



# Meat: Leigh Kane

SHIFT SUPERVISOR,  
MIDFIELD MEATS (VIC)

**“Don’t pigeonhole a meat worker,” says Shift Supervisor at Midfield Meats, Leigh Kane. “I started my career sweeping floors in the beef boning room and now I am in charge of 100 people. You get out what you put in.”**

According to Leigh, who is based in Warrnambool, Victoria, there are an endless number of people who are involved throughout the meat processing chain.

“Farmers, transport, scientists... the industry isn’t limited to just cutting up meat and packaging it,” he says. “There are a variety of careers available and there are plenty of avenues you can take to get there.”

Leigh hasn’t always worked in meat processing. Fresh out of high school, he tried different labouring jobs before landing his first job cleaning the beef boning room floors at Midfield Meats.

After working a few roles at the processing plant, he decided to try another career path and he completed an apprenticeship in plastering. He later relocated his family to Queensland to work in the mines, but as the mining boom began to go bust, Leigh considered what was best for his family and his career.

Even though he had just turned 40, Leigh wasn’t keen on spending the next 20 years of his life doing the heavy manual labour associated with working in trades. Through a chance conversation with a friend

back home in Warrnambool - who also happened to be an employee with Midfield Meats - Leigh landed himself a job back at the red meat processing plant where it all began more than ten years earlier.

Things have not only changed a lot for Leigh, but he is surprised at how far the red meat industry has progressed over that time.

“Once you enter the gates at Midfield Meats, it’s incredible,” he says. “It’s not what people think it is. There are working mums, grandparents and skilled professionals. The opportunity to work with such a varied number of people is one of the main things I enjoy about my job. I even have the opportunity to work with like-minded colleagues from different cultures such as Korea, Thailand and China.”

The red meat industry also offers flexible working hours, something that appealed to Leigh and his family.

“The beauty of my role is that the majority of the work starts early in the morning,” he says. “It gives me the opportunity to do activities after school like coaching running and training for the Great Ocean Road marathon. The hours work for my family.”

Having tried his hand in a number of roles, Leigh says the scope of where you can go in the meat processing industry is better than other industries he has experienced. He also likes the fast-paced environment, reaching targets and problem solving.

Leigh says that during his career development he has also been given “curveballs” he never thought he would experience.

“As someone who has worked in other fields and has returned to the industry, I can confidently say there is definitely more scope for career opportunities in meat processing,” he says. “When I get into a role, I try to get as far as I can.”

“Initially all I wanted was a full time job that paid well but what I have now is better than that,” says Leigh.

“I have a secure job, in a reliable industry that not only pays well but keeps me mentally and physically fit too. To be able to work my way up the corporate ladder is something that I am proud of and will continue to strive for throughout my career.”

The next time you eat red meat, have a think about the variety of people who got it onto your plate. It’s thanks to people in all sorts of roles – from HR managers, boners and slicers or IT professionals to

engineers, apprentices and microbiologists. It could even be the result of Leigh’s handiwork.

[www.ampc.com.au/resources/careers](http://www.ampc.com.au/resources/careers)

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