



YOUNG
PEOPLE
WORK

YOUTH
Summit
2022

Movement to Work

Youth Summit

10th November 2022

An overview

Hosted by

BT Group



MOVEMENT
TO WORK™

Summit overview

On Thursday 10th November we held our annual Movement to Work Youth Summit in Birmingham, hosted by our partners BT Group. We welcomed over 100 attendees including HR, youth outreach and training professionals, alongside 46 young people who are currently job-seeking, in employability programmes, or have overcome barriers to work and are now in steady employment. Putting young people front and centre – with a youth ambassador as our MC, all youth panel and youth presenters who fed back on the roundtable sessions, this document presents a summary of the fantastic discussions which were at the heart of the event.

Summit objectives

- Provide a platform for young people to share their lived-experiences in a way that is safe and truly heard, in order to refresh and deepen our understanding of what a quality job and career means to young people today.
- To collate insights direct from young people and implement into the Movement to Work forward-looking strategy, sharing with key decision makers to drive responsive action.
- Offer business leaders an opportunity to listen to young people, understand their journey to work and encourage them to use these insights to drive best practice.
- To uncover what barriers need to be addressed for more young people to enter the job market and demonstrate the power of quality employability programmes in driving positive outcomes for young people trying to find work.
- Educate our network on the Movement to Work Youth Ambassador programme.
- Encourage more employers to join the Movement and play a key role in driving social change by creating opportunities for young people.

Acknowledgements

Our inspirational event MC was Movement to Work Youth Ambassador, Gavin Phipps, who only a short while ago was a young person trying to get ahead. Gavin was born and raised on a council estate in south Birmingham. Coming from a struggling family, he found it difficult to do well in school, which was only made worse by the bullying he experienced. With the help of a Department for Work and Pensions Movement to Work programme, Gavin is now thriving as a Jobcentre Employment Coach.

Our panel discussion and feedback sessions were hosted by Prince's Trust supporter and BBC Presenter and Producer, Jameel Shariff. Our photographer was Fanny Beckman, who has previously been through a Prince's Trust programme and who uses art to raise awareness of social injustice. The event was delivered with the help of Powwow Events.

Special thank you to Movement to Work employer member, BT Group, who provided us with a spectacular venue (Three Snowhill Birmingham), food and drink, audio/visual and branding support. Special mention also to Alison Morris and the stellar group of BT Group apprentices who helped to ensure the smooth running of the day. Thanks also to our partners at Tesco who kindly donated vouchers for our young attendees and to our fantastic guest speakers, Mayor Andy Street and David Gaughan from the West Midlands Combined Authority.



Our Youth Summit MC, Movement to Work Youth Ambassador, Gavin Phipps

Key themes

- ❑ **Work experience is relevant but has an image problem:** Work experience is a step on the journey but needs to be better promoted and provide a meaningful experience for the young person. It should have an end goal i.e. an assessment centre, interview for an apprenticeship or further support.
- ❑ **Meet us where we are:** Young people continue to share that they don't know what's out there. They challenged employers to be more creative and think "outside the box" when promoting their programmes and opportunities.
- ❑ **Show real benefits:** Young people want it made clear the real benefits of working for an organisation and what they stand for (above a pension plan!) i.e. company values, team culture, how diverse and inclusive an organisation is, provision of facilities e.g. prayer rooms, mental health services and support and how environmentally aware a company is.
- ❑ **Speak straight:** Young people want transparency around the details of opportunities, when and how will they hear back during the recruitment process, what the interview or job really entails, and what any opportunity could potentially lead to.
- ❑ **Uncomplicate processes:** Young people reported experiencing the highest levels of stress during the application and interview stages. They would like to see shorter processes that are accessible for those with diverse needs and suggested more open days, jobs fairs and introductory phone calls, as well as early sight of interview questions and trial shifts instead of CVs.
- ❑ **Money worries:** Young people continue to share frustration that often programmes are poorly paid or not paid at all. This creates financial stress and a reluctance to engage. Young people agreed all work experience programmes should be financially supported.
- ❑ **Community outreach:** Young people told us that they need better education on career paths earlier on and that employers should be more visible in the community i.e. in schools, colleges, youth groups.

"Less people doing apprenticeships now than there were five years ago"
- Local government representative



"Judge me on my work before anything else" - Youth participant





Data & insights

Alongside our conversations, we used Slido to conduct some live polling* on the day. Here's what we learned..

Top 3 moments on the employment journey are the most anxiety inducing:

1. Interviews 82%
2. Post-interview wait 60%
3. Applications 65%
4. First weeks of job 31%
5. Job search 27%
6. Pre-job search 18%

Employers shared some of the reasons why youth talent is so important to them:

1. They are innovative / bring fresh ideas 59%
2. They are the future 37%
3. They bring diversity 17%
4. They possess digital skills 12%

Top two things employers can do to reduce anxiety during the employment journey:

1. Always reply / feedback at each stage as quick as possible 72%
2. Simplify processes and language 68%
3. Mentorship / buddy programmes 34%
4. Provide / signpost mental health support 15%

*40+ respondents



"Post COVID.. it's like learning to walk again." - Youth participant

"Let me show you what I can do because if I just show you my CV you won't hire me." - Youth participant



"Hearing first-hand their stories of dealing with the challenges of getting into work and what employers can do to help was invaluable. I came away with so many concrete ideas to take forward, not to mention new connections – young and old!" - Employer



Roundtable discussions

TOPIC 1. Work experience: Is it still relevant and what does 'best in class' look like?

Quality of experience: Give young people a real chance to prove themselves rather than giving them the “jobs that no one wants to do.” Ensure the young person has a buddy to provide guidance, mentorship and a “safe space.” There is an appetite also for hybrid work experience programmes (time in person plus time online).

Increase motivation: Employers need to incentivise young people over and above the experience itself, for example, with pay or financial support, attractive benefits, offering a practical set of transferable skills or qualifications to be gained, an interview or job guarantee or “built in aftercare.”

Be transparent: Employers need to provide clarity and structure about what opportunities entail and what to expect before, during and after the programme ends. This includes employers sharing the schedule and outline for work experience programmes at the point of advertising the role.

Do it well or not at all: Employers need to avoid discouraging young people and potentially damaging their brand reputation by investing the required time, effort and money in their employability programmes. In the long term this will mean the programmes become truly beneficial for both the young people involved and for the employer who gains a diverse talent pipeline.

Financial support: Work experience programmes should be better financially supported, with travel, food and clothing expenses covered as a minimum.

Shout loud and proud: Employers who are doing this well need to talk about it publicly, to help raise awareness of positive work experiences and share best practice/knowledge to continue to drive standards in work experience delivery.

Work experience blueprint: There is a place for guidance on what excellent work experience looks like and the elements which make it successful. Speak to your Movement to Work account manager for more information on our best practice guidance.

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Roundtable discussions

TOPIC 2. Engagement: How do we reach young people?

Think outside the box: Employers should explore non-traditional recruitment channels to meet young people where they are and use more targeted advertising to promote opportunities. This includes punchy social media campaigns on channels such as TikTok and Instagram and the use of influencers or QR codes where young people can find out more about the company and opportunity quickly and easily. Employers should also consider advertising where young people congregate, i.e. parks, shopping centres and “chicken shops.”

Community presence: Alongside more digital targeting and creative advertising, young people suggested employers need to intervene earlier to come face-to-face to help to educate them on career paths i.e. in schools and colleges, hold open days, attend jobs fairs and run taster sessions. Currently, career support does not equip young people with the knowledge required to look for jobs. They feel they lack commercial awareness and are not made aware of job opportunities linked to their interests/subjects at school in any meaningful way, so physical presence by employers is key.

Easy first step: Long applications need to stop. Questionnaires or personality quizzes for entry level jobs or employability programmes feels excessive. Instead, employers could try introductory phone calls, hold open days or run trial shifts.

Language: Employers need to communicate with young people in a way that inspires them, not daunts them. Consider neurodiversity, scrap the jargon and simplify language to make job descriptions and application processes quicker, less stressful and more accessible for all.

Benefits now pensions later: Explain what’s best about your company at the top of the application or advert and focus more on immediate benefits i.e. the pay, whether there’s a guaranteed job or interview, the buddy systems in place, your mental health provision and access to facilities.

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Andy Street CBE, Mayor of the West Midlands, sent words of support and encouragement ahead of the Summit

Roundtable discussions

TOPIC 3. Pathways: How do we make sure work experience programmes kickstart careers?

Pathway or no way: Employers should commit to providing a clear next step following a programme to raise motivation and engagement. Position work experience as a stepping stone i.e. as a route into an apprenticeship or direct entry role. But...

Opportunities post WEX are not always appealing: Generally there is an observation that apprenticeship salaries are too low, especially for young people who are paying rent for example. Also, there is still a feeling of stigma being attached to those who are doing an apprenticeship.

Let work experience be the CV: "Judge me on my work before anything else." Offer participants jobs based on their performance during their work experience placement.



Movement to Work member and Summit co-host, Alison Morris, Digital Impact in Education Manager at BT Group

Tailored approach: Programmes need to be less generic and more bespoke to an individual, their strengths and needs.

Expand horizons: A need for interventions which help to demystify the world of work and help young people understand the different wide-ranging roles within different industries i.e. rotations around a business to experience different departments, open days, 'a day in the life' experiences at schools and colleges.

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TOPIC 4. Wellbeing: How do we build confidence between young people and employers?

Streamline applications: Applications are highly stressful for young people starting out in the world of work. It would be helpful if employers could make these early stages as quick and stress free as possible.

Interviews are intense: It would really help young people if ahead of interview they had clarity about the format and the questions they are going to be asked shared in advance. so they can prepare and focus on presenting themselves in the best possible way.

Feedback is Key: It was noted that at every step in the recruitment process, a young person's self-confidence and mental health is at risk of being negatively impacted, for example, when they don't hear back after investing time in submitting an application or feeling interrogated at interview. Employers should tell young people how and when will they hear back and even if a candidate isn't successful, it's critical that employers commit to giving them helpful feedback.

Mental health check: Employers should put mental health front and centre of their approach to recruitment. It would be helpful if employers found ways to assess or check with candidates to find out if they are applying or arriving at interview with mental health worries, helping young people to feel that an employer is on their side no matter the outcome.

Diversity: Employers must ensure their recruitment processes and testing methods truly work for those who are neurodiverse or diverse in ability. How do we give diverse people who can't cope with traditional methods the chance to shine? Also, diversity in an organisation is really important to young people and something which feeds into their decision making process whether they choose to work somewhere or not - "If you see it, you know you can be it."

Show your values: It inspires young people to know clearly what your organisation stands for and how this shows up day-to-day in your business i.e. how committed is your organisation to environmental issues and social causes, what is the team culture like, your mental health awareness and provision. If you have special practices and benefits in place to help with a person's mental health, show it clearly!

First month cash flow: Young people shared the stress caused by that first month on the job awaiting salary and being unable to afford to cover basic costs. Employers should consider create ways to remove this early salary pinch.

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“Be loud about your company. We’re here, and we need to hear from you!” - Youth participant

“The Youth Summit was a great opportunity to hear from young people and the message that came loud and clear to me was how crucial quality work placements are in the process.” - Employer

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, in order to drive and deliver impact and positive change throughout our network and beyond.
- Employers - join the Movement! If you are not already involved with Movement to Work, consider joining today. There is no fee for your organisation, all we ask is that you support our mission to deliver quality programmes and life-changing opportunities for young people.
- Young people - join our Youth Ambassador programme! Have you completed a MtW programme and want to be part of a growing community of young people committed to adding their voice and inspiring employers to break down barriers to work? Register your interest:
www.movementtowork.com/youth-ambassadors



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 your Movement to Work account manager.

www.MovementtoWork.com

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Thank you!