Improving employability

How local businesses can work with schools and colleges to improve young people’s employability skills

Why should I take an interest in young people’s education?

Opportunity to: investigate local potential recruits, e.g. through apprenticeships; shape employability skills; pass on enthusiasm for my sector; develop tomorrow’s workforce; influence teaching to make it relevant to the local economy.

What am I going to get out of the relationship?

Opportunity to: meet potential apprentices; get involved in the local community; be promoted in the school e.g. logos on the website or around the school; benefit from better-informed recruits.

What different ways are there to get involved?

You could: take part in a careers education activity for students; support a course project or mock interviews; host workplace visits for teachers and students, work experience or teacher placements; advise on the curriculum; become a school governor.

How much time will this take?

It’s up to you: the commitment could be one hour a week, a month, a year. Your choice! Advance planning is recommended — schools and colleges work to different schedules than business.

How do I make it happen?

Contact: your local school or college, or Teachers in Industry; identify your key contact and use these five questions to guide an initial discussion.

Acknowledging the work of the National Foundation Educational Research, South East Strategic Leaders, London Enterprise Panel and London Councils: www.nfer.ac.uk/employability
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What will our young people gain?
Improved employability skills; access to and greater awareness of job opportunities, especially with SMEs (Small to Medium Enterprise); opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships; smoother transition to employment; better careers information; improved student commitment to their studies.

What will our school/college gain?
More outward focus; greater awareness of local job opportunities; fulfillment of careers guidance duty; better understanding of real workplace skills.

How can employers get involved?
In many ways; as a BoT member; providing more relevant project work; workplace visits; work experience; student mentoring; career talks; teacher placements; mock interviews; supporting employability activities; building relationships with local schools.

How much time will this take?
Time needed will vary; but it is important to agree timescales and aim to build long-term relationships. Advance planning is recommended — businesses are driven by different schedules to schools and education.

How do I make it happen?
Contact: your local business association, consider parent and/or BoT business networks; identify your key contact and use these five questions to guide an initial discussion.

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