

How to make the most of mock interviews and CV workshops

Evidence review for the Careers and Enterprise Company report *What works? The evidence on transition skills events (mock interviews and CV workshops)*. Technical report.

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Summary

This report, published with the kind support of the Careers and Enterprise Company, presents evidence on the operation and impact of transition skills events held in UK schools and colleges. Specifically, evidence was analysed to understand the potential impacts of employer-led activities. This paper reviews the current evidence relevant to the design and effectiveness of employer led transition skills events such as mock interviews and CV workshops. The findings provide schools and colleges with evidence to support the delivery of these events and activities.

The paper draws on a mixture of academic literature and new survey data collected by the Education and Employers research team at a number of transition skills events. The paper uses data collected from a student feedback survey, testimonies from teachers and employee volunteers as well a follow up survey of experienced practitioners, which tested the insights for best practice gathered from the other sources.

Transition skills events are focussed on improving the knowledge, attributes and skills a young person needs when navigating the jobs market and applying for jobs. Such recruitment skills – being able to present about yourself and highlight your appropriate skills in the context of a job’s requirements in what is often a stressful environment – are critical to young people’s success in obtaining employment.

Different types of school and college events

Transition skills can be practiced and taught in a number of different formats, each of which attempts to develop the skills needed to succeed when applying for and securing employment. Transition skills events are often, but not always, delivered with workplace volunteers. The most common types include:

- **Mock interviews**, in which a teacher or other professional provides pupils with a chance to practice their interview technique in a situation mimicking a real life job interview. This often takes the form of a one to one round-robin style session, where students speak to a number of different interviewers in one location.
- **CV workshops**, in which a teacher or other professional helps pupils understand what a good CV looks like, how to write cover letters and what employers look for in a good job application. A CV workshop can be delivered as a talk or classroom presentation with break-out group sessions, as well as a one to one session where students bring in their CVs for evaluation.
- **Recruitment skills events**, in which a teacher or other professional discusses how the labour market works and when and how to apply to jobs. Offering general advice on the current recruitment and labour market landscape, advising young people on who gets shortlisted, and who does not, when it comes to applying for jobs and why.

Methodology

This review sets out evidence from a number of different sources:

- Insights from a literature review which searched academic databases for relevant research publications published across the OECD countries since the year 2000. Other public literature was also considered. In all, fourteen publications were closely reviewed.
- Results from a new survey of 183 14-18 year old students from five schools reflecting on their experiences of recruitment events. The survey asked specific questions about the design of recruitment events and how the young person's skills and attitudes may have been changed as a result of participating.
- Testimonies from teachers and employee volunteers who took part in the events observed by the project team. Teachers and employees were interviewed to provide experienced insights into the efficacy, design or outcomes of different transition skills activities.
- Results from a survey of a further 56 experienced practitioners. This survey drew on practitioner expertise to test and validate insights for best practice found in the literature, student surveys and teacher and employer testimonies.

Conclusions

This review of the evidence found:

Need and Demand

As modern school-to-work transitions become increasingly competitive the need for students to be equipped with adequate recruitment skills has become ever more important. Despite this, recruiters and employers have consistently reported that the current generation of students commonly lack knowledge of recruitment processes, as well as basic interview and application skills. Several large scale studies have demonstrated that current and former students appear to be very aware of the necessity of these skills and would welcome greater provision from their educational institutions. For schools, a key message taken from the literature was: increase the provision of transition activities to align with labour market and pupil demand.

Evidence base

The number of high quality studies and evaluations into transition skills is very modest. The evidence supporting these events is largely qualitative with relatively small sample sizes. More experimental or quasi-experimental studies are needed to offer more definite conclusions about the design and outcomes for events like these. However, from the evidence that does exist it is possible to draw tentative conclusions about impacts and offer advice to practitioners looking to set-up recruitment skills activities.

Impacts

There is sporadic evidence that suggests that transition skills activities can often have positive outcomes for the students taking part. Alongside expected outcomes such as the improving knowledge of what makes a good CV or interview, the evidence presented here highlights that wider impacts can also be expected. It suggests that students who participate in these events are noted as having increased confidence as a result of them. Moreover, these events give pupils a chance to experience and deal with negative feedback, in doing so improving their resilience before entering the world of work. Both CV workshops and mock interview events also offer young people the chance to receive bespoke career advice based on their career ambitions and interests. Further evidence suggests that engagement in transition skills activities can be associated with more positive attitudes towards schooling. Moreover, these opportunities serve to expand the effective personal networks of young people, allowing them access to larger numbers of professionals with more varied types of experience.

Insights for practice

The different evidence sources used in this review provide insights into how these events can best be designed. Taking account of the limited academic studies as well as the new evidence provided here it is possible to give best practice advice for designing and delivering these events with respect to:

Preparation

Schools and colleges should set aside time for students to prepare before an event begins. Students regularly found mock interview sessions more useful if they have had time to prepare questions and answers prior to the event taking place.

Authenticity

Transition skills events should be presented or facilitated by an employer or employee volunteer from the world of work, assisted by teaching staff who know the students taking part.

Interaction

Mock interviews should be delivered as one to one practice interviews rather than as a passive talk or presentation which simply describes the process.

Feedback

Employers should provide feedback on the performance of a young person.

Variation

Students taking part in mock interviews should have the opportunity to be interviewed by a number of different employee volunteers, preferably from different occupational sectors.

Volume

Students should have the chance to take part in multiple transition skills events. In our survey of young people, we found that it was students who undertook the greatest numbers of mock interviews and CV workshops who found them to be most helpful.

Age of Participants

Whilst the evidence suggests that positive outcomes can be achieved across all Key Stages, there is a strong suggestion from both the literature and survey results that best outcomes can be achieved if both CV workshops and mock interviews are offered to students in year 11 or older.

Further research

There is a clear need to improve the quantity and quality of research into actions that schools and colleges can take to help young people succeed through their school to work transitions, equipping them with knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in recruitment exercises. No UK study has explored whether (and how) participation in such school-mediated activities does improve the likelihood of young adults gaining employment. At a time when young people are struggling to compete for employment against older workers, such longitudinal research studies are a high priority.

1. Literature review

The review seeks out research literature of relevance to the delivery and impact of each of the three forms of transition skills event. The review uses a number of explicit methods to demonstrate how studies were included and excluded based on a pre-designed set of criteria. The review was undertaken with the aim of identifying literature which provides reliable insights of value to practitioners, policy makers and researchers. The review considered literature published across the OECD countries from the year 2000 onwards. The review examined the evidence of transition skills events from a wide range of studies using qualitative and quantitative designs.

The main questions addressed in the review included:

- What impacts can be expected from transition skills events in terms of educational and employment outcomes?
- Can impact be expected to vary by pupil type (achievement level, occupational ambition, age, gender)?
- How can transition skills development be optimally delivered?

This review was designed to identify evidence within the literature to inform the optimal design of events so the best outcomes can be achieved for the young people taking part.

Search strategy

A systematic review methodology was applied to source literature from relevant studies. This included:

- setting review parameters—refining the review question, defining keywords, and developing the search strategy;
- searching—the systematic identification of potentially relevant evidence using a keyword strategy;
- screening—the application of pre-determined criteria to report titles, abstracts, and full texts derived from the review questions;
- data-extraction—an in-depth examination, quality assessment, and extraction of evidence; and
- synthesis and reporting—the analysis and identification of key findings.

The research team used the evidence databases ERIC, Google Scholar and JSTOR which allow sophisticated searching across a wide range of thematic databases. The review also considered literature previously identified in studies by Education and Employers for the CFBT, CEC and Edge.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Once the initial search strategy had been carried out, relevant studies were identified from abstracts (and, for some papers, from reading the full pieces), applying the following criteria:

- research that has been published in the English language since 2000;
- studies from OECD countries;
- research that examines the efficacy, design or outcomes of transition skills events (that is mock interviews, CV workshops and recruitment skills talks)

- research that is directly linked to school and college provision (that is all types of schools and colleges ranging from primary education to upper secondary education or equivalent); and
- research that focuses on young people of all types and ages— in England Key Stage 2 (7–11- year-olds), KS 3 (11–14), KS 4 (14–16), and KS 5 (16–19).

Studies were excluded if they:

- focused on training or post-18 education (including higher education)

Given the weakness of the literature, public reports and doctoral dissertations were also considered within the search. The search strategy is summarised below.

Location	Time Period	Sample	Inputs
Worldwide	2000 onwards	Secondary	CV Workshop
		Teenage	Résumé workshop
		School	CV Advice
		Pupil	Résumé advice
		Student	Mock Interview
			Interview workshop
			Interview training
			Interview skills

In all, fourteen pieces were identified within the literature review.

Abstracts

Ali, S. R., Yang, L. Y., Button, C. J., & McCoy, T. T. (2012). 'Career Education Programming in Three Diverse High Schools: A Critical Psychology—Case Study Research Approach.' *Journal of Career Development*, 39(4), 357-385.

This article describes the collaborative development, implementation, and evaluation of a career education program within three ethnically and economically diverse rural high schools in the United States. Using case study methodology, the authors examined the effects of the “A Future in Iowa Career Education” (FICE) programme using three different sources of data (pre–post test results, student evaluations, and focus groups). Context-specific results indicated the programme was associated with increases in self-efficacy and career aspirations and had practical strengths and weaknesses. Results are discussed in terms of current literature and practical implications are provided. To address these research questions, three different types of data were collected for each school. First, the team conducted a pre–post survey with each student who participated in the FICE programme to examine the change in SCCT variables from pre to post intervention. Second, at the end of each of the programme in each of the schools, student evaluations of the programme were collected. Third, focus groups were conducted with students and school personnel at each school to understand their perceptions of the collaborative implementation the FICE programme. Four students from School 1 identified the mock interviews as the most helpful activity and five students identified the Discover

Program as the most helpful activity. One student from School 2 identified interview skills as the one thing they learned, eight students identified specific type of information about colleges or careers (how to apply for college). In terms of Question 2, six students identified “the entire thing” as the most helpful activity and one student identified the mock interviews as the most helpful. Four students from School 3 identified confidence as the one thing they had learned. For example, one participant wrote: One thing that I learned from the programme was “to be yourself and be confident about what you do.” Nine students identified interview skills as the one thing they learned. For example, one student wrote the one thing I learned, “that you have to be very positive in an interview and you have to be prepared.” For Question 2, seven students identified the mock interviews, six students identified the Discover Program, and four students identified the Panel of experts as the activity that was most helpful.

Brewer, J. (2015). *From resumes to dress attire: Preparing teens for interviews*. Masters dissertation: California State University

The purpose of this project was to create an interview preparation curriculum for students at a secondary school in California, United States. This curriculum included proper dress attire, how to create a resume and cover letter, how to answer some common interview questions, what to expect during an interview, follow-up after the interview, and the impact of social media on the job search process. This project took place during the first week of April 2015. Twenty-six students ranging in age from 16-19 were present for the course. The course took place over a three day period, with each class lasting for approximately 30 minutes. During the course, students were encouraged to ask questions and share their experiences with the interview process. Once the final topic had been covered, students were given an opportunity to role play both as interviewers and interviewees. This allowed the students to think about how they would respond to certain questions. Finally, students were debriefed and given a chance to share their feedback on how they felt the course had progressed and to offer any advice for future similar courses. During the course, students stated how much they appreciated the information being taught and how useful it was. In addition, those students who had been through the interview process before reported that the information within the course was relevant and aligned closely with their own experiences. The students reported that they most appreciated the real world examples given during the presentation, saying that the examples made the information seem real and applicable to their own lives.

Damian, I., Baur, T., Lugin, B., Gebhard, P., Mehlmann, G., & André, E. (2015, June). ‘Games are better than books: in-situ comparison of an interactive job interview game with conventional training’ in *International Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Education* (pp. 84-94). Springer International Publishing.

In this paper, the authors investigate the potential of a virtual job interview game for training young adults. The application was developed within a larger research project which aimed to create a scenario-based simulation platform for young people to explore, practise and improve their social skills in the domain of job interviews. The authors tested the platform on 13 to 16 year old pupils from a school in Bavaria, Germany. The system enabled users to take part in a job interview simulation where a virtual character played the role of the recruiter. The virtual character was able to perform both proactive and reactive behaviour. Using social signal processing techniques, the system recorded and analysed the user’s non-verbal behaviours which were used to trigger actions for the virtual characters in real time, but also as material for the debriefing phase. The system was evaluated in a three day study during which the impact of the system was measured on pupils’ job interview performance and compared it to a conventional learning method commonly used by the school (learning from a written job interview guide). Following a three day user study, the authors found that pupils who worked with the training system improved more than those who had used traditional learning methods,

i.e. reading a written job interview guide. More precisely, professional practitioners rated the overall performance of the pupils who trained with the system significantly better than of those who did not.

Hansen, K., Oliphant, G. C., Oliphant, B.J., and Hansen, R. S. (2009). 'Best practices in preparing students for mock interviews.' *Business Communication Quarterly*, 72 (3), 318-327.

This US study emphasises the importance of preparation in transition skills events. The authors hypothesised that the positive outcomes would be increased if a number of preparatory activities were organised prior to the mock interviews. Students took part in a 'frequently asked questions' activity as well as 'partner interviewing' activity, in which students were randomly paired with a partner and asked to interview each other outside the classroom. The study relies on qualitative comments only, in the form of written feedback from participants as well as the teachers and employers involved. While acknowledging that further research is needed to investigate the correlation between the activities and mock-interview performance, following the preparatory exercises, the authors observed increased confidence in students as they approached the mock interview. Several students, particularly after they graduated, commented on how helpful the mock-interview activity and preparation had been in readying them for real job interviews. "The mock interview practice helped me to come across in a professional manner in interviews," one graduate remarked. Another reported, "I had an interview today, . . . and I did everything you taught in class about interviews, and my interviewer was impressed. So impressed that she offered me the job right on the spot."

Ipsos MORI (2009). *Young people's omnibus 2009 – wave 15. A research study on work-related learning among 11–16 year olds on behalf of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. January - April 2009. Coventry: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority*

This report presents findings from the 2009 Young People Omnibus Survey of secondary school pupils, carried out by the Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute on behalf of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The overall aim of the study was to gather information regarding how well schools were preparing young people for their future and their working life in particular. The survey set out to cover the following key issues: what kinds of work-relating learning pupils are receiving in school; how helpful [the pupils] perceive different types of work-related learning to be; who should be taught about jobs and working life at school; and what young people would most like to be doing at age 19. This research follows earlier studies conducted in 2007 and 2004. Specifically the study found that 86% of young people from ages 11-16 found learning interview techniques useful in helping them do what they wanted to in the future and 80% found CV workshops helpful.

Izzo, M. V., Cartledge, G., Miller, L., Growick, B., & Rutkowski, S. (2000). 'Increasing employment earnings: Extended transition services that make a difference.' *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 23(2), 139-156.

This study examined the effects of extending transition services beyond graduation on employment earnings and other post-school outcomes. The study population included vocational graduates who completed a vocational training program at Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development in the United States. During the first year of the project (1990 - 91 school year), 86 graduates were selected to participate (54 were in the experimental programme and 32 were in the control group). During the second year of the project (1991 - 92 school year), 36 additional graduates were selected to participate from an updated list of nominated graduates. Of the 36 graduates, 25 were in the experimental programme to fill slots vacated by participants who had either successfully completed the programme or dropped out of the project, and 11

graduates were in the control group. The size of the experimental group was limited to 25 to 30 participants per job training coordinator. The size of the control group was smaller than the experimental group to minimize the number of youth who could not gain extended transition services. However, enough youth were selected to participate in both groups to ensure adequate statistical power for analyses. Graduates were only assigned to experimental and control groups during the first two years of the project. The third year was dedicated to providing transition and follow-up services to experimental participants, data collection, and analyses. Within the programme 60% of participants completed multiple mock interviews and 95% took part in employability and development sessions. The authors found that young people who had taken part in transitional skills programmes had significantly higher earnings five years on, and were significantly more likely to be employed or on a training programme than those who did not participate.

Mann, A. Dawkins, J. and McKeown, R. (2016). *Towards an employer engagement toolkit: British teachers' perspectives on the comparative efficacy of work-related learning activities*. London: Education and Employers.

This study reports on survey data which were collected initially from: i) the 5,465 Pearson panel of teaching staff ii) members of the 1,500 community of teaching staff then registered as users of the www.InspiringtheFuture.org programme. Between April and August 2012, the research team submitted surveys to the two panels seeking views from participants with teaching experience at Key Stages 3 and 4. In all, 390 individuals completed the survey. Respondents were predominantly subject teachers, heads of department and/or members of senior leadership teams. Respondents were invited to consider a range of 16 common work-related and employer engagement activities, including mock interviews, and to identify firstly those which were in operation in their own schools. The average number of activities observed was eight. 74% of respondents signalled a familiarity with mock interviews. Each respondent was then presented with a new personalised list, including only those activities which they had observed and asked to reflect on the comparative value of the activities in supporting the progress of different types of pupils. 47% of teachers (3rd out of 14 activities) found mock interviews to be effective in giving students an advantage in getting attractive part-time work while in education. Respondents argued that there was a relationship between participation in mock interviews and the academic achievement of young people, notably higher achievers.

Mann, A. Kashefpakdel, E.T, Rehill, J. and Huddleston, P. (2017). *Contemporary Transitions Young Britons reflect on life after secondary school and college*. London: Education and Employers.

This report, sets out findings from a survey of 1,744 young British adults aged 19-24. The survey investigates the experiences of respondents as they engage in transitions which take them from education towards the working world. The focus of the report is on work-related activities commonly undertaken by schools and colleges to help prepare them for such transitions, relating specifically to employer engagement in education. The report sets out the recollections of these young adults on actions taken by educational institutions to prepare them for the working world; their perceptions of the quality of their experiences; where they feel greater preparation would have been valued; and, using statistical regression analysis, what it was that schools and colleges did which actually helped with those transitions. In particular, the study explores whether young adults would have welcomed greater provision of transition skills training whilst they were in secondary education.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. (2004). *Work-related learning baseline study 2004*. Coventry: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

This study collected data on: young people's attitudes towards work-related learning, the structure of work-related learning provision and the quality of work-related learning provision in English schools. Collecting data in these areas was designed to allow a measurement of the impact of the statutory requirement to work-related learning at key stage 4. QCA inserted questions into the 2004 MORI School Omnibus survey to find out about students' attitudes towards work-related learning. In total, 101 schools participated, and fully completed questionnaires were obtained from 2,412 11- to 16-year-olds, including 838 at 14-16. Students from schools in urban areas were found to have been more likely to have undertaken certain work related activities than students in rural schools. These activities include learning how to write a CV (54 per cent of urban students compared with 35 per cent of rural students) and learning interview techniques (48 per cent compared with 27 per cent).

Mann, A. and Dawkins, J. (2014) *Employer engagement in education*. London: Education and Employers Taskforce

This paper considers the range of common employer engagement activities (work experience, job shadowing, career talks, workplace visits, enterprise projects etc) and asks what can each be expected, typically, to give to participating young people in terms of employability skills, attainment and employment outcomes, and changes in insights and attitudes. Moreover, it explores whether different types of young people, as defined by attainment levels, learning difficulties and engagement patterns, can be expected to gain from different types of activity. The authors consider the range of different ways that employers can support the learning and progression of young people in British schools. The paper draws on a wide range of source material to ask: What are the typical benefits of different types of employer engagement? Do expected benefits vary by discrete types of pupils, by attainment level or destination intention, for example? How can teaching staff make best strategic use of employer engagement to support their pupils to succeed in education and then in the workplace? The questions present a first attempt to develop coherent frameworks for understanding the ways in which young people can and do experience the workplace and working professionals whilst still in education.

Marks, M. and O'Connor, A. H. (2006). 'The round-robin mock interview: Maximum learning in minimum time.' *Business Communication Quarterly*, 69(3), 264-275.

The round-robin mock interview process involves small groups of students moving around multiple interviewing stations in a single class period. One student interviews while the others observe. Interviewers conduct a 10- to 15-minute interview and provide feedback to the small group as a whole. In one class period, students participated in one interview and observe two or three more. With five interview groups, five interviewers were recruited from the university and local business community. People with experience conducting job interviews were selected to ensure that the exercise would have authenticity. Care was also taken to select people with different backgrounds and personalities to allow the students to experience a variety of different interview styles (informal/formal). Student feedback from the process was positive. Students indicated that they learned from the experience and gained a good perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of their performance. They were also able to identify areas requiring improvement and develop specific ideas on how they might do so. In addition, students indicated that the exposure to different

interviewers and interview styles was beneficial. Overall, the activity was well received and the students' confidence increased.

Thomas, T. (2013) *"Hey, those are teenagers and they are doing stuff": Youth Participation in Community Development*. Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh.

This doctorate considers youth who participated in a youth-based programme, the Braddock Youth Project (BYP). The report used focus groups, individual interviews and participant observation to collect data. The author conducted individual interviews with youth who had graduated from the Braddock Youth Project. Part of the project was dedicated to 'job readiness training'. A number of participants in the study indicated they would not have participated in an interview with the researcher if not for their experience at the BYP. One said, "Yeah, even now like before I was never a big talker so an interview like this. I never would have said too much. Now I'm more comfortable with talking." Some of the youth who had been in the programme longer than one summer indicated feeling prepared to be on the job market. "Yeah, I feel like I'm definitely ready. I know how to do a resume and things like that." Provision included exposure to reading materials and workshops hosted by BYP, as well as feedback from work and participation in mock interviews.

Tu, T. & Higon, J. (2013). *Education and employability*. London: Ipsos MORI.

Ipsos MORI's 2009 survey of 368 Year 11 pupils found that 94 per cent agreed that 'being taught how to write a CV' and 92 per cent that 'learning interview techniques' would be helpful to them in doing 'what you want to do in the future'.

YouGov, (2010). *Edge annual programme of stakeholder surveys: report*. London: Edge Foundation

This report uses survey data conducted by YouGov between September and October 2009. The report offers insights on the demand for engagement activities from young people and teachers, analysing which specific activities young people had taken part in and where they think more provision is necessary. Of the 1,012 teachers surveyed, most were likely to think there was insufficient employer engagement in their school. High levels of demand were recorded for (55%) mock interviews and (45%) and CV writing lessons. Many students had never taken part in these types of activities. Only 24% had taken part in a mock interview and 44% in CV writing workshop.

2a. Student survey analysis: Mock interviews

This section sets out the findings from a new survey of 183 14-18 year old students from five schools reflecting on their experiences of recruitment events. Completed between February and March 2017, the survey asked specific questions about the respondent's current career ambitions and the design of both mock interview and CV workshop events. The survey then went on to ask whether the young person's skills and attitudes, such as their educational engagement and careers awareness, may have been positively changed as a result of participation. In the analysis below, cross tabulations highlight potential evidence of variation in impacts by pupil and event characteristics.

Background statistics

This section gives a detailed breakdown of the 131 14-18 year old students who took part in mock interviews.

School type	Number of respondents
Sixth form college	20
11-19 Comprehensive	111

Gender	Number of respondents
Female	53
Male	73
Prefer not to say	5

Year group	Number of respondents
Year 9	36
Year 10	60
Year 12	24
Year 13	11

Attitudinal questions

Before today's event, did you have a good idea of the jobs that you want to do after leaving education?

	Number of respondents
Yes	63 (48%)
No	23 (18%)
Not sure	45 (34%)

How did participants rate the events?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
0	1	5	9	23	13	16	27	16	23	7.09

Did you learn something new and useful today?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
1	4	6	8	16	14	18	22	17	25	7.08

Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
2	2	4	3	15	13	14	21	17	36	7.57

Changing attitudes

This section outlines how a young person's attitudes may have changed, or what they may have learnt, as a result of taking part in a mock interview. We found that:

- When surveyed, the majority of students in our sample agreed that in taking part in mock interviews they learnt what makes for a good interview.
- The majority of students agreed that after attending a mock interview they have a clearer sense of what they need to do in school/college to get the job they want.
- The survey data collected from young people attending these events suggests that engagement in transition skills activities can be associated with more positive attitudes towards schooling. Of the participants surveyed the majority noted that both CV workshops and mock interviews motivated them to study harder when in school.

Do you agree with these statements? (1 being totally disagree and 10 being totally agree)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
I learnt how employers actually use interviews when they recruit	1	1	1	3	16	17	11	27	20	28	7.62
I learnt what makes for a good interview	0	1	3	4	15	16	22	17	16	31	7.53
I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to talk about in an interview	0	1	4	7	17	11	25	13	12	30	7.80
Today's event has made me think again about my career ambitions	8	3	9	8	16	12	20	15	16	18	6.47
Today's event motivated me to study harder	5	2	4	6	12	21	16	12	17	27	7.06
After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want	4	5	2	5	17	9	13	16	25	26	7.23

Experiential questions**Have you ever had to prepare for an interview before?**

	Number of respondents
Yes in school	21 (17%)
Yes outside school	18 (14%)
No	85 (69%)

Have you ever done a mock interview before?

	Number of respondents
Yes once	27 (22%)
Yes more than once	6 (5%)
No	91 (73%)

Would you like more interview activities like this in the future?

	Number of respondents
Yes lots	61 (50%)
Yes some	44 (36%)
No	18 (14%)

Which type of mock interview did you do today? (Tick all that apply)

	Number of respondents
One to One sessions	33
Presentation to the whole class	96

Findings patterns between background factors and outcomes

The following section gives a detailed breakdown of whether any background factors or characteristics have an impact on the outcomes or benefits a young person can experience when participating in a mock interview event.

Gender

We found no consistent evidence that positive outcomes are more likely to be achieved depending on the gender of participants.

Gender* On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

Gender	Average score
Female	6.68
Male	7.4

Gender* Did you learn something new and useful today?

Gender	Average score
Female	6.81
Male	7.31

Gender* Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

Gender	Average score
Female	7.55
Male	7.57

Gender* I learnt how employers actually use interviews when they recruit

Gender	Average score
Female	7.40
Male	7.77

Gender* I learnt what makes for a good interview

Gender	Average score
Female	7.10
Male	7.84

Year group

The timing of events like these is important. Whilst the evidence suggests that positive outcomes can be achieved across all Key Stages, there is a suggestion from both the literature and survey results that best outcomes can be achieved if both CV workshops and mock interviews are offered to students in year 11 or older.

- **On average, results demonstrate that better outcomes can be expected from mock interviews and CV workshops if they are carried out at late KS4 and post-16.**

Age * On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

Year group	Average score
Year 9	6.52
Year 10	6.38
Year 12	8.91
Year 13	8.90

Year group* Did you learn something new and useful today?

Year group	Average score
Year 9	6.86
Year 10	6.5
Year 12	8.37
Year 13	8.18

Year group* Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

Year group	Average score
Year 9	7.22
Year 10	7.15
Year 12	8.58
Year 13	8.8

Year group* I learnt how employers actually use interview when they recruit people

Year group	Average score
Year 9	7.91
Year 10	7.14
Year 12	8.25
Year 13	7.9

Year group* I learnt what makes for a good interview

Year group	Average score
Year 9	7.17
Year 10	7.26
Year 12	8.66
Year 13	7.6

Year group* I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to use in an interview

Year group	Average score
Year 9	6.88
Year 10	6.67
Year 12	8.54
Year 13	8.44

Year group* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

Year group	Average score
Year 9	5.85
Year 10	6.14
Year 12	8.16
Year 13	6.4

Year group* Today's event motivated me to study harder

Year group	Average score
Year 9	6.44
Year 10	6.89
Year 12	8.08
Year 13	7.88

Year group* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

Year group	Average score
Year 9	6.79
Year 10	6.87
Year 12	8.39
Year 13	8.22

Certainty

* In this cross-tabulation, certainty relates to how certain the young person was before the event, that they had a good idea of the job(s) that they wanted to do after leaving education.

- Our student survey data indicates that transition skills events have more impact when they are undertaken by students who already have a good idea of their career ambitions. While this is evident in students participating in mock interviews, it is particularly pronounced for those attending CV workshops.

Certainty* On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.36
No	6.30
Not sure	7.13

Certainty* Did you learn something new and useful today?

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.25
No	6.17
Not sure	7.31

Certainty* Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.91
No	7.45
Not sure	7.13

Certainty* I learnt how employers actually use interviews when they recruit

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.58
No	7.27
Not sure	7.87

Certainty* I learnt what makes for a good interview

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.79
No	7.22
Not sure	7.31

Certainty* I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to use in an interview

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.22
No	6.35
Not sure	7.65

Certainty* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

Certainty	Average score
Yes	6.20
No	6.13
Not sure	7.04

Certainty* Today's event motivated me to study harder

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.14
No	6.63
Not sure	7.17

Certainty* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

Certainty	Average score
Yes	7.68
No	5.77
Not sure	7.35

Experience

* In this cross-tabulation, experience relates to whether a young person has previously participated in a mock interview session in their school career.

- **In our survey of young people, we found that it was students who undertake the greatest numbers of mock interviews and CV workshops who found them to be most helpful to them. Results from our student survey demonstrate that young people who had previously taken part in at least one mock interview prior to a new event reported greater positive impacts than peers who were undertaking the experience for the first time. On average, students were 11% more likely to say they had a clearer sense of what they needed to do in school or college in order to get the job they wanted if they had previously attended a mock interview.**

Experience* On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.53
No	6.89

Experience* Did you learn something new and useful today?

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.56
No	6.88

Experience* Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	8.17
No	7.30

Experience* I learnt how employers actually use interviews when they recruit

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.84
No	7.53

Experience* I learnt what makes for a good CV

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	8.15
No	7.24

Experience* I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to use in an interview

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.72
No	6.97

Experience* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.02
No	6.20

Experience* Today's event motivated me to study harder

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.13
No	7.07

Experience* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

Experience	Average score
Yes at least once	7.71
No	7.02

Activity type

- **Young people who had taken part in a one to one mock interview session rather than a classroom presentation were more likely to say they found the activity helpful than those who had taken part in a transition skills presentation. They were also 18% more likely to say they had a clearer sense of what they needed to do in school to get the job they wanted after taking part in a one to one session.**

Type* On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.48
Presentation	6.43

Type* Did you learn something new and useful today?

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.24
Presentation	6.63

Type* Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.65
Presentation	7.18

Type * I learnt how employers actually use interviews when they recruit

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.03
Presentation	7.42

Type * I learnt what makes for a good CV

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.25
Presentation	7.23

Type * I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to use in an interview

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.41
Presentation	6.75

Type* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

Type of event	Average score
One to One	7.59
Presentation	6.03

Type* Today's event motivated me to study harder

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.03
Presentation	6.72

Type* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

Type of event	Average score
One to One	8.34
Presentation	6.84

2b. Student survey analysis: CV workshops

This section gives a detailed breakdown of the 52 14-18 year old students who took part in CV workshops.

Background statistics

School type	Number of respondents
State comprehensive	52

Gender	Number of respondents
Female	24
Male	27

Year group	Number of respondents
Year 11	32
Year 13	20

Before today's event, did you have a good idea of the jobs that you want to do after leaving education?

	Number of respondents
Yes	17 (33%)
No	21 (40%)
Not sure	14 (27%)

How did participants rate the events?

- Transition skills events should be presented or facilitated by an employer or employee volunteer from the world of work, assisted by teaching staff who know the students taking part. The evidence indicates that the adults participating in the event are critical to its usefulness. Students surveyed at transition skills events report that it was very important to them that the person they heard from was from the world of work.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful did you find the event you took part in today? Please circle. (1 being least helpful, 10 being most helpful)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
0	0	0	0	1	0	11	23	12	5	8.15

Did you learn something new and useful today?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
0	0	0	0	2	6	12	21	8	3	7.69

Was it important to you that the person you heard from was an employee volunteer?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
0	0	0	1	2	2	12	12	18	5	8.03

Changing attitudes

This section outlines how a young person's attitudes may have changed, or what they may have learnt, as a result of taking part in a CV workshop. We found that:

- Data collected from our survey of students found that the majority agree that after attending a CV workshop they have a clearer sense of what they need to do in school/college to get the job they want
- Of the participants surveyed the majority noted that both CV workshops motivated them to study harder when in school.

Do you agree with these statements? (1 being totally disagree and 10 being totally agree)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
I learnt how employers actually use CVs when they recruit	0	0	0	2	2	4	7	16	16	5	7.94
I learnt what makes for a good CV	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	13	23	11	8.76
I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to put on a CV	0	0	0	0	1	5	15	15	12	4	7.84
Today's event has made me think again about my career ambitions	1	1	1	1	4	8	11	15	8	2	7.05
Today's event motivated me to study harder	0	0	1	0	1	7	14	14	12	3	7.65
After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want	0	0	1	3	5	7	16	8	11	1	7.05

Experiential questions

Have you ever had to prepare a CV before?

	Number of respondents
Yes in school	8 (15%)
Yes outside school	21 (40%)
No	23 (45%)

Have you ever done a CV workshop before?

	Number of respondents
Yes once	5 (10%)
Yes more than once	1 (2%)
No	46 (88%)

Would you like more CV activities like this in the future?

	Number of respondents
Yes lots	13 (25%)
Yes some	27 (52%)
No	12 (23%)

Which type of CV workshop did you do today? (Tick all that apply)

	Number of respondents
One to One sessions	0 (0%)
Group sessions	32 (62%)*
Presentation to the whole class	52 (100%)**

* ** Percentage exceeds 100% as certain events contained both group sessions and presentations to the whole class.

Findings patterns between background factors and outcomes

The following section gives a detailed breakdown of whether any background factors or characteristics have an impact on the outcomes or benefits a young person can experience when participating in a CV workshop.

Gender

We found no evidence that positive outcomes are more likely to be achieved depending on the gender of CV workshop participants.

Gender* helpfulness

Gender	Average score
Female	8
Male	8.29

Gender* new and useful

Gender	Average score
Female	7.48
Male	7.88

Gender* hearing from employers

Gender	Average score
Female	8.28
Male	7.81

Gender* I learnt how employers actually use CVs when they recruit

Gender	Average score
Female	8.04
Male	7.85

Gender* I learnt what makes for a good CV

Gender	Average score
Female	8.72
Male	8.81

Year group

Year group* helpfulness

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.93
Year 13	8.5

Year group* new and useful

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.93
Year 13	7.3

Year group* hearing from employers

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.53
Year 13	8.85

Year group* I learnt how employers actually use CVs when they recruit

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.5
Year 13	8.65

Year group* I learnt what makes for a good CV

Year group	Average score
Year 11	8.75
Year 13	8.75

Year group* I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to put on a CV.

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.75
Year 13	8

Year group* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.03
Year 13	7.03

Year group* Today's event motivated me to study harder

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.46
Year 13	7.95

Year group* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

Year group	Average score
Year 11	7.09
Year 13	7

Certainty

- Our student survey data indicates that transition skills events have more impact when they are undertaken by students who already have a good idea of their career ambitions. While this is evident in students participating in mock interviews, it is particularly pronounced for those attending CV workshops.

* In this cross-tabulation, certainty relates to how certain the young person was before the event, that they had a good idea of the job(s) that they wanted to do after leaving education.

Certainty* Helpfulness

	Average score
Yes	8.33
No	8.17
Not sure	7.85

Certainty* New and useful

	Average score
Yes	7.90
No	7.70
Not sure	7.35

Certainty* Hearing from employers

	Average score
Yes	8.28
No	7.76
Not sure	8

Certainty* I learnt how employers actually use CVs when they recruit

	Average score
Yes	8.48
No	7.64
Not sure	7.57

Certainty* I learnt what makes for a good CV

	Average score
Yes	9.19
No	8.35
Not sure	8.64

Certainty* I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to put on a CV.

	Average score
Yes	7.90
No	8.05
Not sure	7.5

Certainty* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

	Average score
Yes	7.23
No	6.47
Not sure	7.5

Certainty* Today's event motivated me to study harder

	Average score
Yes	7.66
No	7.70
Not sure	7.5

Certainty* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

	Average score
Yes	7.33
No	6.70
Not sure	7.07

Experience

* In this cross-tabulation, experience relates to whether a young person has previously participated in a CV workshop in their school career.

Experience*Helpfulness

	Average score
Yes at least once	8.20
No	8.08

Experience*New and useful

	Average score
Yes at least once	7.41
No	8.04

Experience* Hearing from employers

	Average score
Yes at least once	8.13
No	7.91

Experience* I learnt how employers actually use CVs when they recruit

	Average score
Yes at least once	8.13
No	7.69

Experience* I learnt what makes for a good CV

	Average score
Yes at least once	8.75
No	8.78

Experience* I plan now to do things in school/college which I will be able to put on a CV.

	Average score
Yes at least once	7.96
No	7.69

Experience* Today's event has made me think again about my career ambition

	Average score
Yes at least once	6.96
No	7.17

Experience* Today's event motivated me to study harder

	Average score
Yes at least once	7.79
No	7.47

Experience* After today's event, I have a clearer sense of what I need to do in school/college to get the job I want

	Average score
Yes at least once	6.96
No	7.17

3. Practitioner and employee volunteer testimonies

The project team observed four recruitment skills events in three 11-19 comprehensives and one Further Education College between February and March 2017. Teachers and employees interviewed offered experienced insights into the efficacy, design or outcomes of different transition skills events. The team asked for respondents perspectives on the impact of recruitment skills events on students, as well their insights for practice based on their relative experience. Participants included careers advisors, careers coordinators, subject teachers as well as employee volunteers from a number of sectors and seniority levels.

Event one

Location	Event	Demographic	School type	Event size
London	Mock Interview – One to one sessions	Mixed 16-18	FE College (SEN students)	0 – 50 students

Response from member of school staff

Preparation

“Preparation is key with events like these. All of the kids on this course have learning difficulties, so if you throw something at them they haven’t seen or heard of before they may just freeze and not know what is expected of them.”

“So the students have been set employability tasks during their normal lessons anyway. They’ve been working in pairs during form time, preparing questions and answering them in pairs. They’ve also had a member of staff (usually me) come in and give them the mock interview. So they’ve had lots of preparation from the college but I thought it would be really useful to have someone come from outside.”

Authenticity / Interaction

“They take the interviews with employee volunteers much more seriously, they are obviously really quite nervous. The students obviously know us already, they’re more comfortable with us. But they need someone to put them on edge because that’s what the real world environment is like. If you go for a job interview it’s not going to be me or my colleague with them. I think it’s important they grasp that.”

Format

“I think it’s most beneficial at age 16 and upwards, because they will be actually going out and looking for jobs and part-time work. I think before that it loses something, most of the time they switch off because most of them honestly aren’t going to use any these tips and skills until they reach 16.”

“It’s better from my experience having a smaller group and having more employers. With all people of this age, but especially SEN students it takes a little while for the confidence to grow. For example each student had 4

interviews and you could visibly tell by the last one they were feeling much more confident and really getting the most from the volunteers.”

“I would do something like this once a term. I would use the first one as a yard stick to compare throughout the year, so not only can you as a tutor or a teacher gauge where the young people are in terms of their preparedness, but you’re also building that confidence in the young people as they can see their progress.”

Outcomes

“These sorts of events are absolutely key for SEN students. Because of the age difference to some of the other college students – for example some of my students are 23 – the careers professionals are sometimes wary of giving any advice and say ‘go and ask your tutor’. For this student type there really isn’t a lot out there. That’s why events like these really add something.”

“I think giving them a chance to put on professional clothing, it changes their mind-sets, it makes them feel older and feel like they could actually go to work.”

Response from employee volunteer

Preparation

“They were extremely well prepared. From their body posture to their confidence you could tell they were well prepared but also excited to be at the event. They had also had a confidence building session in December which was really great to see in practice.”

Format

“I would say a minimum age to have these sorts of events is 16 years old. Due to the learning difficulties that these young people have, I think the participants have to be a certain age and maturity to understand why these events are taking place and really take what is intended from them.”

“In terms of size I would say around 3 young people to each volunteer as the severity of the learning difficulty can mean that certain sessions take longer. You never want the young person to feel like you are rushing them, if you spend more time with a young person I think it rubs off on them and as a result they tend to be more focussed.”

“Sometimes young people with more severe learning difficulties find it difficult to comprehend the advice you are giving. For example we told a few of them how to sit whilst getting interviewed, after looking at the feedback a few seemed to think it was negative, almost a telling off. I found it beneficial to tell them a story, a real life anecdote. From the feedback forms it was clear the young people remembered these stories more than they did the straightforward advice.”

Outcomes

“I think the young people take more from the event if it’s applicable to real life. Even if they may not have interview coming up, at least if they are told when and where they might use the skills they are so much more attentive. For example, I had a young person who had an interview for paid work the next day and you could tell from his feedback form that it really benefited him.”

“In terms of outcomes the biggest thing is confidence. You can tell in their body language and responses that they feel less nervous by the end of the sessions. I think it’s important to let the young people know that it’s okay to feel uncomfortable and nervous, and give them practical means to overcome this.”

Event two

Location	Event	Demographic	School type	Event size
London	CV Workshop – Presentation and group sessions	Mixed 11-18	Comprehensive	0 – 50 students

Response from member of school staff

Preparation

“We have a number of different careers modules within citizenship that build on each other. We’ve had mock assessment centres, talks on apprenticeships plus little drips of information given about careers thinking which help these sessions as the young people already have the mind-set there.”

Timing

“In terms of ideal timing after year 10 is the best time for events like these as the young people have done their work experience. Any time before that it’s a bit pointless as there’s no applicability there for them they have very few experiences to draw on. Doing it again when the young people are in year 12 or 13 would again be helpful as they will be using the skills for more than just summer jobs.”

Interaction

“They see us teachers as people who never leave the school, not even to sleep! Even though most of us have tonnes of external experience and are more than willing to share it, having that different voice really adds some extra, it keeps the young people engaged. They seem to value it more from someone from the real working world. We can repeat the same things as the volunteers say until our faces turn blue but the young people still really take notice when someone from the world of work speaks.”

Format

Group size

“I really don’t think the group size matters as long as the young people are interacting with the volunteer. Today for example they broke down into small groups which encouraged that interactivity. It also gave them the confidence to speak to their peers about their futures, which for one reason or another is a bit of a taboo subject.”

“The key though is having the teacher present throughout the whole session. Being in my position you know the curriculum so can make links to things you know they can grasp and appreciate. More than that though I know the students, so I can pitch in and make links if one student I know is interested in the apprenticeship route. That would be a tip of mine. I also think having the use of computers or a computer room would really help the session flow. Because they’re being asked to write up a CV by hand, which to be honest, no one does this day

and age. Also it would allow them to have a 'work in progress' CV which they work in sessions like this and can also be easily accessed at school, so they can work on it with me or with the careers staff rather than scribbling on a piece of paper and probably losing it or forgetting it on the way home."

Pupil type

"I think the borderline young people need these events the most, they're the ones who are either going to be applying for part time jobs or apprenticeships. But the thing is they're usually the most disruptive, so teachers I think are often put off organising events for them for lack of engagement and feedback. That's why with today's event I mixed up the group and ensured a mixture of gifted and talented students and borderline achievers to encourage one another."

Outcomes

"I would say it gives them a first chance to really think about their CVs, for many of these young people this is completely new information. For example, I had a group designing their CVs on Tuesday and it took them an hour to design the basic bones. It really is starting from fresh for these guys."

"I think also it gives them encouragement to ask about their CVs when they may have been embarrassed before."

Response from employee volunteer

Format

"Group working really helps break up the session and keeps the young people engaged. That's the most important element really. You can go to events like these, where they know they've got no grade or mark and they switch off. Give the young people a chance to speak! Without this they're passive receivers and they really get very little out. I've got a few activities that I use to keep them on their toes. For example, this morning I asked them to give their 'elevator pitch' to me on the spot, not only did it spur on some creative thinking it gave them a chance to think which skills and character traits they would put in the profile section of their CVs."

Outcome

"I think (and I hope!) that the students now feel comfortable formatting a CV or are at least are aware of the do's and don'ts, and you know thinking about their skills."

Event three

Location	Event	Demographic	School type
Leicester	Mock interviews – One to one sessions	Mixed 16-18	Comprehensive

Response from member of school staff

Preparation

“For this particular type of event we advertised to pupils through posters, targeted emails and on the intranet. But to get events like these off the ground you really need to sell into the staff. We’ve been in contact with the progress coaches, individual subject staff and heads of department to really get the word out and I think/hope the messages got down to the students.”

Format

“I think for those looking into vocational pathways these are incredibly important. They’re the ones who will be having interviews to get onto placements in the next few months. We’ve found a list of all those looking into apprenticeships and sent them a text inviting them along.”

“I think first term would be ideal. It’s so busy with UCAS and things but at this time (Spring) the young people are so focussed on exams they don’t have that appetite.”

“I would also ask the young people to bring in a copy of their CV, not only so the interviews are more tailored but also so the employers have a record of who they have spoken to. You would be so surprised how many employers are so impressed with the young people that they ask ‘Who was that young man/woman I spoke to earlier’ so they could put them in touch with their company. Not only is an event like this a chance to fine tune your skills it’s also a fantastic opportunity to network and get your foot in the door.”

Interaction

“I think seeing the employers adds something. They see us all the time, there’s some added weight to talking to someone ‘in the field’. Also I think there’s an issue with repetition from careers staff. We repeat arguably the same messages all the time and offer them the same skills advice but for some of them I think they see it as droning on. Having that fresh voice makes the information seem novel and unbiased.”

Outcomes

“I think obviously these events give the young people a chance to fine tune their interview skills. It gives them a chance to grow their confidence when speaking to someone of real seniority in business which is really invaluable.”

“These events also give them a chance to get some careers advice based on their interests. You’d be surprised how well some of these volunteers know sectors outside their current one. Most of them have been in different jobs for a number of years so they can offer insights in getting into certain careers as well as the skills needed once they’ve got to interview stage.”

“That being said, it’s also incredibly important to complement this employer led provision with sustained careers advice. Sometimes I’ve heard employers contradict each other on apprenticeships etc, in the same event. So it’s important for us as practitioners to be able to provide follow up support if there is any confusion.”

“Also, for a lot of young people the volunteers just aren’t available for their particular sector of choice, for example the arts, they just don’t have the time. There are a number from finance, STEM etc. but none from these areas. So we have to really strive to get these sectors in.”

Response from employee volunteer

Preparation

“I feel like schools and colleges could do more to advertise the profiles of attendees. These could then be advertised by subject specific staff, I feel like that could have more of an effect. If, for example, a maths teacher said to their year 12 or 13 students that an engineering employer was coming in I think it would speak a bit more to them than say a general mock interview announcement on their intranet.”

Pupil type

“I think it really works for the lower socio-economic groups. I came from a pretty poor background, when I was at college I had no chance to speak to any other adults, let alone employers, except my parents and my teachers and I think it’s the same today. Giving these types of young people the chance to speak to adults and expand their networks is unfathomably important.”

Format

“I think you need the young person to bring their CV. It gives you a chance to offer more advice on the short space of time. Otherwise it can run the risk of falling into an impromptu careers advice session. Also it gives you, as the employer, a chance to be in the real interviewer position, asking pointed questions about the young persons’ experiences. You can also offer tailored advice which makes it more worthwhile for both you and the student.”

“The young people should also prepare for an actual job, to make it a real life situation. Get them to fill in an application or something similar before coming in.”

“I wouldn’t do it any earlier than year 12. They just don’t have enough to draw upon and it makes it really difficult for them to get anything fuller out of it. I think the closer to finishing school/education the better and they’re closer to applying to real jobs.”

“I think also in terms of timings, spring doesn’t really work. They’re all either thinking about their exams or using it to just apply to summer jobs. Events like this should be used to expand their horizons as well as thinking about applicable skills.”

Outcomes

“If more young people attended they could get advice on their appearance before an interview, highlighting strengths and allowing them to develop their questioning techniques. For example, what questions to be prepared for and absolute interview must do’s and must not do’s.”

“Also I think it helps young people understand and work on negative feedback which really helps them to set themselves apart from the competition. A big issue for a lot of these kids is confidence.”

Event four

Location	Event	Demographic	School type
Hertfordshire	CV Workshop - Presentation	Mixed 11-18	Comprehensive

Response from member of school staff

Preparation

“I send out a flyer to the students, I speak in assemblies but more importantly, I send out information to parents directly in letter and email form. This not only encourages the young people to attend events, from the informal feedback I’ve heard at events it also gets conversations about careers and their futures going at home - which is vitally important.”

Authenticity

“When you consider our geographical area, most of the kids in our catchment area come from the local villages. Without these events these young people would barely have the chance to speak to any large businesses, let alone consider them as potential career options. It changes their thinking when someone comes from Watford or from London. They start to think “hold on, I can go do that”. It opens up their minds to careers and options they haven’t thought about, just because it’s a different alien voice saying it.”

Careers fairs – different pupil ages/achievement levels

“I think careers fairs in particular are really useful for the younger pupils. They really encourage them to think about companies or careers before they make subject choices in year 9 or year 11. Having at least an idea before you reach these points is really helpful in driving the younger ones to succeed.”

“Also I think careers fairs can be really useful for those who are on the cusp of being at university level or those higher achievers. You can get universities to come in and provide that extra voice encouraging them, they motivate in a different way to the way we can.”

CV workshops – different ages

“CV workshops like the one today are useful for any type of student I think, the skills are transferrable across any achievement type. That being said I probably wouldn’t have them for students any younger than year 9, as it’s more than likely they won’t be considering any part-time work or anything similar until then. I also believe this year group (year 13) is slightly too far along for this type of event, it’s still really useful, but most of them know the skills already. They’re already using UCAS and most have part time jobs.”

Careers talks – talks v other events

“We’ve had some of our old students come in and give a couple of talks, they offer something a bit different. Something a bit more personal if they’re old students. I picked the ones that have gone on the apprenticeship

training route. They've been really useful for the ones who may not want to go to uni. They're really listening because not only are they success stories, most of the time they're from the village over."

Follow-up

"We don't actually do any follow up with our students. We probably should. I think it would be really useful to have a bit of a before and after. Maybe to see how prepared they are in September at the beginning of year 11 to May at the end, just to check their preparedness. I think that would be useful."

4. Practitioner survey

This section presents the findings of a survey of 56 experienced secondary school practitioners gathered in April 2017. The primary purpose of this further survey was to test and validate insights for best practice found after initial analysis of the existing literature, student surveys and teacher and employer testimonies. Using the www.InspiringtheFuture.org platform, teachers and careers professionals were identified based on whether they had organised a recruitment skills or careers event over the preceding year, ensuring the respondents had some experience of organising such employer led transition skills activities. The following statements drawn from available evidence were put to practitioners. Practitioners were asked if they – as people with experience and expertise with these events – would agree.

- **95% of practitioners agreed that mock interviews are more effective when the interviewer is clearly someone from the world of work, whilst 61% agreed better outcomes could be achieved when the presenter of a CV workshop was an employer/employee.**
- **In terms of format, the evidence recommends that mock interviews should be delivered as one to one practice interviews rather than as a passive talk or presentation which simply describes the process. When this assertion was put to the panel of fifty-six practitioners 100% agreed that interactive one to one sessions provided better outcomes for the young people taking part.**
- **There was broad agreement across practitioners that mock interviews were more effective when the student participating is given feedback to improve their future performance, with all survey respondents agreeing (87% strongly agreeing) that this was a vital part of any such experience.**
- **The majority of practitioners agreed that these events have a greater impact on Year 11 or older, rather than younger pupils.**
- **When surveyed, 94% of the 56 surveyed practitioners agreed (69% agreeing strongly) that mock interviews were more effective when students took part in preparatory activities before attending the session**

Survey response

Q1: Mock interviews are more effective when...the students taking part are in Year 11 or older, rather than younger pupils.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	12	13	2	11	15	3	56
%	21.4%	23.2%	3.6%	19.6%	26.8%	5.4%	100%

Q2: Mock interviews are more effective when...they are delivered as a one-to-one interactive practice interview rather than a passive talk or presentation which simply describes the process.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	44	11	1	0	0	0	56
%	78.6%	19.6%	1.8%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Q3: Mock interviews are more effective when...the interviewer is clearly someone from the world of work.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	34	19	2	1	0	0	56
%	60.7%	33.9%	3.6%	1.8%	0%	0%	100%

Q4: Mock interviews are more effective when...the student is given feedback to improve their future performance.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	47	9	0	0	0	0	56
%	83.9%	16.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Q5: Mock interviews are more effective when...time is spent preparing students before the mock interview sessions.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	36	16	3	0	1	0	56
%	64.3%	28.6%	5.4%	0%	1.8%	0%	100%

Q6: Mock interviews are more effective when...students are taught more generally about how recruitment processes work.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	16	28	5	6	1	0	56
%	28.6%	50%	8.9%	10.7%	1.8%	0%	100%

Q7: Mock interviews are more effective when...students are interviewed by a number of different employee volunteers.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	13	15	10	11	7	0	56
%	23.2%	26.8%	17.9%	19.6%	12.5%	0%	100%

Q8: Mock interviews are more effective when...students are interviewed by people in occupations linked to their career ambitions.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	16	17	5	15	2	1	56
%	28.6%	30.4%	8.9%	26.8%	3.6%	1.8%	100%

Q9: Mock interviews are more effective when...undertaken by higher performing students.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	2	2	2	21	20	9	56
%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	37.5%	35.7%	16.1%	100%

Q10: Mock interviews are more effective when...undertaken by lower performing students.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	9	14	2	8	20	3	56
%	16.1%	25%	3.6%	14.3%	35.7%	5.4%	100%

Q11: CV workshops are more effective when...the students taking part are in Year 11 or older.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	9	14	2	8	20	3	56
%	16.1%	25%	3.6%	14.3%	35.7%	6.4%	100%

Q12: CV workshops are more effective when...they are undertaken by students who already have a good idea of their career ambitions.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	2	9	1	22	15	7	56
%	3.6%	16.1%	1.8%	39.3%	26.8%	12.5%	100%

Q13: CV workshops are more effective when...the workshop presenter is clearly someone from the world of work.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	11	24	3	14	4	0	56
%	19.6%	42.9%	5.4%	25%	7.1%	0%	100%

Q14: CV workshops are more effective when...undertaken by higher performing students.


	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	2	2	1	23	18	10	56
%	3.6%	3.6%	1.8%	41%	31.1%	17.9%	100%

Q15: CV workshops are more effective when...undertaken by lower performing students.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Don't think it makes a difference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Number	2	4	2	22	16	10	56
%	3.6%	7.1%	3.6%	39.3%	28.6%	17.9%	100%

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