

Erick's story . . .

Erick Zaira came to Australia in 2006 from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). He became a refugee at the age of 19, forced out of Africa because of a long and brutal conflict that caused massive suffering for civilians in the DRC. In his homeland Erick worked as an investigative journalist.

Initially working at Hungry Jacks, his first job on arrival in Australia where he was 'Employee of the Month', Erick was then given the opportunity to develop his skills and pursue a career with Reomart NT. Although he started at the bottom, Erick is working his way up, learning new skills and multi-tasking with the willing assistance of his supervisor Bradmel Matugas. Erick has become a valued addition to the company and is highly regarded by his fellow workmates, considered to be the company 'mascot', being the youngest employee.

Happy to be Reomart NT's 'mascot' Erick feels valued and comfortable in his workplace and appreciates the range of training opportunities he has been given. He believes that for newly arrived people from diverse backgrounds the biggest challenges arise from not paying attention to what employers need and want. With a positive attitude and a healthy dose of mutual respect Erick believes, and is living proof, that great partnerships can be made between employers and employees of refugee status.

His advice to employers that are considering taking on newly arrived people from culturally diverse backgrounds is, "Give them a go and the chance to show you what they can do. Everyone is learning and we have to start somewhere. We may not have Australian work experience, but that doesn't mean we can't do the job."



**Erick Zaira
Employee
Reomart NT (on right)
and Bradmel Matugas
(Employer)**

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