

RECOMMENDATION

Include concise materials about the types, dimensions, procedures of quality informal learning practice in the workplace in employer education and orientation.

5 Formal Policy

There are very few examples of human resource policy related to the recruitment, development and support of at-risk youth. Often HR policies combine these youth with all new hires, leaving it up to individual efforts of owners, managers or supervisors to ensure that youth are successful. Creating a formal policy in this area provides a focal point for employer education/orientation to the issues raised above, as well as increases the likelihood that one or more aspects of best practices is not ignored.

RECOMMENDATION

Create HR practices that promote hiring, supporting and retaining at risk youth. Youth employment agencies and employers might collaborate on developing these policies.

“We went from 3 people... to a company of 15 employees in just a few years. And that was with the help of the youth too, committed people.”

**OWNER/MANAGER OF A
PLUMBING COMPANY**

“I basically believe we need to give young people a chance because... I came to Canada in 1974 as a youngster, 14 years old, and I had a hard time and there were people who would give me a chance. So now fortunately in my position I like give back, give to young people an opportunity because of race or status...”

**(OWNER/MANAGER, SMALL
AUTO REPAIR GARAGE)**

RESOURCES

For the full report on the study please see 'Following the Success' Project (2009) at:

**http: //www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Research/
FundedResearch/project-funding-work.htm**

Or contact:

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Successful School Work Transitions:

What Employers Can Do



The Following the Success (FTS) project focused on the relationships between youth and employers that lead to good jobs and/or successful transitions from school to work. The project builds on research done in Canada and elsewhere and explored 2 central issues:

1. How do youth and employers understand the impact of youth marginalization on achieving successful and sustainable employment and career development opportunities?
2. What are the workplace learning practices that help youth obtain stable positions that lead to careers and are able to sustain these jobs?

ABOUT FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS

For the FTS project interviews were done with youth in Ontario experiencing difficulties finding and staying in meaningful jobs. Interviews were also done with the employers. The purpose of the research was to highlight successful examples of labour market access. The research looked both at the individual youth and the environment around the youth that helped him or her succeed at work. Attention was paid to individual efforts, supportive work environments and workplace learning practices. The project arose as a response to the high levels of youth unemployment in Toronto. The work was funded by the Canadian Council on Learning.



FACTORS THAT LEAD TO SUCCESS

1 Individual Efforts of Employers

Individual effort, interest and understanding among employers are significant success factors in youth employment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Promote and celebrate “good practices” of successful youth employment and retention in both the youth employment service delivery sector and the business sector.
- b) Ensure that support for employer education and orientation about the benefits of youth employment for firms is more available from government and other sectors.
- c) Provide more information about the benefits of youth employment to the community and larger society.
- d) Develop mechanisms to build a strong commitment to hiring marginalized youth.

2 Understanding the Full Scope of Barriers Facing Youth

Many employers don’t realize the full range of barriers facing youth at risk. More information on this issue might lead to better human resource practices such as specific recruitment and employee development opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

That employer education and orientation include concise materials that demonstrate the range and complexity of barriers facing youth at risk.

3 Matching Youth Work Orientation/Expectation to Work Practices

The correct “match” between the specific employment expectations of a youth and the employment position or workplace environment is key to successful hiring. Youth attitudes change through employment and other life experiences. Employers may see this change as a lack of compatibility for the position while youth experience this as a “mismatch” of employer or management styles to their needs.

RECOMMENDATION

Include clear information about the importance of matching employer and youth expectations in employer education and orientation materials.

4 Importance of Informal Learning

Youth and employers interviewed agreed that informal learning experiences are an important ingredient in a successful workplace experience. On-the-job or informal learning experiences are important determinants of success for at-risk youth. Managers and supervisors play an important role in shaping the informal learning environment. Youth’s co-workers also play an important role. How employers involve co-workers in delivering this training or learning is important and cost-effective to the firm. Employers may not always know the best way to involve co-workers or other staff in informal learning practices in the workplace.

