The beginning
As a young child, Joseph was always interested in cooking. Attending and helping out at family barbeques, parties and going to restaurants was just the beginning of his journey. ‘After I graduated, I knew exactly what I wanted to do; it was just deciding how to begin.’

Joseph utilized his degree and landed himself a position as Statistical Coordinator. He then moved into banking for three years and is now currently Manager of two driving test centers. ‘Juggling between my day job and cooking lifestyle has been a challenge, but I’ve got the determination, cooking is something I’m really passionate about.’

Cooking lifestyle
Before Joe appeared on BBC’s MasterChef, he spent his time travelling to places such as India, South Africa and USA to explore the world. ‘When I saw the opportunity for MasterChef, unfortunately I applied too late. Six months later my mum applied for me and I was asked to come in for an audition.’

Joe was required to travel to Soho, which was his opportunity to showcase his talents and present it to the interviewers. ‘I was clever with my approach; I made a Beef Carpaccio with homemade truffle mayonnaise, so by the time I arrived in Soho, it was ready to eat. I made so much of it that the judges went to have the rest for lunch!’ It was after this initial impression, Joe was asked to come on to the show.

The further he went in the competition, the more confident he became. The first challenge he faced was a series of tests for dishes he had to reproduce. In the second half of the challenge, Joe created his own. ‘I enjoyed the whole experience, I’ve learnt a lot from it. I’ve realised that keeping calm under pressure was vital, I felt that I tried too hard at times.’

Joseph’s day job allows him to save some money aside whilst kick starting the new business. Since leaving the show, Joe has been offered the chance to judge a mini MasterChef competition for a local school in Hertford and his recipes are regularly showcased on the Hertfordshire Mercury website.

Education & the future
Studying at Hertfordshire was an ideal location not just for his degree, but it worked out perfectly for his business too. ‘You may think cooking has nothing to do with my studies, but I have fallen back on a lot of skills I developed, particularly more on soft skills such as research and confidence as well as accounting and analytical skills.’ It’s clear that studying any degree will give you both the hard and soft skills you need after graduating, but for those setting up a business; Joe suggests that perseverance is key. ‘Never give up and always be resilient. It’s not easy setting up a new business and it could take many years, but the most important thing is to know that you will get there eventually with persistence. Get all the experience you can, because one day it will prove to be useful.’

Looking to the future, Joe would like to produce cook books and hold cookery schools. We hope it all works out for him! To find out more, please visit his website: www.the-privatechef.co.uk.

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