Jobs Open Data Challenge

Summary of user and stakeholder research to inform the development of products and services

28 Feb 2015

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JOBS
OPEN DATA CHALLENGE

Introduction

How can we use open data to help people get better jobs or create new jobs? This research was conducted to inspire effective solutions in response to the Jobs Open Data Challenge.

Uscreates interviewed a number of key stakeholders (see appendices) including a wide range of employees or potential employees, employers and supporting organisations who work with people at an individual level as well as having a strategic overview. We also reviewed secondary evidence to highlight key issues in the sector.

Within discussions we asked employees and potential employees to give us an overview of their current employment situation and to talk about their ideal job. We also asked them to describe the journey in relation to changing jobs or progression within their career and the main opportunities and challenges for people in their position. We asked employers about their approach to recruitment and staff professional development as well as challenges and opportunities that they face in relation to employment. Supporting organisations were asked about the help that they provided and what they saw as the main areas where additional support was needed.

We then synthesised what we found into these summary slides to help participants base their ideas on real life contexts and scenarios.

The aim of the research is to uncover detailed insights, and create empathy with the target audience. However the relatively small number of people we spoke to means the research is not meant to be a comprehensive reflection of the rich variations and complexities of people's experiences of jobs, but a lens to inspire and provoke new ideas and questions, which might otherwise have been overlooked.

Details on the individuals we interviewed and a list of some secondary sources are further reading are provided in the appendices.

Contents

Key facts

1 MILLION PEOPLE aged 50-64 have been made involuntarily jobless through redundancy, ill health or early retirement.

41% OF PEOPLE from a workforce survey reported finding their most recent position through networking or someone they knew.

MORE THAN 1/3 OF WORKERS plan to change their job in 2015. Over 60% of those thinking of moving are looking for an opportunity to progress in their career.

Low paid and low skill workplaces have FEWER PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES.

ONLY 36% of those who move from Job Seekers Allowance to employment are still in that job 8 months later.

700,000 PEOPLE IN THE UK are on a zero hours contract in their main job. 1/3 of these people say they would like more hours.

73% OF EMPLOYERS reported that candidates attitudes were the most valuable attribute to them when recruiting.

15% of the UK workforce are SELF-EMPLOYED.

Who we spoke to

We interviewed over 33 people about jobs. This included people who were in work, who were searching for employment, employers, supporting organisations and those who have responsibility for strategic decisions and the shaping of policy.

We spoke to
17 people

about employment and progression opportunities for them.

3 of the people we spoke to had been in the same career for a number of years.

6 of the people we spoke to had recently undergone a notable career change.

4 of the people we spoke to wanted to change careers.

2 of the people we spoke to were unemployed and actively seeking work.

2 of the people we spoke to have set-up their own small businesses.

We spoke to *Employers:*

From construction industry
Professional services organisation
Manufacturing organisation
Health research organisation
IT consultancy

We spoke to *11 policy, supporting and intermediary organisations:*

2 LEPs
2 Local Authority organisations
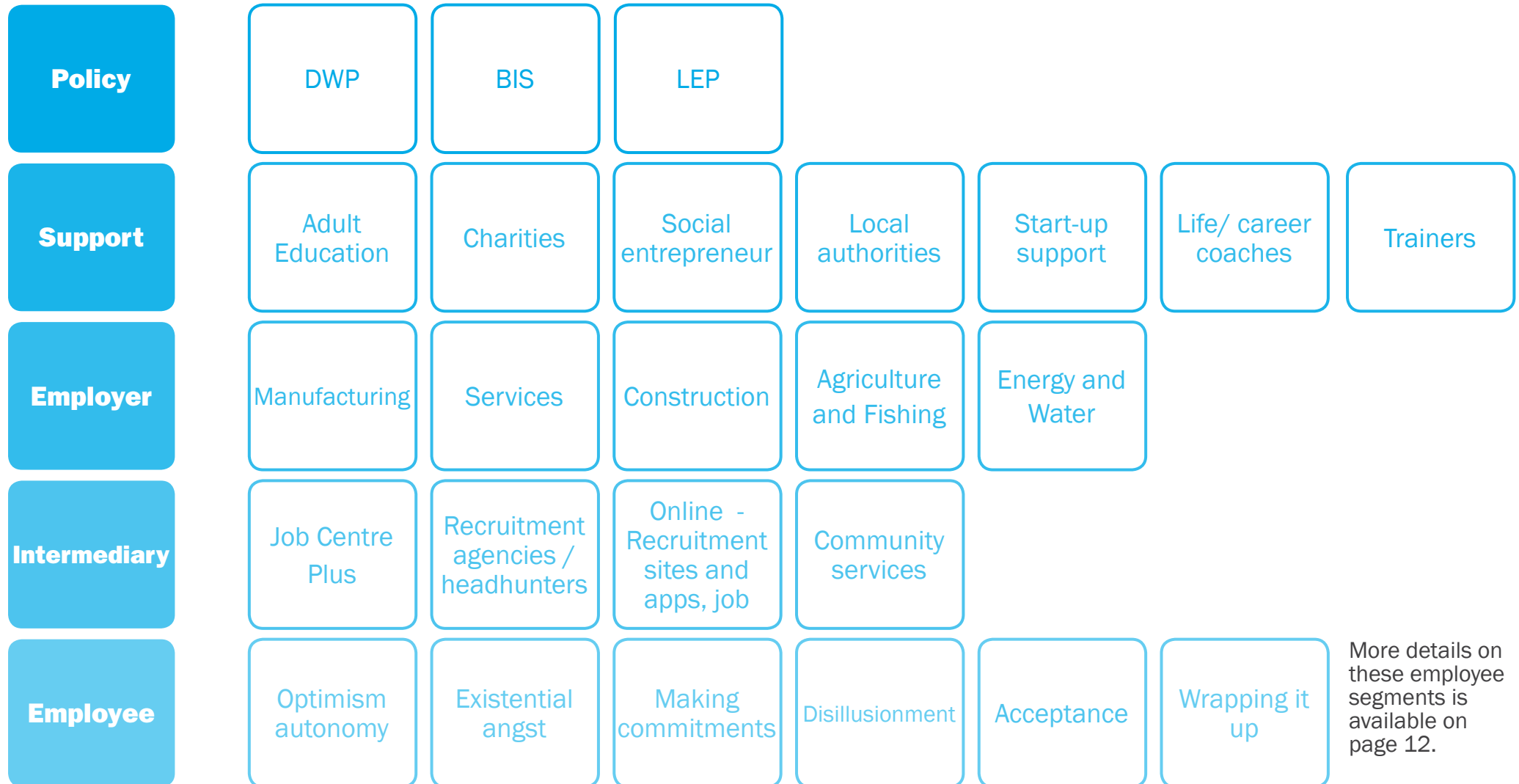**4** Job Centre Plus
1 mental health charity
1 career development social enterprise
1 skills consultant

Stakeholder map

Stakeholders in relation to jobs interact with one another and operate at different strategic levels. The map below identifies the different strategic levels and some of the stakeholders or organisations in each category. The list is not exhaustive, it is merely designed to highlight the different roles of organisations and how stakeholders interact.

Policy	DWP	BIS	LEP				
Support	Adult Education	Charities	Social entrepreneur	Local authorities	Start-up support	Life/ career coaches	Trainers
Employer	Manufacturing	Services	Construction	Agriculture and Fishing	Energy and Water		
Intermediary	Job Centre Plus	Recruitment agencies / headhunters	Online - Recruitment sites and apps, job	Community services			
Employee	Optimism autonomy	Existential angst	Making commitments	Disillusionment	Acceptance	Wrapping it up	

More details on these employee segments is available on page 12.

Key insights

From the research there were some clear, emerging themes and issues highlighted by each stakeholder group.

Employees thought it was important to:

> acquire and demonstrate key skills

> develop a better understanding of jobs where their skills and qualities are needed

> do plenty of networking and develop relevant contacts

> have the opportunity for progression and personal growth in a job

Employers thought it was important to:

> find people with the right attitude and potential to excel in a role

> offer benefits packages that are attractive to staff

> use line managers / team leaders to spot talent within the organisation to support progression

Policy, supporting and intermediary organisations highlighted the following:

> ongoing issue of discrimination

> support for people who need it is available but not enough currently engage

> there are still too many low quality jobs in existence

> Local Enterprise Partnerships and similar can take a more strategic approach to things that need to change, like new roads being built to service a business park, which can have a direct impact upon the labour market through creation of jobs in new companies based there, etc

Existing apps and tools

Aside from the job listing sites and online recruitment agents there were few existing tools identified by people we spoke to. A few were identified and these are highlighted below:

Linkedin is a business orientated online social networking tool which has in excess of 259 million users in more than 200 countries. https://www.linkedin.com/home

Numerous online job listing sites and online recruitment agencies exist e.g. http://www.monster.co.uk/, http://www.reed.co.uk/ and the Universal Jobmatch Service https://jobsearch.direct.gov.uk/register. aspx?redirect=http%3a%2f%2fjobsearch.direct.gov.uk%2fhome.aspx

National Careers Service have a really comprehensive list of potential careers on their website with details of qualification requirements, expected salaries, etc. Useful for anyone looking to find out more information when considering a career change. https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobfamily/Pages/default.aspx

Skills to Succeed Academy is a tool which offers online modular skills training http://www.accenture.com/us-en/company/citizenship/Pages/skills-succeed.aspx

No Desire to Retire connects people who are over 50 with companies or households who are looking to employ someone with specific skills. People list their skills or skill requirements online and people match themselves up. http://nodesiretoretire.com

Inspirational ideas

There were very few inspirational ideas highlighted by people we spoke to. Most felt that the information they needed was available if not always very accessible. Here are a few new and inspirational ideas that the people we spoke to offered:

FOR EMPLOYEES:

- A tool or service to help the development of soft skills

- Tools to help networking, particularly in a new sector or in a new location

- Something to bring back more face to face contact with employers

- A tool or service that would help people understand how their skills may be transferable across other jobs

- Something that would assist those not IT literate to search for jobs online

FOR EMPLOYERS:

- Clear information on strategic development in the local area to help planning

- Access to training material for staff to train employees in-house e.g. toolbox talks

- Knowledge to help identify and tackle the skills gap

- Clearer presentation of the open data that exists

Employees/ self employed

JOBS

What is an ideal job?

We asked people what their ideal job would be. Here are some of the emerging themes.

Flexible fit with life outside work	Opportunity to work from home	Variety in work undertaken	Working for a company that values you and treats you well
Something to be passionate about	A job that enables you to make a difference	Training and personal development opportunities	Colleagues that you get along with
Challenging	Doing work that you can be proud of	Additional benefits like pension and healthcare	Time and resource to enable you to do your job properly
Direction of company and culture needs to align with personality/ values	A good and fair salary	Enjoyable work	Autonomy in your work
Located somewhere that person wants to live or easily commute	Opportunity to progress in career	Work that keeps you engaged and challenged	

Career stages overview

Numerous career stage models have been developed by various researchers, but most follow a similar pattern. We've adapted the Aol.jobs career stages to illustrate some of the different stages of people's careers. Whilst not a scientific model of a career pathway the stages were recognisable when we were interviewing people. **For this research we are focussing on stages 2 to 5**.

1 OPTIMISM - AUTONOMY	**2** EXISTENTIAL ANGST	**3** MAKING COMMITMENTS	**4** DISILLUSIONMENT	**5** ACCEPTANCE	**6** WRAPPING IT UP
Boundless sense of opportunity and time, the idea of permanence taken lightly. Feel able to move from job to job and address to address. With no dependents you are idealistic, optimistic and a source of great annoyance to people in stages 2-6.	You start asking yourself questions like "who am I?" "is time running out?" and "why am I picking up the product manager's dog's laundry again?". It's a time of self-reflection and reorganisation of one's goals.	A time of calm and stability, often the result of a more satisfying salary. You begin to settle into yourself and have a better idea of how to achieve your dreams.	Commonly known as a mid-life crisis. If you are not happy in your career it's because if you have not achieved your dreams you wonder why not and if you have you wonder why it's so undesirable now.	The golden years as turmoil from the previous stages has been resolved. The meaning of life has become clear to you and you feel responsible for the mentoring of younger people progressing in their career.	A time of retirement as you come to realise the limitations of life and the self. This is either upsetting or brings a feeling of relief and enlightenment that you feel everyone must know about.

Existential angst – meet Kerry

KERRY

Kerry is a 28 year old from the North of England who lives in a rural area. She has a fine arts degree from university but since graduating she has worked as an assistant in a shop as she was not sure what she wanted to do. After volunteering at some local schools she returned to University to obtain her PGCE and has recently started a job as a Teaching Assistant working with children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Motivations:

Kerry's partner earns an OK salary to support them so earning a larger salary was not a motivation. However, Kerry felt unfulfilled in her job in retail and wanted to work in a job where she could make a positive difference. She wanted to use some of the creative elements of her degree as well as organisation and communication skills which she developed when working in retail. The social side of work is also important to Kerry and she wanted to meet like minded people she could get along with. Kerry would like to work somewhere that she can develop and improve in a role in a job that is challenging and keeps her busy.

Challenges:

There are limited opportunities for work due to the location Kerry lives as she does not want to drive more than half an hour to get to school and there are not a lot of schools in her local area. She checks teaching job listings but not knowing a lot of teachers or schools means she may have missed opportunities. Her experience is that teaching assistant positions often go to people a school knows. Once in employment some organisations are not always proactive in helping employees with additional training so progression and personal development may be more difficult.

Circles of influence:

Kerry's partner offers her practical support in writing applications, as well as morale support, but he is not in the same sector so she speaks to friends and people she has met through volunteering and on her course about opportunities. She has joined specialist recruitment agencies and looks on sector specific websites. She also looks in the local paper and national press for news related to education which may affect her and her career.

Making commitments – meet Andy

ANDY

Andy is a 41 year old IT entrepreneur. He worked for a number of global organisations in London but moved to the midlands with his young family and set-up as a consultant. He travelled into London several times a week whilst working as a consultant. He has recently set-up his own company with a business partner, based locally to where he lives, and they have secured some start-up funding from investors.

Motivations:

Andy became frustrated working as a consultant as he was only able to offer advice and not deliver projects anymore. In addition he was spending a lot of time commuting so wanted to find a job that allowed him to spend more quality time at home with his family. Andy also wanted the freedom of being his own boss in terms of the work he was doing. Earning enough money to support his family and enjoy a good lifestyle is important but he would not compromise doing the job that he wanted simply for a larger salary, so long as he can earn enough. He sees this new business venture as being something he will work with for the next 10 years and beyond.

Challenges:

In relation to London Andy has found that there are fewer opportunities available to him locally now he has moved away. Whilst he is enjoying the challenge of running his own company, he felt that he had little choice if he was to be able to do the job he wanted. The main challenge Andy faces now is building his business and making it sustainable as he has invested some of his own money in it as well as finding external investors. He needs to exploit his network of contacts and meet key people from organisations who might buy the services of his company. Identifying the right people is not an issue but getting the opportunity to speak to them is. Andy also still has to travel a lot for work at the moment while he is getting started but hopes this will reduce as the business is established.

Circles of influence:

Andy's family has been a major influence on his career as he moved out of London with his young family to be nearer his wife's parents. In terms of his new business his wife offers him moral support and practical help where she can. He talks to a lot of former colleagues about his work and has set-up business with one of them. In addition he speaks to his network of contacts regularly to update them on what he's doing and looks to expand his network by attending as many relevant events as possible. He reads industry press, online and print, and searches websites to learn more about career options and the labour market.

Disillusionment – meet Jan

JAN

Jan is a 39 year old taxi driver from London. She went to University and got a degree. Since then she has had a lot of different jobs. She has been a taxi driver for a few years. She works between 5 and 7 days a week and each time works a 12 hour shift. She is effectively freelance so can work whichever days and shifts she chooses.

Motivations:

Jan wanted a job where she knew that she was going to be able to earn money. Previously she had worked in jobs on a zero hours contract which she did not like. She wanted to work in a job which offered her the flexibility of being self-employed and in which she could earn enough money. She felt that being a taxi driver offered her this. She says that she does not have high aspirations in terms of employment but would like to work for an organisation that valued and cared for their employees. However, she feels that these organisations don't exist.

Challenges:

There is not really an opportunity to progress from her role. The only opportunity is to work more hours. She also feels that whilst being self-employed offers her flexibility she feels quite vulnerable from unfair treatment from those she works for and clients e.g. if they don't pay there is no-one to represent her and ensure she gets her money. Jan does not feel that she earns very much for the amount of work that she puts in and doesn't feel that it is a very lucrative career.

Circles of influence:

Jan talks to other taxis drivers about their work and also checks out other firms but feels they are much the same. She reads stories about her industry in the press and contemplates how that might affect her job.

Disillusionment – meet Stuart

MEET STUART

Stuart is a 61 year old living in Birmingham. He was managing a small refuse collection team for a local housing association for several years. He was generally happy in his position and intended to stay until he retired. However, due to a reorganisation he was made redundant. He is currently unemployed and looking for work.

Motivations:

Stuart was looking for stability in his career and wanted to retire from the job he was doing. He found it hard to accept when he was made redundant. He is now looking for something that will offer him a stable income until he is able to retire and claim his pension. However, he'd ideally like a job that was flexible and local to where he lives as he relies upon public transport. He enjoys the responsibility of managing and training others and would like a job that enabled him to share his experience and expertise with other younger employees.

Challenges:

Stuart has found it difficult to find a new job and believes that he has been discriminated against due to his age. Due to issues with his eyesight he is no longer able to drive which excludes him from a lot of positions in his field. Due to the early start time of most jobs he is applying for, being able to get there is an issue. He relies upon public transport and he has found that employers are not willing to be flexible to accommodate that. Stuart has not found the Job Centre to be helpful as he feels they are interested in processing numbers of people and don't have time to work with individuals effectively and understand their skills. Stuart is not computer literate and struggles to search and apply for jobs online.

Circles of influence:

Stuart talks to his family about work especially his son who is in the same industry. He also talks to former colleagues who work locally. Stuart searches for jobs at the Job Centre and online with some help from his family.

Employees journeys

Employee journeys have been mapped starting from the times when they were looking to progress in their existing company or sector, and times when they were transitioning either into a new sector or career, starting a job after a period of unemployment or setting up their own business.

PROGRESSION

AWARENESS

People either become aware themselves that they are frustrated or something happens to draw it to their attention. Other contributors include being in the same role for a long time, not feeling challenged by the work, and not feeling that they are able to learn new things on the job.

"I began to feel increasingly that I wanted more of a challenge than my job was offering and that I wanted to do something different."

"My organisation restructured and my job was not the same anymore. I no longer enjoyed it."

"I was approached by a headhunter and it made me think about what else I could do with my career"

DECIDING

The pros and cons of making a change are considered to allow people to make a decision. These include a range of comparative variables mentioned in the 'ideal jobs' section earlier.

"I had to think about what I would get from a new role versus what I might lose. There was more responsibility which I wanted but it also meant much longer hours and a longer commute."

"I had to consider the additional skills I would need and make sure I would be able to get the right support and training to be able to do the job well."

SEARCHING

People research opportunities independently but the majority also speak to colleagues or other people they know professionally. Some speak to their line managers during appraisals if they are looking to progress within the same company.

"Before applying for the role I spoke to colleagues, including senior managers, about the opportunity to determine whether it was right for me."

"There is a lot of information online if you know where to look but speaking to people with inside knowledge is also important. They may know about opportunities before they are publicised."

PREPARING

People review practical things like their CV and write supporting statements for application forms. People also found speaking to colleagues and networking important at this stage. If progressing within the same company, people may benefit from personal development training covered by their company.

"I felt that it was helpful to speak to a career coach about the most suitable opportunities for me and how I could approach the application process effectively."

"Before applying I did all the practical things like updating my CV and practicing my interview technique. I asked colleagues for their opinions."

SECURING

The application process for jobs varies but for new jobs it tends to be the submission of an application form or CV followed by at least one interview. Internal progression was usually less formal but did involve meeting with managers or having to apply for a job that was also advertised externally.

"It's a case of applying for lots of positions and hoping that you'll get an interview. It can be frustrating to not hear back from applications and interviews to help you improve."

Employees journeys

TRANSITION

AWARENESS

People either realise themselves that they are not happy in their job or something happens so they have to start looking for employment e.g. redundancy. A lack of satisfaction is often a key contributor at this stage.

"Being made redundant was a bit of a shock and I hadn't really thought about other career options. The pressure was on to find something quickly without being able to give it enough thought."

"I am frustrated with a lot of things in my job but I don't know what else I could do that would be better. I wouldn't know where to start looking."

DECIDING

The situation, or a desire for change, is such that people feel they have to transition into a new role.

"I had to look for a new role as we decided to move out of the city with our young family. It was a case of choosing a particular lifestyle over career alone."

" I was volunteering outside of work and really enjoyed it so it made me think about jobs I could do in which I could use the same skills and find an equivalent level of enjoyment."

"I was made redundant from a job I really enjoyed. I felt I had to determine what I would be willing to compromise when searching for a new role."

SEARCHING

When transitioning people researched opportunities online, but were often less able to speak to people as they did not have the network of contacts in the sector they wanted to move into. If they were setting up their own business, they were often unsure where to start and tended to just speak to family, friends and colleagues who have experience in this area.

"When looking for jobs I spent a lot of time searching numerous sites online through listings and researching companies I was interested in working for."

"I did not really know anyone in the sector I wanted to work in so joined a recruitment agency. They were giving me information about the sector but I wasn't always able to verify what they were telling me as it was a field I had not worked in yet myself."

PREPARING

People spent more time assessing their skills and potentially signing themselves up for training or undertaking voluntary work to gain experience to help them transition.

"I would consider working for an organisation as an intern if I felt it would help me learn the right skills and there was definite opportunity for progression."

"I researched and attended events such as conferences to learn more about the sector and to make contacts."

"When setting up as a sole trader I had to research new things like tax and invoicing to make sure that I was doing it right. It was complex so I ended up going through an umbrella company"

SECURING

It can be more difficult to transition as you have to convince people you have the skills to do a job if not the experience. If you decide to work for yourself you have to find the work. clients and demonstrate your credentials starting with a blank portfolio.

"It's important to be aware that you might have to wait for the right opportunity to arise and submit numerous applications."

"I had never appreciated how time consuming business development was when working for a large organisation. As a sole trader I have had to spend a lot of time searching for and bidding for work."

"I initially felt that there was a lack of security when working for myself that I rightly or wrongly felt I had when working for a larger organisation."

Opportunities and challenges for employees

Opportunities and challenges relating to the individual looking for work

+ OPPORTUNITIES

CHALLENGES —

OPPORTUNITIES

+ Having a good network of contacts and staying in touch with them

+ Being flexible so you only work when needed

+ Having adaptable or transferable skills

+ Career coaches and other support available

+ Volunteering or internship opportunities to learn skills and more about a sector

+ Good knowledge of a sector, particularly if you've worked in it before

+ Develop other skills to show you are a well rounded individual e.g. learn a language, volunteer, etc

+ Feeling like you are contributing to something positive

+ Lower skilled jobs are easier to find and sometimes easier to secure

CHALLENGES

- Not knowing people in your field of work to make contacts

- Remaining flexible when you have other commitments e.g. family and shifting priorities

- Discriminated against for age, ethnicity, disability gender, etc

- Lack of face to face contact with companies and people in recruitment process – too much online and via intermediaries

- Working full time whilst trying to apply for jobs or train for a change in career – bills still need to be paid

- Having inner strength to continue with job searches in the face of rejection and a lack of feedback

- Not feeling that you are doing something productive

- Turnover in lower skilled jobs higher and can feel less valued by an organisation

Opportunities and challenges for employees

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Opportunities and challenges relating to jobs, location or the labour market in genernal

➕ OPPORTUNITIES

- **+** Organisations have positions to be filled and sole traders can find opportunities if they research their offer
- **+** Professional and personal development opportunities offered
- **+** Benefits offered by organisations e.g. extra holiday days, etc in additional to salary
- **+** Recruitment agencies, Job Centres and job listings are easily accessible
- **+** Feeling valued and supported by an organisation, your manager and your colleagues
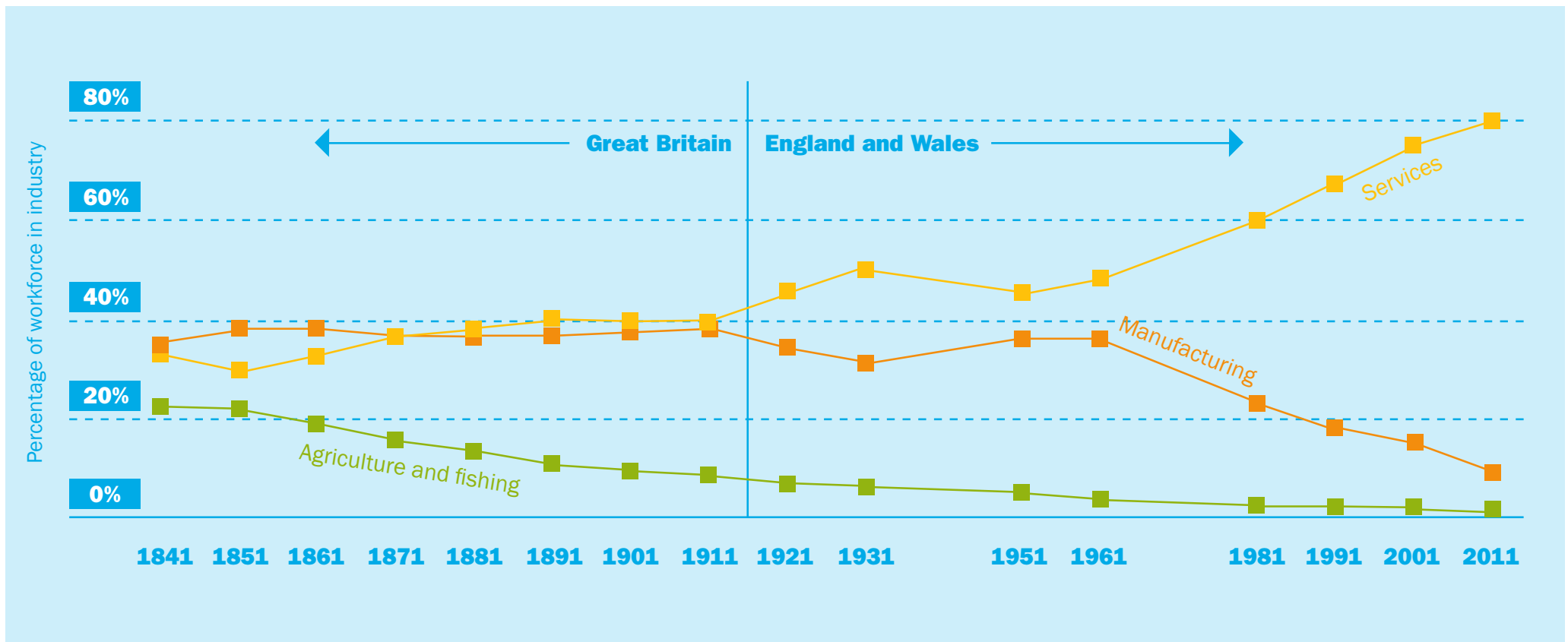- **+** Flexible working terms offered to suit employee

CHALLENGES ➖

- **-** Unfair treatment and lack of representation
- **-** Feeling undervalued by an organisation
- **-** Professional development not seen as a priority for employer when there are pressures on work
- **-** Fewer opportunities for work outside of London
- **-** Competition for jobs high, in London as there are people willing to move there to work and elsewhere because there are fewer jobs of a particular type to apply for
- **-** Low turnover of staff in organisations blocks progression
- **-** Getting employers to recognise transferable skills not just experience
- **-** Hard to find all opportunities in one place, not all listed in Job Centre
- **-** Lack of flexible working terms offered by companies
- **-** No progression opportunities within an organisation

Employers

JOBS
OPEN DATA
CHALLENGE

Understanding the labour market

The nature of UK industry has changed radically over the past 100 years and the jobs that people do continue to evolve and change. This graphic from the ONS demonstrates that even since the 1980s the proportion of jobs in manufacturing has decreased and the proportion of service jobs conversely has increased significantly. The skills gap that exists in relation to this is well documented and was raised by a number of the people we spoke to.

Percentage of workforce in industry

← Great Britain | England and Wales →

Services
Manufacturing
Agriculture and fishing

80% 60% 40% 20% 0%

1841 1851 1861 1871 1881 1891 1901 1911 1921 1931 1951 1961 1981 1991 2001 2011

The diagram has been redrawn from source: ONS (2013)
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census-analysis/170-years-of-industry/170-years-of-industrial-changeponent.html

What are employers doing?

We asked employers what they were doing to benefit their existing employees and new recruits. These were some of the things identified.

Equal benefits for all employees e.g. all offered same level of healthcare cover regardless of position within organisation

Sickness pay above statutory requirement

Workplace pensions which company contributes to above statutory requirement

Pleasant physical working environment that supports employees and their work

Free refreshments or other perks e.g. free gym membership, etc

Offering additional holiday days for long service

Wellness package

Professional development opportunities offered, including sponsorship of formal education

Paid holiday allowance beyond the statutory minimum

Treat employees like a family

Profit share scheme

Time in lieu or overtime payment

Correct resources provided to enable people to do their job

Flexible working requests considered including option to work from home

Help to pay for childcare

Assistance with travel e.g. bike to work scheme, company car or interest free travel ticket loan

Regular and structured appraisals at least once a year

Employer journeys

We spoke to employers about their approach to both employee professional development and progression, and also recruitment of new employees.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

EXPLORE

Employees can raise professional development with their manager or apply internally for positions but most often progression comes through identification by line managers or team leaders.

"We regularly ask team leaders if they have spotted potential in employees that we could encourage through professional development or promotion."

"In a small company employees need to be flexible in terms of the work they do so we become aware if they show a talent or aptitude for something."

OPEN ROLE

Internal progression generally happens less formally unless it's a big step or people have had to apply for a position.

"If employees want to undergo training or professional development they raise this with their team leader who then puts forward the case at the directors meeting for approval. Everyone within the organisation is encouraged to take a lead on their own professional development."

"As we're a small organisation employees talk to me about the skills that they would like to develop and if we see a need we will work with them to identify an appropriate training course."

TRANSITION

Employees move into a new role straight away often with a trial period, or undertake the professional development training required.

"We support employees moving into a role that is very different to the one they were doing before. We offer them mentoring and training where relevant."

"We have a sponsorship scheme for graduates who have worked with us but need to complete further post-graduate level education. Whilst studying they continue to work for us in University holidays."

EVALUATE

Evaluation of progression within an organisation tends to come through the formal appraisals or ad hoc feedback. Where a bigger step has been made more formal evaluation of success might take place at the outset.

"I only have a small number of employees so when they are given more responsibility I work closely with them to ensure they are comfortable with it."

"When we appoint someone to a very different or more senior position there is a 3 month probation period so they can determine whether they like the role and we can determine whether they are able to perform in that position."

Employer journeys

We spoke to employers about their approach to both employee professional development and progression, and also recruitment of new employees.

RECRUITMENT JOURNEY

DECIDE

Managers within organisations generally identify a skill or resource gap and it is usually driven by workload or repositioning of products/services.

"When we note a gap in the skill set or number of people we need to deliver a job we take a decision on whether to appoint someone new to fill that gap and the type of person we might need."

ADVERTISE

Organisations do advertise positions and use recruitment agencies but will also take personal recommendations or have people in mind that they want to recruit.

"We receive a lot of speculative CVs which we read and keep on record in case anything comes up for which they might be suitable."

"We find the more senior people we want don't usually respond to adverts, they have to be approached through agencies or directly."

SHORTLIST

The general approach is to ask people to return an application form or send in their CV and they then usually attend at least one interview if they are shortlisted.

"We like at least two or three people within the organisation to meet prospective candidates which is why we interview people twice."

"Within the interview we ask people to complete a short psychometric test which we find really helpful to learn more about their motivations"

APPOINT & EVALUATE

Companies offer the role to the successful candidate. The companies we spoke to said that they looked for aptitude and skills rather than a specific expertise. Most companies ask new employees to complete a probationary or trial period.

"We can train people in the right practical skills if they show that they have aptitude, the right attitude and a willingness to learn. Its more important than simply having experience in that sector."

"I work closely with all new employees to see how they get on. If they need additional training that's fine so long as their attitude is right."

Opportunities and challenges for employers

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES

OPPORTUNITIES

+ Positive for organisation to develop talent in employees.

+ Employees may have skills or abilities they are not aware of or aren't using to the full that the organisation can help develop.

+ Lots of training provision externally and can be delivered internally.

+ Line managers within the organisation able to spot talent and highlight to management.

+ People can progress through the organisation from entry level to management with the right support.

CHALLENGES

- Should people be promoted into a position to learn on the job or be doing the work first before being rewarded with the title and associated benefits?

- Cost of professional development can be high therefore have to assess need for development and benefit to company as well as individual.

- Balance of progression of people for length of service which might not be as appropriate as progression based on performance.

Opportunities and challenges for employers

RECRUITMENT

OPPORTUNITIES

+ If recruitment agencies work closely with a company they can get to know them and be trusted to shortlist the right candidates for them.

+ Often organisations have someone in mind for a position or have had someone recommended to them which offers some level of assurance to organisations.

+ Social media is increasingly being used to advertise positions at a range of levels.

+ Transferable skills and attitude as important to an organisation as specific skills because the latter can be taught.

CHALLENGES

- Not always sure of consistency of increasing workloads or work requiring different skills so some people have to be employed on a temporary basis for flexibility.

- Having quick access to staff who are appropriately trained at short notice.

- Not always possible to identify people with the right skills.

- Most organisations we spoke to had more people applying for positions than they had positions available.

- People employed by a small company or start-up need to have a wide range of skills so the right person might be hard to find.

Policy, supporting and intermediary organisations

JOBS
OPEN DATA
CHALLENGE

Opportunities and challenges for support and intermediary organisations

We interviewed a range of policy, supporting and intermediary organisations from those who worked with individual people or organisations through to those with a more strategic outlook. These were some of the opportunities and challenges they identified for the individual, for employers and for the labour market as a whole:

ORGANISATIONS WHO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS (EMPLOYEES AND SELF-EMPLOYED)

➕ OPPORTUNITIES

- **+** There are a lot of support and supporting organisations that offer help to the unemployed and are provided by the Government or third sector (e.g. AgeUK, Centre for Mental Health, Disability Employment Advisers, etc.).

- **+** There are job opportunities for people, especially in large cities.

- **+** People have transferable skills that they can offer to employers or prospective employers.

- **+** A wealth of information online about jobs, personal development, and career progression that people can access if they look for it.

- **+** Policy changes such as Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) should make it easier for young people with special educational needs and disabilities to get access to further and higher education and work.

- **+** Tailored employment support is available for people with disabilities or mental health problems who need it if they know about it and it's in their area.

- **+** There are a range of support services available to help people set up their own businesses, such as HMRC advice, Nesta, or British Library coaching.

- **+** There is increasing availability and use of online services to enable people to find jobs and create their own digital footprint.

CHALLENGES ➖

- **-** The long term unemployed, over 50s, young people from a challenging background and those with English as a second language face more challenges in terms of getting into employment.

- **-** People not being aware of their transferable skills and how to sell themselves to employers, and intermediary and support services finding it challenging to understand skills required across sector to offer valuable advice.

- **-** Ability to search effectively online for employment opportunities.

- **-** People not focused on developing important "soft skills" like communication.

- **-** Availability of high quality employment opportunities is an issue. Just getting a job is not enough, it should be a good job for that individual.

- **-** Additional support for people who need it, such as those with special educational needs and disabilities is hard to identify, access, and often requires referrals from public services..

- **-** Skills being taught are not always the ones that organisations need.

- **-** Where there are low levels of opportunity the number of applicants for each job, particularly low skilled jobs, is huge.

Opportunities and challenges for support and intermediary organisations

We interviewed a range of policy, supporting and intermediary organisations from those who worked with individual people or organisations through to those with a more strategic outlook. These were some of the opportunities and challenges they identified for the individual, for employers and for the labour market as a whole:

ORGANISATIONS WHO SUPPORT EMPLOYERS

✚ OPPORTUNITIES

+ Organisations can offer support to companies to help employees develop more effective "soft skills" which might be thought of as difficult to teach.

+ Organisations can help employers support their employees when they are faced with challenges such as disabilities or mental health problems.

+ If an organisation is located in a large city like London they have the opportunity to recruit from around the world.

+ Support available for businesses of various sizes to help them grow via Local Enterprise Partnerships, institutions like the British Library and central government departments like BIS.

+ There are opportunities to work in partnership with large local employers to identify jobs that are being created.

CHALLENGES ➖

- Encouraging employers to consider transferable skills and not just dismiss people because they have not got job or sector specific experience.

- Employers not understanding the importance of well being to increase performance and employee retention.

- Being able to adapt a job specification to suit someone who has disabilities or mental health issues.

- Not discriminating against people on the basis of something that an employer might perceive as a barrier to them doing the job effectively e.g. not employing someone over the age of 50.

- Turnover of employees can be higher in large cities where there are more opportunities for people to move to a new organisation.

- Areas where there are high levels of unemployment are often areas where employers have no desire to create new jobs.

Opportunities and challenges for support and intermediary organisations

We interviewed a range of policy, supporting and intermediary organisations from those who worked with individual people or organisations through to those with a more strategic outlook. These were some of the opportunities and challenges they identified for the individual, for employers and for the labour market as a whole:

THE LABOUR MARKET AND POLICY

+ OPPORTUNITIES

+ Local Enterprise Partnerships allow a more strategic approach to be taken to regional development to support the growth of business.

+ Organisations facilitating knowledge sharing between education institutions and business to address skills gap.

+ Local Government and Central Government via organisations like LEP can make plans for business expansion more economically viable e.g. finding funding for road infrastructure to allow access to a new business park site.

CHALLENGES −

- Infrastructure in rural areas an issue – in particular transport and access to broadband.

- Skills gap between what businesses need and the skills that people have in a local area.

- Evaluating the impact of strategic investment and knowing what benefit it has had upon the labour market.

- Hard to know what to invest in strategically for most positive impact as projects are so varied they cannot easily be judged against one another e.g. skill development locally versus an infrastructure project.

Appendicies

Employees/self-employed people we interviewed

Employees:

Forbes, set-up his own business after leaving armed forces.

Jenny, became a consultant after being made redundant.

Scott, currently looking for work having been made redundant 6 months ago.

Sarah, employed by the NHS for over 10 years.

Andy, recently set-up his own company.

Shirley, became a consultant after being made redundant with early retirement.

Kerry, retrained as a teacher when working in retail.

Karen, worked in banking but left to have a family. Retrained as a beautician.

Sila, set-up her own digital business.

Darren, moved out of London with family so had to change job.

Nat, uncertain about career, moved a number of times in the last year.

Rita, worked for the NHS for many years but left to freelance at a private hospital.

Daniela, had a career but trying to find employment in a new sector.

Lesley, retired but has applied to become a magistrate.

Morgan, made redundant from a job he enjoyed mid-career. Had to find a new position.

Jan, taxi driver for a number of years but experiencing some frustrations with job.

Stuart, made redundant at 60 years old and struggling to find a new job.

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