



MATT PHILLIPS

**Director
Monmouthshire
County Council**

YEAR OF LEAVING: 1999



What was your favourite subject at school and why?

Maths. It was hard, but you were either right or wrong and you at least got credit for explaining how you got to your answer.

What have you been up to since leaving school?

I went straight to university to study Politics and International Relations and then I joined the Royal Navy. I served for 16 years - on a submarine, in Iraq, with the Royal Marines and I also trained as a Barrister and did legal work in lots of different countries doing things like dealing with pirates in the Indian Ocean. I left in 2018 to come back to Monmouthshire where I now work in the Council as well as being part of the Mountain Rescue team in the Black Mountains.

What experience and qualifications do you need to do your job, and do you have advice for current students looking to go into your sector?

To join the military it's a lot more important to be able to work as part of a team than anything else, but if you want to join as an officer there are minimum GCSE and A Level requirements. To be a lawyer you obviously need to have the right educational qualifications and go to university but even then, if you want to make any progress you need to know how to work with people more than anything else.

Whatever you choose to do I'd recommend talking to as many people as you can find who will explain what your chosen career entails. Don't forget, people love talking about themselves so don't feel afraid to ask!

What is one piece of advice you would give to current students?

Always believe that you are capable of taking the next step and succeeding in the next challenge. But never make the mistake of thinking you've got the current one nailed!

What challenges have you faced in your life so far, and how have you overcome them? What is your next big goal?

I had no contacts or access to the legal world or that of an officer in the military so I worked hard to find out everything I could and be as good as I could possibly be. People will always appreciate someone who works hard and wants to contribute to the overall purpose. Next big goal? See my kids go on to do bigger and better things than I have.

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