

Expectations of young's competency

Lorena-Denisia Atanasoae

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, 700506, Romania

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

Informatics and Economics

Abstract

This paper provides an analysis of an increasing important research direction: young's employing. I will present how employers take into account the younger generation and I will also analyze the factors that influence the successful transition of young people to the labor market. Certainly, the importance of the creativity, innovation and different competencies alongside with the ambition and personality of the future employee will be also presented in the following rows.

Keywords: *graduates, career, innovation, perceptions, recruitment, competencies.*

Introduction

Several studies identified the most important criteria that employers pursue in hiring young people. The commitment of graduates is one of the changes brought to contemporary academic education and contributed, on the one hand, to its articulation, to the evolution and needs of society and, on the other hand, to the development of education beyond the national borders. This basic concept emphasizes the concern for the graduates' situation, but also the need to develop professional and personal experiences to facilitate the introduction of future employees on the labor market. Employers recruit prospective employees with the opportunities for their professional and personal development and wage benefits. Also, the strategies they use to promote their jobs and identify the skills of graduates are important

factors in the recruitment process. All this involves a close collaboration between educational policy makers and employers.¹

In the following chapters I will present how much are the young people encouraged to work, which is the top of competencies that employers value the most, how important creative graduates and innovation are to employers' business strategies and why some employers see the recruitment of graduates as too challenging.

I."Learning to Work" campaign

In 2012, CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) has designed a new campaign, entitled "Learning to Work", for young. Their campaign addresses the structural unemployment of young people, and thus there will be gradual changes in the employee-employer relationship. For real success, employers have to overcome the idea of the deficiencies of today's youth. This campaign involves building closer ties between colleagues and employers by engaging with young people, giving them a positive experience of working life and the emergence of various "entry doors" in companies and by supporting young people seeking a job.

At the beginning of 2012, more than one million young people aged 16 to 24 were unemployed in UK and more than 22% of young people were looking for a job. Many employers give young people opportunities to work in their companies, but many worry about lack of work experience. Youth participation in volunteering is an opportunity to gain essential skills at the workplace that employers are looking for. These include innovation, communication, teamwork skills, and the ability to be a good leader. Volunteers are more likely to stand out from potential employers. Besides, employers themselves are involved in social responsibility actions. First of all, to help the community they are part of and, secondly, to connect with the young people involved. On the other hand, another way young people are taught to work are the internships. Nearly one third of employers offer internships. The CIPD also actively encourages employers to pay interns in the period when they work. An internship

¹ Mann Anthony, Huddleston Prue with a response by Kevin Green, CEO of the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (2015). *What do recruiters think about today's young people? Insights from four focus groups*, pp.17-18.

last from three to six months to a year and it is a big plus to an organisation because this is how employers can be in contact with the students and learn them to understand the very basics.²

With the help of the following figure realised by CIPD, I will present the most important and successful seven ways in which employers can have a real success in recruiting young people who are eager to work.



Source: CIPD Report Research (2014). *Employers : Learning to work with young people*, pp. 16

By characterizing the campaign initiated by CIPD, I highlighted the ways in which employers can contribute to the preparation of young people to work. From hiring during their studies, to providing internships. Of course, it takes a lot more to reinforce what has been done through "Learning to Work"!

² CIPD Report Research (2014). *Employers: Learning to work with young people*, pp. 1-2.

II. Top Competencies Searched

A question that young graduates are asking is "What are employers looking for?". The most important competences that employers are looking for at the recruitment stage are the technical knowledges and creativity because employers are considered to play an essential role in the development of technical knowledge through formal training or qualifications. Thus, almost a half of employers recruit for attitude and then train to teach additional skills. Another three competencies that employers value a lot are the effective communication, the ability to understand and work with numbers and the ability to work well as a member of a team. In the following table, made using information from „Qualities employers are looking for”, I will present other competencies that employers are looking for and how often.³

Competencies employers are looking for	How often do they look for them?
Self-management and Teamwork • Arrives ready for work on time. • Professionally presented • Works well as part of the team • Has a positive ‘can do’ attitude towards work tasks and team members • Is respectful of others	• Very often • Very often • Very often • Most of the time • Most of the time
Communication • Asks questions to clarify understanding • Understands and follows verbal and written instructions, policies and procedures • Provides high levels of service to all stakeholders and customers	• Most of the time • Very often • Very often
Planning and organising • Prioritises personal and professional needs including demonstrating a sense of urgency when required • Manages work and other commitments successfully	• Most of the time • Most of the time
Learning and finding solutions for problems • Actively seeks feedback on performance from peers and supervisors • Listens to and applies constructive criticism to improve work performance • Identifies and values professional learning appropriate to current and future aspirations • Identifies issues and refers as soon as possible	• Most of the time • Most of the time • Most of the time • Most of the time
Technology • Utilises technology appropriately for effective work performance	• Most of the time

³ Oxenbridge Sarah, Evesson Justine (2012). *Young people entering work: A review of the research*, pp. 12, pp.37, pp.41

III. The importance of young's creativity and innovation in companies

The essence of an innovative organization is the ability of employees to contribute to the organization's activities that involve the development of processes that center on creativity. Employers should give their workers autonomy to put their own innovative ideas into practice, and the result of this choice could lead to capitalize or improve firm strategies. Employees see the ability to invent and innovate in young generations, so engaging young people becomes an essential factor in terms of competition.

For large companies, this can be a problem because smaller organizations are more likely to have creative young employees. First of all, small companies can be more innovative and can try new things because they are not slowed down by past experiences. Then, it is easier for a smaller organization to treat employees as family members. Thus, family spirit helps small businesses attract young people.

There is no innovation without creativity

While creativity is the act of turning new ideas into reality, the innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product, service or process that creates value for business.

Walking through the unknown and exploring new ideas lead to increasing organizational productivity. The problems of the organization will be resolved faster and more accurately with the help of employees who have the ability to convey new ideas. We can say that companies that help young employees to develop their creativity have a comparative advantage over those who do not. Also, for truly success, organizations need to support and encourage the open exchange of ideas.⁴

IV. Recruiting young people - sometimes a challenge

Some employers see the recruitment of young people as a big challenge. These employees complain of the lack of professionalism of graduates: they do not have the ability to identify their skills, they do not know where they want to apply and they do not know how to dress properly at the interview or at work.

⁴ ILO (2011). *An Introductory Guide for Employers' Organizations: Tackling Youth Employment Challenges*, pp.29

In such cases, the oldest who want to engage are more advantageous because they already have experience on the labor market.⁵

V.Conclusions

Following the chapters presented above, we realize that the relationship between employers and young graduates is not sufficiently tight. Thus, the process of recruiting young people becomes quite complex.

Employers who offer well-paid jobs sometimes have negative perceptions of young people, considering them unprofessional, without specific competencies, or requiring too much attention. Yet, engaging young people can bring more benefits to the company. With the bringing of young graduates to the company, there are new perspectives for business, lower costs, availability and they are trained according to company values and principles. Young people can be cost-effective and offer the skills and the necessary workforce in the future.

Therefore, recruiting young people and strengthening the encouragement of introducing innovative ideas is not just a social responsibility act but also a solid business strategy.

⁵ Winterbotham Mark, Vivian David, Shury Jan, Davies Ben, and Kik Genna, (2014). *UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2013: UK Result*, pp.89.

Bibliography

CIPD (2014). *Employers: Learning to work with young people*, pp. 1-2

ILO (2011). *An Introductory Guide for Employers' Organizations: Tackling Youth Employment Challenges*, pp.29

Mann Anthony, Huddleston Prue, with a response by Kevin Green, CEO of the Recruitment & Employment Confederation (2015). *What do recruiters think about today's young people? Insights from four focus groups*, pp.17-18

Oxenbridge Sarah, Evesson Justine (2012). *Young people entering work: A review of the research*, pp. 12, pp.37, pp.41

Tasmania. Department of State Growth. Skills Tasmania (2016). *Qualities employers are looking for in employees*

Winterbotham Mark, Vivian David, Shury Jan, Davies Ben and Kik Genna, (2014). *UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2013: UK Result*, pp.89.

Lorena-Denisia Atanasoae

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi

Personal Numerical Code: 2980329070055

E-mail: lorena.at@yahoo.com