's Central Engineering Services department which supports all Almac's business units with engineering solutions based on internal and external customer requirements.

What does your job entail?

Engineering Services supports Almac's various business units by providing solutions for New Product Introduction (NPI), Process Improvement and Production Critical requirements. This is a broad remit where I manage the engineering support to supply new machine format parts, components, and equipment to drive efficiencies, and new equipment to meet capacity or regulatory requirements.

How did you get into this line of work?

I have always had an interest in technology and mechanics. This, combined with an interest in art and design, led me to technical drawing and mechanical engineering. As my experience with equipment engineering increased, I became more involved with machine design and then eventually the management of projects involving machine modifications and manufacture.

Outline your career to date

I started my career as a Mechanical Design Engineer, designing and detailing components initially within AutoCAD and then in Solidworks. As my experience grew, I was able to work on the mechanical design of larger projects. My knowledge with production equipment then allowed me to manage the development and purchase of machinery for new facilities and buildings.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

I attended University of Ulster and achieved a degree in Mechanical Engineering. During my career I have also gained training in NEBOSH for Health and Safety, PRINCE2 for project management, Solidworks for design. I have also become a Chartered Engineer and I am a member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

Being able to work well in teams is important, all my work involves a lot of interaction with others. An understanding of equipment is beneficial to my job, I need to have an overview of how equipment works, how different functions interact with each other. When working in the pharmaceutical industry, being detail orientated and able to identify risks and issues is advantageous.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

My parents always advised me that everything is a learning experience, you may not think you need it right now, but you may in the future and having a good foundation broadens your horizons and allows greater flexibility to make changes.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I share a trials car that I work on in my spare time, keeping it in good condition and making modifications, it is a winter hobby, so it gets me outside even when the weather is poor. I enjoy being outdoors, camping, biking, and walking.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself?

I initially wanted to be an architect, it fitted in with drawing and design, which I liked. Following a work placement, however, I changed direction. It is a great career, but not for me, I realised I was more interested in machines and equipment so changed my plan.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

My parents above all, I value their opinion, go to them for advice and I really appreciate the values they instilled in me. In work I have lots of inspiration from a diverse range of colleagues with a huge wealth of experience.

What advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

I would tell myself to not worry about making changes, there is time, there is help, look at different options, it is better to be sure you are on the correct path.