

David Cooper:

My name's Dave Cooper. I work at the University of Warwick. I work on the student projects and I'm the technical advisor.

So the student projects are a framework for the students to back up their academic knowledge with hands-on experience. We're not just talking about the core engineering skills for automotive and engineering. This is every aspect of working in industry. So students that come down here have a chance to work on not just the vehicles and go to the competitions, but they can work on outreach, we can work on HR. They can learn about procurement. They can learn about design. They can learn about FEA, simulations, all the things that you're required to do, the hands-on skillsets you'll need in industry in the future.

We have students from every background, and this is really important to work together as a team. Students that work on these projects go to the most amazing jobs in the future. They're constantly keeping in touch with alumni. So just to give you an example, from the car alone, we've got students going to McLaren and we've got students going to Mercedes, Red Bull, Elmore. On the bike project, we've had people go to Norton, we've got people that go to Triumph. And all our sponsors are constantly looking into these projects for the students in the future. The students come and learn the skills, they go out and do placements, they go out on scholarship roles, they get job placements, and the companies get a real understanding of how the student projects work. So there's a lot of benefit of coming to learn hands-on skills, because if you become a good engineer, you can use those skills to work in any type of environment.

We do a lot of outreach. We go out to schools. We have school visits. We do STEM events. We do industrial days. We have internships. We have scholarship programs running at WMG. This way, younger sporting engineers can come in and see young people working hands-on. I understand that it's important to have senior roles, but when young people see young engineers working in this type of environment, it inspires them to follow that route in the future.

What advice would I give to people going into STEM? So first, be happy in what you do. Be excited about what you want to do, and look at the core skills that you'll need. So when you're at school, if you want to go the traditional engineering route, then yes, you need to look at maths, you need to look at physics, you need to look at science. But to be truthful, any way you educate yourself will help you make choices in the future. So just do the best you can.