

YOUNG
PEOPLE
WORK

YOUTH Summit 2021

A summary



Overview



On 17th November we held our first face-to-face Movement to Work (MtW) Youth Summit since lockdown. We welcomed 54 attendees including HR leaders from across the MtW network (existing members and prospective), together with young people who are currently job-seeking, in employability programmes, or have overcome barriers to work and are now in steady employment.

What we set out to do

1. Provide a positive platform for young people to share their lived-experiences in a way that is safe and truly heard
2. Offer business leaders a real opportunity to listen to young people, understand their journey to work and encourage them to use these insights to drive best practice
3. To refresh and deepen Movement to Work's understanding of what a quality job and career means to young people today
4. To uncover what barriers need to be addressed for more young people to enter the job market
5. To collate insights gathered directly from young people and implement into MtW's forward-looking strategy

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to our event collaborators at **The Prince's Trust** who provided us with our fantastic Panel Host **Tyler West** (Prince's Trust Celebrity Ambassador, KissFM DJ, TV & Radio Presenter), and connected us with two young Prince's Trust creatives who were our photographer (**Fanny Beckman**) and videographer (**Lyle Ashun**). The 'sold out' event was MC'd by Movement to Work Graduate **Anastacia Jamfrey** (BAE Systems) – big thank you to her for continuing to wave the MtW banner for and with us!

Special thanks also goes to Movement to Work employer partner **BT** who provided us with a spectacular venue (BT Tower, Fitzrovia), food and drink, audio/visual and branding support. Thanks also to our partners at **Marks & Spencer, Tesco, Diageo, BAE Systems** and **Unilever** who also provided financial support, free products and vouchers for goodie bags for the young attendees.



*"I'm not a risk.
I'm an **investment**."*

What came up

There was a fantastic youth panel and eight different roundtable discussions ranging from 'Accessing Apprenticeships' to 'Building Confidence'. For the purpose of this short summary – we've pulled together some of the more prominent problems raised and possible solutions offered during the summit.



"It's not always about the pay... it's about having a purpose"

Problems

- **COVID-19:** The social and mental effects of the pandemic continue to negatively impact young people's confidence and general wellbeing. For some, virtual programmes and home-working can be more accessible i.e. can be a way to avoid the commute and therefore save time and money. Others have a desire to be in the workplace, want a change of environment and are keen to learn face-to-face from their peers.
- **Visibility:** There was concern around opportunity awareness – driven by not knowing where to find opportunities and/or there being too many platforms making it complicated, stressful and time consuming – opportunities are being missed as a result.
- **Language:** Young people expressed finding job hunting and lengthy applications overwhelming including the use of language which can feel intimidating i.e. unrealistic expectations around previous experience and qualifications, use of corporate jargon, long lists of required skills.
- **Feedback:** It was shared how too often potential employers or training providers do not respond to their emails, enquiries and applications or do not give feedback post interview – this was felt to be demoralising and damaging for young people.
- **Logistics:** We heard how young people still face logistical barriers such as not having a form of ID, digital equipment, struggling with money management, or can't afford the commute.

Solutions

- **COVID-19:** From the start of the recruitment process into employment, employers must take care to offer personal support alongside professional development. They should strive to offer a flexible or hybrid approach to the workplace that can respond to individual needs.
- **Visibility:** There needs to be a more joined-up effort between employers and youth outreach organisations, schools, colleges and training providers to ensure people who need these opportunities know about them. Could employers work harder to 'meet young people where they are' and diversify how they market opportunities i.e. via social media and influencers? Could there be a one-stop-shop so young people can reduce the number of platforms they search?
- **Language:** Employers must take care to use accessible and simplified language and challenge themselves to further reduce their minimum requirements – choosing instead to invest in on-the-job training for young people.
- **Feedback:** Employers must make a renewed effort to respond to every young applicant, to give regular updates throughout the recruitment process and always offer feedback whether successful or unsuccessful.
- **Logistics:** More joined-up knowledge of existing schemes, grants and financial support packages. Employers should always try to support disadvantaged young people with key expenses i.e. travel, food and uniform support, and consider paying young people 'up front' for month one to avoid financial chaos.

Next steps

- Over the next few weeks and months we will be using the insights from the Youth Summit to further develop our strategy for the year ahead– with a key focus on our Movement to Work CEO Summit and Youth Employability Awards coming up in March 2022. Here we'll be putting some of the topics raised to senior influencers in business and government – with a hope to drive and deliver impact and positive change throughout our network and beyond.
- We will host a youth focus group with a view to work with our employers to ensure job descriptions and recruitment processes are more accessible and attractive for young people.
- We will encourage our employers to always 'reply and respond' to young applicants, and commit to providing useful feedback that will help boost their prospects for next time.
- We will be relaunching our Youth Ambassador programme in 2022 – with a renewed effort to put young people at the heart of everything we do. If you or someone you know wants to get involved, please drop a note to:
elaine.mcculloch@movementtowork.com

*"You can't see me because
I have no qualifications
but I have skills to offer
your company"*



Stay involved

Please Follow us, Like, and Share on all our social media channels, and tag us in content that you want us to see! Here you will also see the latest updates from the Movement to Work network and how you can get more involved.

For more information on any of the above please contact:
info@movementtowork.com or via your Movement to Work account manager.

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Thank you!