

What works to recruit and include disadvantaged young people in the workplace?



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Chris Goulden, Director of Impact & Evidence

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Why supporting young people matters

- Young people hit hard by the pandemic
- They are still recovering – 2.6m economically inactive
 - While vacancies remain high
- More in education but leaving job market for health reasons
- Economic inactivity rising for young men; falling for women
 - **Challenge for employers is how to engage (or re-engage) young people further away from the job market and experiencing disadvantage and discrimination**





What we did

- Two “rapid evidence assessments” with **Centre for Evidence Based Management**
- Partnership with **Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)**
- Summarising evidence from high quality evaluations of employer practice relating to disadvantaged young people:
 - 1. Recruitment & selection**
 - 2. Retention & inclusion**
- Available for free online, each with a summary from CIPD

Recruitment & Selection



What are the recruitment problems?

1. **Ineffective recruitment channels and advertising** – i.e., using purely formal, online or professional-only routes
2. **Poor short-hand selection methods** – e.g., years of experience or age are unreliable predictors of job performance
3. **Sub-group differences/bias in selection tests** – e.g., IQ tests
4. **Bias** – unconscious or otherwise – e.g., affinity bias, where we are drawn to people we know or who we think are more similar





How can we reduce these problems?

- **Reaching out**

- Invest in getting to know the target group – activities, interests, networks and the local context
- Partner with organisations that already work with or are led by young people

- **Structured selection**

- Use structured interviews, guides and clear evaluation grids based on job analysis
- Define questions to be asked, their order, and provide examples of 'ideal' and 'poor' answers, together with a clear indication of rating scales

- **Use of testing**

- Cognitive ability tests the most robust way to predict future job performance, but must compensate for potential subgroup differences
- **Otherwise, they risk re-enforcing bias and discrimination rather than addressing them**
- Badly designed and biased tools can be worse than no tools at all

- **Post-recruitment:** track the data to detect bias in the process (now the norm for most)





Retention & Inclusion





The role of *managers* in retention and inclusion of young people facing disadvantage

- Use participatory decision-making
- Be an authentic leader
- Adopt a transformational leadership style





Interventions to *foster inclusion* of young people facing disadvantage in the workplace

- Diversity training
- Support networks – employee-led
- Effective interventions need more than compliance

