

Missouri Career Mentor video transcript



Ryan Micke

Machinist and Business Owner
Mick's Performance

My name is Ryan Micke. I am owner and operator of Mick's Performance. At Mick's Performance we remanufacture and manufacture torque converters for the automobile transmission.

Early Interest

When I was a child growing up, I spent many hours in our home garage working on cars with my dad and my brother. Growing up I got to spend a lot of time with my dad and my brother. My brother had a '71 Chevelle. We did a lot of work on it – a big block Chevy car, you know, nitro assisted, a car that ran in the mid-eighties. ***[He is describing a drag racing car that can go from zero to a quarter-mile mark in a shade over 8 seconds. (That's fast!)]*** And we spent a lot of time working on it, enjoying the aspects of racing with it.

Education & Training

In high school I took automotive technology. I really enjoyed the hands-on training. From high school I worked part-time in an automotive machine shop. I really liked the machinery, really liked the hands-on work. From there, I decided I needed to make a living, so I went to Linn State Technical College to get an associate's degree in machine tool technology.

Daily Responsibilities

Every day my job includes rebuilding torque converters, dealing with the customers the converters belong to, and making sure we have the parts and machinery to work on their product successfully.

Skills to Be Successful

In order to work in this industry you need to be a fast learner, you need to be somebody that can work with many people in a group, and you need to be somebody that can take pride in your work.

Joys & Challenges

In my field I really enjoy taking in our materials that our business makes and at the end of the day we produced a torque converter for a race car that we get to see do a 220-mile pass at the end of the day.

Some of the biggest challenges we face very day in my business are keeping up with the new transmission technology. We have to manufacture our own parts to fit new transmissions and new engine applications every day.

Early Influences

Some of the people I looked up to growing up were definitely my father, my brother. When I got into high school, I really enjoyed spending a lot of time with my shop teachers. They were somebody that could take something, break it down for me and show me how it worked. Then when I got into machine tool technology I got the same training with those people. I went into tech school with my math skills a little low. I got lucky, found a math teacher I really enjoyed. He was able to show me how to break problems down and to make it work for me.

High School Classes

The classes that I took in high school that are helping my career now today definitely were my English classes, my math classes. I use the English every day now – multiple e-mails on a daily basis, a lot of letters back and forth to people. We spend a lot of time reading instruction manuals on new products. And then we also use our math skills to do everything from programming machinery to simple inspection of parts.

In Retrospect

Knowing what I know now in my manufacturing career I definitely would have spent a lot more time on my English homework, and I definitely would have spent a lot more time on math, science, and everything that had to do with communication. On a daily basis we communicate with people to run our business and to make a living for my family.

My Advice

My advice to somebody that would like to have a career like mine (would be to) spend a lot of time working on anything you can get your hands on. You might tear it apart and not get it back together, but at least you know how it came apart and how it works. And anybody that is willing to show you how something works, definitely take the time to spend with them to learn something.

Memorable Moment

My proudest moment would be when we took our '67 Camero all the way to Bradenton, Florida, to win our first race at an NMCA event in ProStreet with an automatic transmission.