



Research summary
December 2013

THE OPPORTUNITY- INFORMATION GAP

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
WITH SCHOOLS

Today's young people, tomorrow's workforce



WORK



WORKFORCE



WORKPLACE

Championing better work and working lives

The CIPD's purpose is to **champion better work and working lives** by improving practices in people and organisation development, for the benefit of individuals, businesses, economies and society. Our research work plays a critical role – providing the content and credibility for us to drive practice, raise standards and offer advice, guidance and practical support to the profession. Our research also informs our advocacy and engagement with policy-makers and other opinion-formers on behalf of the profession we represent.

To increase our impact, in service of our purpose, we're focusing our research agenda on three core themes: the future of **work**, the diverse and changing nature of the **workforce**, and the culture and organisation of the **workplace**.

WORK

Our focus on work includes what work is and where, when and how work takes place, as well as trends and changes in skills and job needs, changing career patterns, global mobility, technological developments and new ways of working.



WORKFORCE

Our focus on the workforce includes demographics, generational shifts, attitudes and expectations, the changing skills base and trends in learning and education.

WORKPLACE

Our focus on the workplace includes how organisations are evolving and adapting, understanding of culture, trust and engagement, and how people are best organised, developed, managed, motivated and rewarded to perform at their best.

About us

The CIPD is the professional body for HR and people development. We have over 130,000 members internationally – working in HR, learning and development, people management and consulting across private businesses and organisations in the public and voluntary sectors. We are an independent and not-for-profit organisation, guided in our work by the evidence and the front-line experience of our members.

THE OPPORTUNITY- INFORMATION GAP

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS

Youth unemployment has become a key issue in the UK. Over the last few years, the number of young unemployed people has hovered stubbornly around 1 million, which has prompted a public debate about a 'lost generation'. Even university graduates, who traditionally just 'walked into jobs', struggle and now find that their chances of getting a (good) job straight out of university are limited. Many young people still in secondary education also worry about their future. Sobering recent data from The Prince's Trust highlighted how one in six young people believe they will end up on benefits for at least part of their lives.

There are a number of different reasons for this and views differ as to whether issues on the employer side, the education system or even young people themselves are responsible for more difficult education-to-work transitions. One thing, however, is clear: CIPD and other research has shown that, with entry-level jobs disappearing, there are not enough access routes for young people into organisations. Previous CIPD survey data highlighted that almost three-quarters (73%) of employers believe that there need to be more routes into organisations for non-graduates.

And yet, there are some indications that the tide may be about to turn as more and more employers review their engagement with young people and start to develop their portfolio of youth opportunities: Barclays, an organisation traditionally focused on graduates and more experienced workers, now offer 1,000 Apprenticeships explicitly aimed at those not in employment, education and training (NEET), and Nestle UK and Ireland just committed to offering 1,900 employment opportunities for young people over the next three years. That these examples aren't an exception but part of a growing trend is highlighted by our latest survey of employers on these issues.

The employers we've surveyed have told us that over the last 12 months they've increased a variety of access routes into their organisations. Fifty-six per cent state that they now offer more Apprenticeships, 50% more Traineeships, 48% say they've increased their school-leaver programmes and 44% and 37% offered more internships and work experience programmes. In a world where fewer young people have Saturday jobs (a recent report by the UK Commission for

56%

*of those offering
Apprenticeships report
they have increased over
the last 12 months.*

24%

of employers say they have not received an application from a 16–24-year-old over the last 12 months.

Employment and Skills highlighted the ‘death of the Saturday job’ for many 16–17-year-olds) or combine work and study but where employers increasingly ask candidates for work experience, these schemes that expose young people to the world of work are crucial to improve education-to-work transitions.

The increase in opportunities is of course great news for the many

young people preparing to enter the labour market. However, there is a risk of many missing out on the opportunities that are on offer because they simply won’t know that these exist and how they can go about applying for them. Because while employers say they’ve increased their opportunities for young people, 24% say they have not received an application from a 16–24-year-old over the last 12 months

Table 1: Programmes offered by employers (%)

Type of programme	Employers offering it	Employers reporting an increase	Employers who report no change	Employers reporting a decrease	Employers who don’t know
Work experience opportunities	41	37	22	19	23
Internships	18	44	15	17	23
Apprenticeships	31	56	17	10	17
School-leaver programmes	6	48	22	12	18
Graduate schemes	28	36	22	18	24
Traineeships	15	50	19	11	19
Other programmes aimed at young people	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
None of these	35	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Base: All HR workers (1,035)

Table 2: Employers who have received an application from a young person aged 16–24 in the past 12 months, by main sectors (%)

	All	Private sector	Public sector	Voluntary sector
Yes	68	62	68	60
No	24	31	8	35
Don’t know	8	7	24	5

Base: All HR workers (1,035), sector data based on YouGov panel only: private sector (522), public sector (179), voluntary sector (74)

Table 3: Employers who have engaged with schools or colleges in their local area, by main sectors (%)

	All	Private sector	Public sector	Voluntary sector
Yes	35	25	54	42
No	58	69	27	56
Don't know	7	6	19	3

Base: All HR workers (1,035), sector data based on YouGov panel only: private sector (523), public sector (179), voluntary sector (74)

The schools assessment body, Ofsted, has recently carried out a review of the delivery of careers advice and guidance in schools. The review, published in September 2013, found that the current system is not working well enough – with only one in five schools effective in ensuring that its students are receiving the level of information, advice and guidance they need to support their decision-making. The report highlighted the limited nature of the advice available, in particular when it comes to alternatives to university education.

It's clear that representatives from the world of work can play a major role in helping to address

these issues by going in to talk to students about the options available. However, more than half of employers (58%) questioned in our latest survey said they do not engage with local schools (this figure is 69% for the private sector). When asked why, an overwhelming majority (63%) said they have not considered this or they are not sure what they have to offer to schools.

What these employers don't realise is that simply meeting an employer can have a powerful impact on a young person. They say a piece of information can change a person, and when it comes to knowing about the opportunities

58%
of employers do not engage with schools.

Table 4: The reasons why employers do not engage with local schools, by sector (%)

	All	Private sector	Public sector	Voluntary sector
Organisation doesn't know how to	5	3	5	9
Not sure what organisation could offer to a school	21	21	15	9
My organisation doesn't support schools engagement	8	9	12	14
Lack of response from schools	4	6	3	1
Not considered it	42	42	32	42
Other	23	23	23	28
Don't know	8	7	19	2

Base: All working in HR and whose organisation does not engage with schools/colleges (567), sector data based on YouGov panel only: private sector (372), public sector (43), voluntary sector (38)

Young adults who encountered four or more employers while at school, on average, are up to 20% less likely to be NEET.

that are available, that's definitely the case. Forthcoming research by the Education and Employers Taskforce, to be published in the *Journal of Education and Work*, shows positive links between the volume of contacts a young person has with employers and their later employment outcomes. Young adults who encountered four or more employers while at school, on average, are up to 20% less likely to be NEET, earn 18% more when in full-time work and are much more confident that their early careers are going in the right direction than their comparable peers who had a low level of employer contact while at school.

Feedback collected through the CIPD Steps Ahead Mentoring programme for young jobseekers has also demonstrated the huge impact regular interaction with an employer can have on a young person. In addition to

providing information about the opportunities on offer, employers can also help with highlighting what they expect from their young recruits, something that is also a key issue in terms of the disconnect between employers and young people. This is explored further in the CIPD report *Employers are from Mars, Young People are from Venus: Addressing the young people/jobs mismatch*.

Policy-makers talk a lot about making access to schools easier for employers: but that mechanism already exists for individuals via the Inspiring the Future initiative, which matches employers and state schools. This new survey data shows that a lot more needs to be done to convince employers of the benefits of this engagement in the first place, including highlighting what they can offer to schools and young people.



INSPIRING THE FUTURE

provides employers with an easy way to engage with local schools and colleges. It is a flexible scheme that allows employers to sign up via a secure online portal for a range of options, including careers insight talks and inspiring women, a scheme introduced to encourage the ambitions of

school-aged girls. The CIPD has also teamed up with Inspiring the Future to provide a CV and interview advice element to the initiative, advice that HR professionals are particularly well placed to give. To date more than 1,200 HR professionals have signed up. To sign up visit www.inspiringthefuture.org

For more information on this report or the CIPD Learning to Work programme please contact Katerina Rüdiger, Head of Skills and Policy Campaigns at the CIPD: k.rudiger@cipd.co.uk

Background to the survey

The data referenced in this document has been taken from a survey conducted using an online interview administered to members of the YouGov Plc GB HR Panel for 2,000 HR directors and 8,000 HR professionals. The total sample size is 1,035 HR workers. Fieldwork was undertaken between 6 and 25 November 2013. The survey was

carried out online. Emails were sent to panellists selected at random from the base sample. The email invited them to take part in a survey and provided a generic survey link.

The figures have been weighted and are representative of UK businesses.

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Today's young people, tomorrow's workforce

Learning to Work is an action-focused programme led by the CIPD to promote the role of employers in reducing youth unemployment. It falls within the CIPD charity objective to **champion better work and working lives**.

The overall aim of the Learning to Work programme is to promote the business case for investing in the future workforce and increase the number of opportunities available for young people to engage with the world of work. We encourage HR professionals and employers to recognise and champion their role as key players in tackling youth unemployment by taking part in and promoting youth volunteering schemes, offering a wider range of access routes into their organisations and making their recruitment and management practices youth-friendly. We also lobby policy-makers to ensure that the education system is doing enough to prepare people for the workplace and, via our HR volunteers, directly promote employability skills among young people.

cipd.co.uk/learningtowork



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