

Movement to Work



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Organisation: Cabinet Office, UK Government

Country: United Kingdom

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Economic affairs

Type: Human Resources, Organisational Design, Partnerships

Launched in: 2010

Overall development time: 1 year(s)

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

Movement to Work is a cross sector, employer-led initiative in the United Kingdom (UK) with an objective to reduce youth unemployment through quality work experience and learning.

Movement to Work is a voluntary collaboration of leading employers who are working in partnership to help young people move closer to employment, either through gaining employment directly or through training or a return to education.

The initiative focuses on the 18-24 age group and those who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The desired outcome of the initiative is a reduction in the number of NEETs in the UK labour market.

The UK Civil Service is one of 15 founding employers of Movement to Work. A range of departments within the Civil Service committed to Movement to Work placements during 2014, with even more joining from 2015.

Collectively, 6000 work placements will be delivered in the Civil Service during 2014-2015. Jobcentre Plus, the operational arm of the Department for Work and Pensions, operates the scheme for the Civil Service, linking young unemployed people to work experience opportunities across the organisation.

Why the innovation was developed

- With approximately one in six young people unemployed, youth employment remains one of the most significant political priorities in the UK.
 - Youth employment and employability is therefore a topic with interest from both political and business perspectives. This convergence has presented an opportunity for employers to bring energy and focus to an important agenda, with government playing a facilitative rather than directional role.
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Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve social equity, Support economic growth

- The objective of Movement to Work is to reduce youth employment.
 - This, by proxy, has a range of benefits to society including reduced cost to the tax payer through reduced jobseeker benefit payments, reduced youth depression and other impacts of early joblessness, reduced poverty, and improved social mobility.
 - In addition, there is joint value for society and businesses in building skills and capability that organisations need through investing in the employability of young people to develop a strong pipeline of resource for the organisation in the future.
 - The rationale for this sort of activity is well documented, for example, in the CIPD manifesto for work .
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Main beneficiaries

Businesses, Civil Society, Government bodies, Government staff, Students, Young people

- NEET Youth (Not in education, employment, or training)
- Civil service
- Partner companies

Results

Service quality

Accessibility:

- This network has increased in maturity, sharing insights and developing an approach for new organisations coming on-board. Practical issues such as a low risk appetite to reduced security clearance limiting access to buildings or computer systems have been explored and escalated through this group.
- The group have also played an increasingly strategic role in Movement to Work through making sensible and insightful links between other organisational priorities such as age diversity in the workforce and capability gaps.
- All of these insights have strengthened the business case for Movement to Work, by identifying benefits for different stakeholders. The infrastructure and processes built through the efforts of this group, had delivered over 3000 work placements at the half year point of 2014-2015.

Development

Design

During 2014 the HR community in the Civil Service has been working collaboratively in a number of different ways including working with HR colleagues in other sectors.

Within the Civil Service, a working level network has been developed with responsibility for implementing Movement to Work. Each department has a lead contact responsible for implementing their department's commitment. This network has increased in maturity, sharing insights and developing an approach for new organisations coming onboard.

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Testing

- No methods were used to test the innovation.
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Implementation

Tools used:

- Creating a working-level network across the UK Civil Service.
 - Assigning a lead contact in each department responsible for implementing Movement to Work.
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Challenges and solutions

- A focus on delivering work placements targets quickly could be at the expense of the quality of the work experience offering and that the outcomes of the programme will suffer. Developing a quality assurance and evaluation approach with a cross section of stakeholders is mitigation for this, as is identifying partnerships with other organisations to supplement the work experience. Quality guidance and best practice for managers has been a great means of ensuring consistency in how placements are designed and delivered.
 - A unionised environment presents further risk to delivering the committed number of placements in a public sector context. Seeking support from the Trade Union Congress at a programme level and responding proactively to concerns has addressed this risk so far.
 - Accountability is a further challenge. The Civil Service is a federated organisation, with underpinning departments acting as employers in their own right. An engaged and supportive community of HR Directors, who have time together to regularly discuss cross-Civil Service priorities has been a lever for progressing Movement to Work.
 - These risks as outlined are being actively managed and can be tempered by a number of individual and team benefits. Articulating these benefits and maximising them is part of making a business case within the organisation.
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Partnerships

Marks & Spencer

Private sector

A number of large corporations, facilitated by the CEO of retailer Marks and Spencer, have become increasingly focused on skills and capability and the transition of young people from education to work as an important element of their organisations having the capability to deliver future strategies. This priority is also being reinforced by the HR professional body - the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD).

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Exploring and committing to partnerships with other organisations has been a further success. Accenture (a management consultancy) are providing an online skills academy for young people and the CIPD are delivering a pilot of employability mentoring from young people by their members (HR professionals).
 - These partnerships have been cost neutral, responding to interest from others organisations in undertaking a proof of concept with a big employer. A desire to negotiate partnerships and a less risk adverse attitude than is typical for the organisation has allowed opportunities for partnership and innovation to be sought.
 - The impact of this will be to improve the Movement to Work experience for candidates, in areas where the Civil Service, largely due to financial pressures, has less flexibility (such as provision of training).
 - Outside of the Civil Service, at a programme level, the business case for Movement to Work has been refined and has undergone several iterations over the last year.
 - HR directors from each organisation, via fortnightly meetings, have shared the experience of implementing with colleagues in other organisations. These meetings included sharing success stories and testimonials and developing an approach to quality assurance.
 - Organising the secondment of Civil Servants into the programme to help drive progress and to bring back expertise and insight from a variety of organisations has also strengthened this learning and sharing.
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Conditions for success

- As the Civil Service is a federated organisation comprised of autonomous departments, gaining commitment and engagement from departments in order to deliver the work placements has been heavily based on influence from the centre of the organisation and by peer influence between HR Directors.
 - The organisation of HR in the Civil Service has been conducive to this [see figure three], with strong networks of departmental HR Directors who can be directed by the Head of Civil Service HR. This governance and accountability has been importance to gaining engagement and pushing for progress.
 - HR Leaders have been instrumental in implementing Movement to Work into a coherent people strategy for the organisation. Identifying and bringing together relevant topics including the ageing nature of the workforce, improving social mobility through employment and exploring bias towards experience over potential in recruitment and selection has helped to shift Movement to Work from corporate social responsibility to a meaningful and tangible part of delivering the business strategy for the Civil Service.
 - This will, in turn, help to gain commitment from outside of HR. These senior HR discussions have also identified areas of risk such as potential confusion for young people when looking at a host of employment initiatives available to them. The HR community can then proactively address to these risks.
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Other information

As a whole programme, Movement to Work will focus on expansion for the remainder of 2014-2015. The scale of the programme will increase from 10,000 placements by the end of 2014 to a goal of 100,000 work placements through two main expansion strategies.

Expansion will focus on both breadth (increased number of new organisations pledging their involvement) and depth (increased number of suppliers and clients in the network of existing companies pledging their involvement).

Refining the business case for Movement to Work based on the experience of employers so far and communicating the outcomes of the programme on youth employment figures, including through high profile media, will be central to this expansion.