

Feedback and Review – Year 10 Careers Day December 2019

For the third year in a row, Jenna Halesworth and Claire Ladbrook put together a careers day for Copleston High School's year 10 students. With sixteen visitors to the school presenting and giving their time to facilitate the day, classes moved to accommodate and facilitate space for the different workshops to take place, it is worth mentioning that it is never possible to hold such a successful event without a great deal of collaboration and our thanks go to everyone, staff and visitors alike, who took part and made the day brilliant for our students.

"Although I had to do a presentation (which I was nervous for)
I feel it increased my confidence."

The why....

Year 10 students are in their second year of GCSE study, they have two weeks work experience in the summer and start gearing up for their final year in the main school at Copleston and making decisions about what they are going to do post-16. The careers day forms part of the wider careers programme, to both directly prepare them for work experience in terms of what to expect and to help and support students to find their placement and be comfortable in the workplace. It serves as a foundation for future job seeking.

The golden thread running through the day is "Employability Skills." Described variously as employability skills, enterprise skills or soft skills, very many of our students find it difficult to describe their own skills and qualities positively and effectively. Increasingly soft skills are being recognised as drivers of business success, *"formal qualifications and technical skills are only part of the requirements for modern employees. 'Soft skills' and personal attributes are just as important to success. Indeed ten of the sixteen 'crucial proficiencies in the 21st century' identified by the World Economic Forum are non-technical."*

"As technology, globalisation and demographic shifts continue to shape how businesses compete, the importance of soft skills will grow... Deloitte Access Economics forecasts that soft skill intensive occupations will account for two-thirds of all jobs by 2030, compared to half of all jobs in 2000. The number of jobs in soft-skill intensive occupations is expected to grow at 2.5 times the rate of jobs in other occupations." (From; <https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/economics/articles/soft-skills-business-success.html>)

When we also understand that evidence shows statistically significant positive relationships exist between the number of employer contacts (such as careers talks or work experience) that a young person experiences in school (between the ages of 14 and 19) and:

- Their confidence (at 19-24) in progression towards ultimate career goals;
- The likelihood of whether (at 19-24) they are NEET or non-NEET
- Earnings if salaried (https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/its_who_you_meet_final_26_06_12.pdf) and that further, Dr

Anthony Mann's research showed "young adults surveyed who recalled four or more activities while at school were five times less likely to be NEET and earned, on average, 16% more than peers who recalled no such activities. The findings are not linked to highest level of qualification."

The evidence from the World Economic Forum (<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/03/21st-century-skills-future-jobs-students/>) suggests that by facilitating and enabling our students by engaging them in events like the Careers Day we are preparing them for the changes and challenges we expect in working life in the coming years – as well as directly providing preparation for work experience they will complete in the next few months.

Gatsby Benchmarks

This day meets the following Gatsby Benchmarks;

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
5. Encounters with employers and employees
7. Encounters with further and higher education

(<https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>)

The Format

This year's event was broken down into five parts, an assembly style presentation followed by a carousel of different activities. Our approach ensures that every student receives a similar experience, delivered by several different people over the course of the day.

The introduction; The day was introduced by Jenna Halesworth who is Leader of Learning and Lead for PSHE at Copleston and Claire Ladbrook, Careers Leader. Students were introduced to the concept of the day; emphasis was on the golden thread of employability skills. We then welcomed **Rebecca Keeble – Senior Student Recruitment Officer from University of Essex** who gave a presentation titled "Why go to University?" This introduction to higher education gave students a taste of what to expect if they choose to go to university. Students had the chance to ask questions afterwards.

The Workshops all students were allocated into 12 different groups and attended four workshops throughout the rest of the day.

Apprenticeships; we were fortunate to welcome back **Federica Bocchetti – School Engagement Co-ordinator from The Aim Group** to lead this workshop on apprenticeships. Telling students what apprenticeships are and what levels they are available at, Fred went on to explain how to use the government website "find an apprenticeship.gov" and set students the task of writing the first two lines of their personal profile in a CV using resources in the booklet each student had for the day. Fred was supported by her colleague **Abigail Odell** who is in the same role in Essex schools. We

were fortunate to be supported by two alumni, **Jake Doncic and Lydia Hubbard** who have just started as **apprentices at BT**. Jake and Lydia shared information about the apprenticeships available with BT and a little about their reasons for choosing an apprenticeship.

"I didn't know anything about apprenticeships, but now I know a lot."

Work Experience; our students are supported and encouraged to find their own work experience placements. They have two weeks work experience in the summer of year 10 and this workshop is designed to give them information and support to enable them to do so. Designed by **Jenna Witting** Copleston's Work Experience Co-ordinator, the workshop was delivered by school staff, Jenna was supported by **Melanie Hercus – Operations Manager: Employment at Realise Futures**, Jenna's presentation was also delivered by **Anne Bailey – CEO and Co-founder at Form the Future C.I.C.** Anne said *"the students were a credit to the school. When we teach them how to find work experience, we're teaching them skills that will serve them in so many ways and throughout their life. So, it's a privilege to be able to work with them. "*

Employability: Interview Skills; in the first of two workshops directly related to soft skills mentioned above, students learn about the different parts of an interview and how to shake hands with their prospective employer. Delivered by **Jordan Holder, CEC Enterprise Co-ordinator and Governor of Copleston High School, Josie Finch - CEC Enterprise Co-ordinator and Ashleigh Seymour-Rutherford – CEO of Colbea and Enterprise Adviser to Copleston High School.** We are grateful to **Helen Tidswell - Group Marketing & Communications Director, at Cloudfm** who redesigned the presentation for the workshop. Helen, a business associate of Ashleigh's is hoping to join us at the event next year. This workshop is interactive and puts employability skills into context by introducing how to use them effectively during an interview. In English business culture, the handshake is the first contact an employer will have with a prospective employee, so it's important to get it right.

"I know more about what an interviewer wants and how to shake someone's hand"

Employability; What do employers want? This year our presenters were new to the school to deliver this workshop naming employability skills and asking students to make a small presentation about one of five skills as a group. The workshop is interactive, and students have to engage with their presenters. Claire had sought volunteers through "Inspiring the Future" in September, then having gone on to meet and talk to all of them, they came to the school and were amazing!

Thanks go to;

- **Ren Akintaju - Solicitor**
- **Jean Rogers – Retired Manager BT, Governor at Britannia School**
- **Tracey Risebrow – Senior Nurse, Ipswich Hospital**
- **Angela Wright - owner Way Arts**
- **Lucy Ashford-Scott – HMRC Tax Auditor**
- **Michael Coe – owner Dimension 88 HR**

"Helps with how to present myself, boosts confidence"

The Feedback

After each major event we ask students to complete feedback for the day and ask them who they would like to have come to careers events at the school. Students are asked to rate each workshop on a scale of one to five smileys. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and this time many students commented on how helpful the day was (their comments are in quotes throughout.) We are, rightly, proud of our students in Copleston, with so many outside speakers and the change of routine, our students made the day successful through their engagement, co-operation and taking part with enthusiasm.

Apprenticeships: 84% of students rated this as good to excellent.

Work Experience: 91% rated this workshop as good to excellent.

Employability; Interview Skills: 50% of students rated this 5 smiles! With 94% rating it good or better.

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Students' comments included;

- I am now more confident in communicating
- Helped a lot
- More confident asking questions
- Really open and understandable
- Really helped me know that a phone call is much better than an email
- Learnt how to be more formal in an interview
- Learnt all the skills required for a job, especially communication
- It was fun
- I learned lots of details about work experience
- I learned how to properly do handshakes
- Useful skills to optimise interview
- They want someone passionate, formal and memorable
- Helpful as before I didn't even know what an apprenticeship was
- I know more about what an interviewer wants and how to shake someone's hand
- Helpful
- Fun practice, I found out a lot

Some students found the Interview Skills workshop challenging as they didn't like shaking hands – one student said that they "didn't like touching people's hands" and another said that having to present their poster during the What do Employers Want? workshop was challenging as they found the social interaction hard. We will consider this feedback for following events in the context of students needing to learn in a safe environment what would be expected of them in the world of work.

In conclusion most grateful thanks again, to everyone involved in the day. It is only possible to give our students this kind of experience with everyone pitching in to help and support.

Teachers were moved and covered multiple lessons, IT supported the day getting all the presentations to the right place at the right time, staff delivered the work experience preparation presentation with style. Thank you Copleston staff team!

Our presenters, all visiting the school, some for the third year in a row... Thank you for your effort and your time that you gave to us freely.

If we go back to the why of the day, then consider the most positive feedback we have had for this day ever, this truly is a day full of memorable encounters with employers during their education at Copleston which will stand our students in good stead for their futures.



Claire Ladbrook
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