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Stronger management.

NAJOUA CHEKAYA, 29
REGIONAL MANAGER, PURE GYM

As a teenager, Najoua, 'Naj' Chekaya was fascinated by fitness. Her aunt used to work as an instructor and Naj would help her practise and learn new routines for Body Combat and other gym classes.

This interest stayed with her and she secured a part time job as a cleaner in her local leisure centre to be in the environment she loved. After doing A Levels, Naj worked on reception and then undertook an NVQ Level 3 in Personal Training as well as training in the various skills required to teach classes such as Pilates and Body Pump.

Now 29, Naj is a Regional Manager for **Pure Gym** looking after 21 sites across London and Essex. I line manage the gym managers and support them to run the clubs, she says.

I started at Pure Gym in October 2012 as a Gym Manager then I was promoted to Senior Manager and two years ago, Regional Manager.

I was encouraged by our Learning and Development team to undertake a Level 5 Apprenticeship in Management and Leadership through **Intec Business Colleges** and I thought it would be useful in my role and good to have on my CV.

Carrie, my tutor, and I meet once a month to review my assignments but I undertake most of the study at home.

Yes, it takes a fair amount of dedication when you're working full time, but I tried to incorporate as much as possible of the course into my work, which helped a lot. I was lucky enough to be seconded onto the team working on the LA Fitness acquisition which was really interesting and helped with the change management aspect of the qualification.

For my assignments, I needed to undertake research myself as they involved things I'd never considered before. This research was probably the aspect of the learning that I enjoyed the most.

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