

What's the Point in

Mathematics?

To help you understand the value of maths, we've spoken to a number of professionals who still use the skills, qualities and knowledge they gained from the subject at school in the work they do today. Turn over to find out who they are, what they do and what they had to say....

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The Digital Media Assistant

As a designer, maths has proven very useful for me. From needing to know print proportions and ratios, to being able to use three-dimensional letters made in a wood shop for poster design, the more techniques and processes I've learnt, the richer my ideas have been, and the more options I've been able to offer my clients.

Rachel Mayes, Digital Media Assistant at the Institute of Environmental Analytics

The Entrepreneur

I am the managing director of a fast growing and award-winning financial technology start-up business. The analytical and reasoning skills I gained through studying maths have helped me make crucial strategic decisions, particularly in relation to the financials of the business (so often the reason for start-up businesses failing).

Alex D G Marsh, Entrepreneur and Business Leader at Close Brothers Group

The IT Audit Manager

I use maths to assess and score business and technology risks which may prevent an organisation from achieving its objectives. Each risk is calculated based on its likelihood and impact. I then provide an independent view and present advice to the Board and senior management on where they should prioritise their investment based on the risks that the organisation faces.

Amie Pinder, IT Audit Manager at Worldpay

The Quantity Surveyor

As a quantity surveyor for a large construction firm, I use maths on an everyday basis from general problem solving (working out the best value way to complete the project by comparing different materials and techniques) to writing equations in excel which allows me to add up the costs and value for the project.

Anna Bennett, Construction Supervisor at Skanska Ltd UK

The Vice President (Banking)

I am grateful for the basic maths I was taught. During my career I've often had to make very quick calculations in order to determine how to prioritise and assign cash values to the items I've been processing, whether this is making a multimillion cash payment or determining which project item should be worked on.

Anthony Murphy, Vice President, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

The Commercial Advisor

In my first job post university, I constructed computer models of power stations and chemical plants in order to set up equipment to maximise profit. This required an understanding of differential equations. In my current role, I often review financial models of cash flows in order to decide whether to invest millions of pounds in government projects.

Beverley Nash, Senior Commercial Advisor at the Cabinet Office

The Production Manager

I use maths when calculating how many hours of staff I require to cover a number of different craft skills across 90 hours of live output per day, 365 days per year. This then leads to how many staff we need to employ and the costs of employing them, which in turn leads to the hourly chargeable rate.

Glen Bertram, Manager Production Resourcing at the BBC

The Sea Captain

At sea, I use maths for navigation, using knowledge such as spherical trigonometry. I also use maths for ship stability and stress calculations, making sure that the cargo is transferred in the right sequence and that the ship's stresses were within limits. Maths also helps me build IT solutions such as crew ages, hours of work monitoring programs, medical locker inventory, and food monitoring and ordering.

Capt Chris Snape, Manager – Maritime Independent Assurance at Shell

The Wealth Analyst

I am a wealth manager at Coutts, and my role involves providing investment recommendations to clients. As part of this, I need to ensure that funds are allocated to the right places and that the recommended solution is able to meet their objective. I need to understand and calculate annualised returns and the impact of taxation; all of this requires the maths skills that I learnt in school - especially when we move into standard deviation!

Claire Davies, Wealth Analyst at Coutts

The Finance Director

I became an accountant because I enjoyed maths and problem-solving. Nowadays, most of it is done by computer programs, but these don't always do what you expect them to and are prone to manual error, so being able to check something that is presented to you is really key. Even outside of finance, in the business world, I would say that the majority of successful people are 'all over' their numbers, be it for negotiations, business cases, or monitoring performance.

Clare Boynton, Finance Director at KFC

The Consultant

When running a small business, maths is used to work out calculations, such as the costs and profits of delivering services to companies. Therefore, understanding how to interpret figures is useful when looking at financial accounts. I also use maths when working out personal expenses, including the cost of petrol for miles driven on company business, and for working out salary, national insurance, tax and pension costs.

Hazel Dewey, Lead Consultant at Rowhill Educational Consultancy

The Vice President (Fashion Industry)

My career to date spans the following:

- Paul Smith Ltd - Retail / Sales and Buying / Product Development
- Gap Inc, Banana Republic & Mulberry - Sourcing / Production (deciding which country & factory to make products, costing & delivering them to a specified standard)
- Burberry - Supply Chain / Manufacturing (running a garment factory & fabric mill)

To be successful in these various roles, I've had to use maths skills for technical drawings and costings.

Lise Edwards-Warrener, Vice President (Internal Manufacturing) at Burberry



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