



Having a prime time

Gareth Johnson is arguably the most highly-trained specialist in the timber industry.

The 57-year-old operations manager at timber importer and distributor Premier Forest Products is about to celebrate his 10th year at the award-winning company which he joined following a '31-year apprenticeship' at one of the industry's largest importers.

In fact, so impassioned is he by his job, that he refers to his time since joining Premier as the very best of his life.

And while this level of job satisfaction may be unusual, for Gareth it's a fundamental part of why he is proud to be the longest-serving staff member at Premier, and why he is looking forward to his next 10 years at the organisation.

Gareth said: 'A cat has nine lives. Well I'm lucky enough to have enjoyed two – life before Premier and life after it – and for me the last 10 years have certainly been the best of my life.'

'When I joined the company there was a £3m turnover. This has now

reached £30m and I'd like to think that I played a part in accelerating this growth. The ethos at Premier is to empower all staff, from the most junior up, to feel that they really can make a difference.'

'We have a very informal management structure, and the directors are very approachable, and that's why as a company it's such a great place to work.'

Indeed this 'approachable' ethos, may have something to do with the fact that Gareth himself, in pre-Premier days, was responsible for training some of the Premier Forest Product directors when they themselves were learning the ropes of the timber industry.

'I witnessed the three Premier directors at the very start of their timber industry careers, and in fact I helped train one in my sales team, and convinced another to join the office I was working from.'

Gareth and Premier's three directors are pictured marking the anniversary. Gareth was presented with champagne.