

ACCELERATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF APPRENTICES AND GRADUATES IN THE WORKPLACE

When young people start out in the workplace, employers find that many of them are not sufficiently prepared to adjust to the demands of employment. Skills that would enable them to adapt positively and that employers actively look for in school-leavers and graduates – a positive attitude towards work, self-management, resilience and communication – are lacking.

While there have been some improvements recorded in graduates' behavioural skills in recent years, those of school-leavers in particular continue to fall short⁶. A number of factors contribute to this, including poor quality work experience, lack of awareness of the workplace and limited focus in schools on developing pupils' skills beyond those that improve their academic performance.

In this section of the report, we take account of the role our courses play in developing the behavioural skills of young people once they start out in the workplace.

In 2016, we worked with 65 employers to address the behavioural skills gap in 3,253 apprentices and graduates. Our evaluations over the past several years give a strong indication that the Outward Bound programme that they attend as part of their apprenticeship or graduate scheme can have a positive impact on their self-management, resilience and determination, engagement with their employer and on the quality of their relationships with others in the weeks and months that follow.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORKPLACE BEHAVIOURS

At the end of every course, apprentices and graduates, as well as visiting staff members, complete an evaluation form asking them to rate the extent to which the learning objectives for their programme have been met. We categorise each tailored learning objective into a broader behavioural capability, which enables us to assess the effectiveness of our course delivery across a wide range of employability skills.

Categories used to define behavioural capabilities developed on courses for apprentices and graduates can be found in Additional Research, page 67, Figure 20.

The data shows that delegates and the staff who accompany them on their course report a high level of satisfaction in the behavioural skills developed during the Outward Bound programme.

96% OF DELEGATES (AND 100% OF STAFF MEMBERS) AGREED THAT OBJECTIVES RELATED TO SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT WERE MET

97% OF DELEGATES AGREED THAT OBJECTIVES RELATED TO WORKING WITH OTHERS WERE MET (AND 99% OF ACCOMPANYING STAFF)

97% OF DELEGATES AGREED THAT OBJECTIVES RELATED TO COMMUNICATION WERE MET (99% OF ACCOMPANYING STAFF)

The data also indicates that our courses are particularly strong at developing delegates' teamwork and communication skills, to a greater extent than problem-solving, leadership and self-management. Over the past three years, as we have fed these results back into the delivery teams, we have seen an improvement in the outcomes that the courses achieve in the short-term.

Qualitative feedback from apprentices and graduates at the end of their course supports this.

KEY INFORMATION

Every course we deliver is designed in partnership with employers with the aim of developing a specific set of behaviours that will not only help their apprentices and graduates to adjust to the working environment after leaving full-time education, but that in turn enhance and accelerate their performance and success in the workplace.

IN THE 2016 CBI EDUCATION AND SKILLS SURVEY, EMPLOYERS REPORTED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE ATTITUDES AND SKILLS OF SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEAVERS:

