

Assenti Research

Evaluation of Whiteinch & Scotstoun
WorkingRite Project
Report
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I. Background and Objectives

In Scotland WorkingRite deliver work based learning and mentoring projects to 16-18 year olds.

Their work is based on a number of key principles:

- The importance of breaking away from their peers and learning how to mix in the world of adults
- Practical learning on the job
- The need for many young people to understand and learn skills that matter in the workplace e.g. understanding authority and why it's necessary, importance of time keeping, the cost of mistakes to an employer etc

This report is an evaluation of a project run with Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association. The participants have been referred by the HA, SDS and local youth club (DRC) as well as self-referral. Potential participants are interviewed to ensure a good fit for the project. Most trainees participate in a short, one to one, tailored induction followed by a 16 week placement (although there is scope for placements to be longer or shorter depending on individual circumstances).

I.2 Research Objectives

The over-riding aim of the research was to assess the impact of participation on the young people.

The specific objectives included:

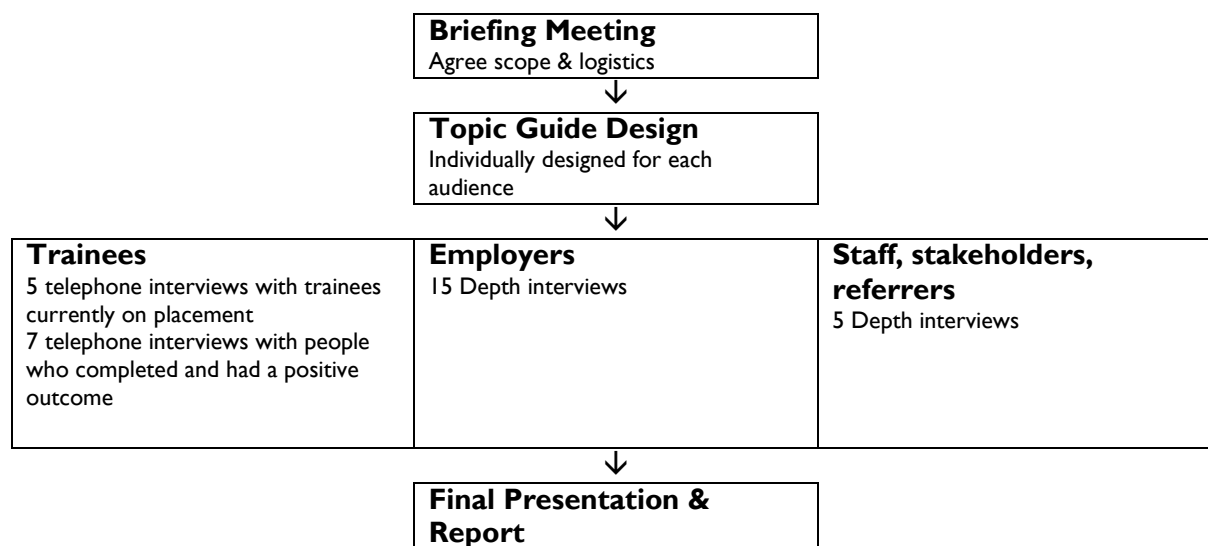
- to consider the project from an employers perspective in terms of what made it appealing or off putting
- to consider how participants felt about the project before they were involved – what were their expectations at that time?
- to understand whether employers felt that the pilot was worthwhile for them – how have they/their business/staff benefited from taking part? – would they take part again in the future/recommend to other employers?
- to make an assessment of the extent to which (and how) participation results in the enhancement of self-esteem and confidence, changes in aspirations and motivation, and improvement in social and team working skills
- to consider what the young people think they would have done without this project
- to ascertain the value that is placed on participating by the trainees and employers
- to identify the benefits and any drawbacks of the project
- to identify the challenges the project has faced in delivery and consider ways of overcoming these
- to understand whether the project is valued by referrers and why

The report also includes other data gathered by WorkingRite about the outcomes for all participants.

2. Research Approach

2.1 Outline of Research Approach

The research approach is summarised below.



2.2 Topic Guide Design

The topic guides used in this research were semi-structured lists of questions and question areas used to guide the moderator during the depth interviews. The draft topic guides were provided to the client for input, comment and final approval before the research commenced. A copy can be found in the Appendix.

2.3 Trainees

The trainees were contacted as far as possible by WorkingRite to explain why the research was being carried out, their role in the research and that it was anonymous and confidential. The research focused on trainees who had recent experience (within the last 18 months) of WorkingRite to ensure that they were able to recall the support they were given. These respondents were offered a £10 voucher as a thank you to encourage participation.

Five telephone interviews were carried out with trainees currently on placement (from a list of seven) and a further seven telephone interviews with people who completed and had a positive outcome (from a list of eleven). Contact details were also provided for some trainees who had left early or had not gone on to employment. Unfortunately none of these trainees were willing to participate in the research despite repeated contact.

2.4 Employers

Understanding the employer experience is particularly key to establishing the impact on the young people involved. Fifteen telephone interviews were carried out with employers including a mix of:

- Those who had current trainees on placement
- Those who had previously had a trainee or trainees who did not complete 16 weeks
- Those who had offered full time employment to trainees at the end of the placement

Many of the employers had worked with more than one trainee.

The employers who participated in the research included many local business in the Whiteinch & Scotstoun area as well as others offering different opportunities in other parts of the city:

Ali Baba's	JS Harvie Ltd
Alva Northern	Kennedy & Co
Andrew Hand Pharmacy	Murrin Hair
Caledonian Maintenance	Panini Express
CCG Construction	PowerLite Electrical
Clydeside Sheet Metal	R&R Fabrications
Dean's Electrical	Same Day Tyres
Glasgow Wood Recycling	

2.5 Staff, Stakeholders & Referrers

Five depth interviews were carried out with:

- Previous and existing project staff from WorkingRite
- Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association Chief Exec
- Skills Development Scotland (referrer)
- DRC Youthwork (referrer)

3. Research Findings

3.1 First Impressions

Overall, first impressions of the idea of the WorkingRite project were quite mixed. Those with previous experience of other employability programmes were often sceptical and had to be persuaded to give WorkingRite an opportunity. After engaging with WorkingRite perceptions and attitudes were much more positive and enthusiastic as can be seen in the sections that follow.

It is interesting that partners such as Whiteinch & Scotstoun HA, DRC Youth Project and Skills Development Scotland were initially quite skeptical about the projections made by WorkingRite for securing long term employment for trainees after the 16 week placement.

“It was a no brainer, almost too good to be true – the amount of money we put in and the potential benefits and results for young people involved seemed great. We had to see it working but the results so far have been great.” (HA)

“WorkingRite sounded too good to be true – you hear a lot of promises in the third sector, it sounds very impressive but often they (employability providers) let you down. I gave it a trial but I was sceptical.” (DRC Youthwork)

All three partners had been very impressed by WorkingRite’s ability to provide individualised support for trainees, matching them with a placement to suit their needs and aspirations and in many cases leading to the offer of full time employment.

“A lot of provision in Glasgow is a bit shorter and some placements are more vague. She (WorkingRite) does a good job of finding the right placement whereas others just fit the trainee to what they have. There is the possibility of a job at the end of it which is just amazing and other providers wouldn’t even whisper that.” (SDS)

“It’s a very person centred approach and it works.” (DRC Youthwork)

Regardless of what they were doing at the time of engaging with WorkingRite the trainees all wanted full time employment or an apprenticeship. The fact that there was potential for a full time job at the end of the placement was the primary motivating factor for trainees. Those who knew about WorkingRite through friends who had been trainees were the most positive at the outset, based on their friends’ experience they believed that if they applied themselves they had a strong chance of finding a job. Those who didn’t have friends’ experiences to base their opinions on were still usually quite positive about the opportunity for them to be kept on at the end of the placement. There were a couple of respondents who had been engaged with other youth employability projects and they were more sceptical about the project due to previous negative experiences.

“My mate had done it and he got a Modern Apprenticeship out of it so I thought there was a good chance if I worked hard that I could get kept on as well.” (Trainee)

“Before WorkingRite I did another thing that was similar but it was a shorter placement and there was loads of us, like maybe 30 or 40 boys and we never got any proper training or anything it was just labouring. We would just get told paint that fence and there wasn’t enough work for us so it was a lot of hanging about and boys were fighting and that. So at the start I didn’t know if this would be just the same but I had nothing else to do.” (Trainee)

“It sounded different what she said but I thought it would be pretty much the same thing with no real chance of a job. Just putting you out there to make up the numbers – but it wasn’t like that.”

Employers all had positive impressions of the project concept at the start. Again some of those who had taken trainees or placements with other employability providers or programmes were more sceptical.

“It’s a good idea, there should be more of this. You know I think young people deserve a chance, they can’t get a job without experience and they can’t get the experience without a job – it’s a Catch 22.” (Employer)

“I have had trainees before and they are just not interested. Maybe they wanted to be a joiner or something and here they are fitting tyres or maybe they are just there cos their parents told them to go. I didn’t want that, it’s no use to me if they don’t want to be here.” (Employer)

3.2 The Trainees’ Experience

Before WorkingRite

Some of the trainees came to WorkingRite straight from school. Of those who had left school some had been to college, others had limited work experience or had been on other employability projects. All of them wanted to be working and many were hoping for a Modern Apprenticeship. Those who came to WorkingRite straight from school were the most positive and optimistic about their futures. By comparison those who had participated in other employability schemes or had some negative experience of employment tended to feel less optimistic before they started with WorkingRite. Those who had experienced disappointment or even failure since leaving school commonly described themselves as “fed-up”, “bored” and “frustrated”. Most had not enjoyed school and disliked the classroom environment, there was a strong desire to begin earning money.

“I felt pretty bad. I wasn’t really doing anything, I kept applying for jobs but I wasn’t even hearing anything back so it felt like a waste of time.” (Trainee)

“I was a bit fed up. I wanted to do something hands on and practical, making stuff or fixing stuff. But getting into an Apprenticeship or a job was really hard.” (Trainee)

“I didn’t like school. The teachers didn’t understand why I never did better and I didn’t get the help I needed. I just wanted out of school as quickly as possible, get a job and start earning.” (Trainee)

“I came straight from school. I was just expecting to get a job and I couldn’t wait to get started.” (Trainee)

Engaging with WorkingRite

Regardless of the source of referral, all trainees first met with the Project Co-ordinator to be assessed, establish if they were a suitable candidate and consider what area of work they were interested in. Trainees were then matched with suitable work placements.

The financial incentive was very attractive to trainees but for the majority the most important factor was the opportunity to be employed at the end of the placement should they perform well. They all hoped that at the end of the placement they would be given a full time job and perhaps the opportunity of an Apprenticeship.

“The extra money was good don’t get me wrong but it was more about getting a job at the end of it.” (Trainee)

“I didn’t even know we would get paid on the placement and I would have don’t it for nothing for the chance of an Apprenticeship.”

“I didn’t think there was really a job there for me so I did it for the experience and the money. It was only when I started up that I realised I could actually get a job.”

Being a Trainee

The trainees were very positive about the Project Co-ordinators who were seen as helpful and supportive.

“I could phone her up if I was having a problem with something or I wasn’t sure about something and she would tell me like how to approach it. She bought me like work clothes and stuff and she came into my work for a chat every week to begin with just to make sure I was ok and doing everything I should be.” (Trainee)

“She was lovely. I couldn’t believe how quickly she got me an interview and got me started.” (Trainee)

“See my first placement I didn’t like it and I just left and thought that was the end of it. But she phoned me up and wanted me to come in and when I explained it all she said how I should have spoken to her first but she was going to give me another chance. It’s all went on from there.” (Trainee)

The majority of trainees had an idea of what they wanted to do. Some had received help from the Project Co-ordinator to consider their strengths and what they enjoyed. Whilst some were willing to be flexible others had quite a definite idea of the sort of placement they were looking for. Most trainees had been pleased with how quickly a suitable placement had been found for them.

The respondents were not obliged or under pressure to accept the first placement offered but most did. A wide range of placement opportunities were reported including: hairdressing, joinery, electrician, plumbing, sheet metal work, retail and construction. Many of the placements were in the local area with local employers and this was seen as a significant advantage.

“I stay five minutes away and I had always wanted to work in here so it was all just what I wanted.” (Trainee)

“It’s quite close so that helps with early mornings eh?”

Many of the trainees had received PPE and one had been provided with a basic toolkit to enable him to make the most of his placement and opportunity for training.

“Other places you get one set of everything and it’s cheap stuff so when it gets ripped or that you have to sort it out yourself. the Project Co-ordinator took me to the shop and got me everything I needed and said if I needed anything else I was to go back and tell her.” (Trainee)

The placements offered genuine training opportunities where the trainees were able to learn new skills and not simply provide cheap labour. The workplaces were often small businesses offering an opportunity to be mentored by the business owner. The mentoring went further than simple instruction on how to complete tasks and included a lot of input around what employers expect.

“To begin with it was learning all the tools and then handing them to the guys. Then they started showing me how to do small things and once I could do that I got on the next thing. I’m doing all sorts of stuff now I can hang doors and fit kitchens.” (Trainee)

“I was washing hair and sweeping up at the start. Then I got trained on answering the phone and taking bookings and I was making cups of tea and stuff. It’s all about customer service and eventually I will be moving onto cuts and colours.” (Trainee)

Among those who had participated in another employability project WorkingRite was perceived to be very different. The differences noted were: longer placement, better matched placement, good potential for a job at the end and quality PPE provided.

“At xxxxxxx I never got any say in what my placement was. You just got papped out onto whatever they had.” (Trainee)

“They said there might be a job at the end but once you got on your placement you realised there was no job.” (Trainee)

“The manager on the placement never taught you anything, it was just free labour for them. The guy was always shouting but you didn’t know what to do and no-one tried to help you. It was a really big site and no-one really bothered with you.” (Trainee)

The respondents had all enjoyed (or were still enjoying) their placements. The key benefits of the placements were:

- Learning new skills related to the job
- Adapting to the workplace / getting into a work routine
- Working with other people as part of a team
- Gaining confidence
- Showing the employer that they could do the job

“I was able to do the job instead of getting told what to do and shown all the time. I knew what needed done and could go and do it.” (Trainee)

“My confidence was built up quite a lot because I had to get to know the other people here as well as the public.” (Trainee)

“I learned what I was good at and also I wasn’t good for asking how things worked and I was struggling ‘cos I wouldn’t like to ask. I feel better about that now I know how to communicate better.” (Trainee)

“I’m moving about working with different teams so getting on with people and learning all the different skills you need in different parts of the site.” (Trainee)

“I feel like I know what it is to go out and start working I’ve matured a lot.” (Trainee)

“When I was in school I thought it would be harder in the real world. But it’s so much better than school, much more enjoyable. I think more, I’m being challenged all the time and learning new things.” (Trainee)

Many of the respondents had received positive feedback from their families and friends.

“My Dad has said he is proud of me, he sees me getting up early and I’ve never been late even when I’m not feeling well I make sure I get in.” (Trainee)

Some respondents had experienced difficulties during their placement. A couple hadn't liked their first placement and had been able to switch to something else. A small number had overcome challenges with keeping themselves in the work routine. Support from the Project Co-ordinators as well as mentoring from their employer was a positive combination. For one or two, ongoing relationships with DRC Youthwork were highly valued in helping them to stay on track.

The Future

Those who had completed their placements and been kept on by their employers anticipated they would still be doing the same thing in a years time – motivation was high across most of them. For those still in the 16 week placement period, some understood that they were likely to be kept on/offered an Apprenticeship and others were still in the early stages of their placement – most had positive expectations.

In 5 years time most of those who had completed their placement expected to have achieved some career progression in the same field either being qualified, promoted or being self-employed. Those still on placement were less confident and certain.

If the project hadn't existed, whilst there was an expectation or a hope among most that they would have got a job, there was a sense that it might not have been in the area they wanted to work. Some thought they would have continued being passed from one employability project to another or just given up trying.

“I'd like to think I would have got there in the end by myself but I don't know, I wasn't having much luck before.” (Trainee)

“I had applied for every Apprenticeship going and I was getting nowhere because of my grades. I would have just ended up laboring but now I'm about to pass my first year.” (Trainee)

All of the trainees would recommend the WorkingRite project to their friends and indeed many already had. The project was highly valued by trainees who saw it as fundamentally important in them being able to find employment in the area they wanted to work in.

“I would say go for it because they will help you get a job doing something that you're interested in.” (Trainee)

“It really helped me find a job doing something I enjoy and if it helped me it can help other people as well.” (Trainee)

3.3 The Employers' Experience

Engaging with WorkingRite

Employers all had a clear understanding of the purpose of WorkingRite. Small employers liked the opportunity for them to mentor young people and impart their own skills and experience.

Some employers had been approached directly by WorkingRite, others were referred by the HA or recommended by other employers. Local engagement was high and this was seen as a positive thing – encouraging local jobs for local people and ensuring that wages paid out went back into the local economy. Local employers particularly like the idea of being able to give something back to their own community.

“It’s bringing girls through who wouldn’t have the nerve to walk through the front door and usually they get there with the right support.” (Employer)

Many employers commented that it was difficult for them to find young staff who were motivated and willing to work. Furthermore the additional support offered by the Project Co-ordinator to the trainee made it easier for them to work and develop them.

“I was getting young people from the Job Centre and they weren’t interested (in working for me) they wanted a bakery or a garage or something.” (Employer)

“It’s good for that they interview and filter out so I only get someone who has a good chance – I don’t have to interview 4-5 candidates.” (Employer)

A small proportion of the employers worked with a range of employability organisations and were already familiar with the concept. They found WorkingRite at least comparable with other organisations and some went as far as to say that WorkingRite offered a higher caliber of candidate and that the more intensive support whilst on placement made their job much easier.

“The level of candidates was excellent. We told her what we could provide and she matched that with the right person.” (Employer)

Taking on a Trainee

The long 16 week placements were seen as advantageous as trainees were there long enough to relax and “show their true colours”. There was a sense that for some young people the first few weeks went very well and then they might go off the rails a bit being late or taking too many days off sick. The length of the placement was critical in allowing trainees to reach and move beyond this phase which was seen by many employers as a natural adaptation from school life to working life.

“It’s like looking after a baby at first they don’t think for themselves. You have to change them from doing what they are told to thinking for themselves. They are just kids and it doesn’t happen overnight.” (Employer)

“They aren’t used to hard work or work full stop. Sometimes after a few weeks they start taking the mickey, maybe not even on purpose. You have to teach them that it’s not ok to be 10 minutes late every day, they have to learn to stop checking their phone whenever they want, they have to understand that they can’t just be off sick whenever they don’t feel 100%. It’s all part of growing up.” (Employer)

“It’s like a really long job interview – before you commit to them you know them warts and all.” (Employer)

“It’s a no obligation way to try someone out – you’re committing your time and materials but only having to pay £1 an hour to them so for a small business it is very attractive.” (Employer)

For local employers there was also some confidence that came from knowing other local employers who already had trainees.

Employers felt well prepared for their trainees and the additional support offered by WorkingRite through regular visits with trainees was highly valued. Some trainees were perceived by employers to be work ready and settle into employment very easily – most had some challenges, most commonly mentioned were:

- Adapting to the differences between work and school which included time-keeping, absences and appropriate use of mobile phones.
- Learning basic job related skills required for employment – sometimes required more support than expected.
- Lack of confidence, being shy and quiet.
- Waiting to be told to do something rather than taking initiative or not being willing to ask questions when unsure how to approach a task.
- A small proportion had attitude problems and were cheeky or would try to avoid work.

“We took 2 boys at the same time and one started he was slow to pick everything up and very shy. The other lad had more nouse, he was more communicative and took instruction better. A few months down the line we could see the boy who had most potential at the start was lazy, sleeping on the job and got cheeky. The longer the other boy went on the more we could see he had potential – he’s really come out of his shell and he’s now doing his apprenticeship.” (Employer)

“He was very quiet and he was on his phone all the time then he started being off sick. We spoke to him and so did the Project Co-ordinator and he really turned things around – it was like he suddenly realised he had to change.”

Many of the employers had experience of working with more than one trainee from WorkingRite, some were kept on and others had left or been let go at the end of the 16 weeks. Where trainees were kept on there was a strong sense that they had developed significantly over the 16 week period – often beyond the employers’ early expectations. Sometimes some of the challenges highlighted earlier were still apparent after 16 weeks but growth and improvement was sufficient for them to confidently offer a full time position. In most cases there are had been significant improvements in confidence, team working, skills and reliability.

“He has matured slightly and he has now got the work ethic. He knows what is expected and gets up and gets on with it.” (Employer)

“He was very quiet but he listened to what you said and watched you once and he could do it himself. I can see him being a site foreman when he is time served.” (Employer)

“He was on the engineering side and doing well we were quite happy. It happened there were some quiet times and we would bring him in the office and get him to help with filing and answering the phone. He started to really enjoy it and wanted to change to the admin side – we had to think if we could make it work but he had good time keeping and was adaptable so it’s all going well now.” (Employer)

“She has gone from strength to strength don’t know what we would do without her now. She’s not the quiet wee girl who first started.” (Employer)

Employers highlighted a number of key benefits from engaging trainees through WorkingRite:

- Low financial risk
- Providing candidates who are interested in this area of work
- Taking away hassle of interviewing lots of candidates
- Help with paperwork
- Help with mentoring and supporting the trainee
- Opportunity to employ someone local / help to access local young people
- Opportunity to work with trainee over a long period of time to establish if they fit in your business

Not all trainees completed their placements or developed as employers hoped, but this didn't put off employers from taking another trainee in the future. There was an understanding that some young people might try a placement for which they have no aptitude or interest. It was also accepted that some young people might have more challenges such as a difficult home life or substance mis-use. Employing and training young people was not expected to be an easy, smooth process – candidates from WorkingRite were just as likely to have additional challenges as candidates from anywhere else. Critically the additional support offered by WorkingRite gave the trainees the best possible chance and made life easier for employers.

“If they aren't turning up on time or taking days sick – it's not just me on at them, the Project Co-ordinator is saying the same thing so they are getting the same message from us both.” (Employer)

“WorkingRite helped a lot with paperwork and took away all the interviewing hassle so it was easier – at the end of the day employing young people is never easy and you have to accept you won't always get the right person.” (Employer)

All of the employers were open to taking trainees from WorkingRite in the future should they have a need. Only one was slightly reticent as they had 3 previous trainees, none of whom had completed the 16 weeks.

All of the employers would recommend working with WorkingRite to other employers.

3.4 Partners

The WorkingRite project was highly valued by Whiteinch and Scotstoun HA. The Chief Executive perceived that there was a shared ethos of wanting to improve the lot of young people in the area.

“Giving a genuine opportunity to young people often not in a position to grasp opportunities. They help stimulate and create opportunities by going out and finding employers.” (HA)

The relationship with the HA was seen to be mutually beneficial. The HA were in a position to raise WorkingRite's profile and their involvement was expected to be reassuring to trainees and employers. Furthermore the HA had many links with contractors and there were several examples of these contractors taking young people on placement, some of whom progressed to apprenticeships. Early concerns about whether there were enough local employers to support the project had been unfounded. The biggest benefit was seen to be for the young people themselves.

“It's extremely valuable and worthwhile. The main outcome is the individual benefit to young people – the majority are getting positive outcomes and some highly positive – we hear wonderful stories of them getting support to fulfill their potential.” (HA)

Other than the Housing Association, the main sources of referral were SDS and DRC Youthwork. Both referrers had been approached by WorkingRite who were seen to be proactive and communicative with referrers.

The project intake was mixed in terms of how work ready the trainees were at the start and how much support they needed. SDS tended to refer trainees who were work ready or close to it. Those from DRC Youthwork (who engage with young people at risk e.g. involved in street crime) often had experienced bigger challenges and perhaps more chaotic backgrounds. Consequently SDS tended to see the project as being ideal for those who were work ready or nearly work ready and DRC Youthwork tended to see the project as most suited to those who were work ready but potentially needed more support. Despite the fact that these two referrers saw the WorkingRite project slightly differently both perceived it to be important, worthwhile and valuable.

“WorkingRite care and have the same view we have. The one to one element in referring and then at WorkingRite is very important. There are two people at different sides watching what is going on and making the pathway for them – with other agencies you send them out and they come back like a boomerang.”
(DRC Youthwork)

“I would be at a bit of a loss without it. It’s unique in its stage of the pipeline for young people who are ready, WorkingRite are there to help them make that transition.” (SDS)

At the time of being referred to WorkingRite the trainees had different needs in terms of the level and nature of support required. Those going straight from school were often seen to face fewer challenges – “they are going from being spoon fed in school to being spoon fed into a job”. Commonly trainees were thought to be disheartened, frustrated and lacking motivation due to the challenges they had faced trying to get into work. Lack of confidence and self-esteem was commonplace. For some there was a lack of parental input or mentoring. Others were from more chaotic backgrounds and had issues with drug or alcohol abuse, learning difficulties and gangs.

DRC Youthwork saw WorkingRite as playing a critical role in working with them to show young people another way forward rather than criminality and gangs.

“They come back in here on a Friday in their working clothes and it has a knock on effect when the young groups see the guys coming back in their yellow vests. Four years ago you are trying to convince them work is the way ahead – we’ve changed that mindset, changed the whole attitude young people and their families want them to work.” (DRC Youthwork)

Referrers saw WorkingRite as being particularly valuable due to:

- Individual attention and support tailored to their needs – motivating young people
- Persistent support e.g. if the young person walks out of a placement or goes off radar WorkingRite will try to track them down and get them back on track, regular workplace visits
- Engaged with local employers – young people often not required to travel far
- Good at matching young people with employers – helping young people into the area of work they are interested in
- Regular communication (with trainees, employers and referrers)
- Approachable and caring
- Ability to make quick decisions and tailor support due to the size of the project
- Majority of trainees being offered a job at the end of the placement
- Links with local school

- Proactive
- Longer placements than other options

WorkingRite was seen to offer something that other providers did not.

“A lot of provision in Glasgow is a bit shorter and placements more vague, do a good job of finding the right placement whereas others just fit the trainee into what they have.” (SDS)

“Some work programmes are classroom based but these young people are trying to escape classrooms and they have no attention span – often someone who doesn’t care is just talking at them. I’ve filtered out a lot of partners and WorkingRite is the only one I’m using for employability.” (DRC Youthwork)

3.5 Staff Experiences

Engaging Young People

Young people were referred by: SDS, DRC Youthwork, Whiteinch & Scotstoun HA, schools and self-referral often after reading about WorkingRite in the HA newsletter or hearing about them from a friend who had been a trainee. The trainees were acknowledged to need varying levels and types of support which worked well with the variety of different placement opportunities that WorkingRite had sourced. The strong relationship with the Housing Association was very important in generating respect and trust within the community and in developing relationships with contractors as employers.

It was felt there was a need for this type of project locally and there were sufficient referrals and local employers to ensure the project was sustainable.

The Project Co-ordinators (current and previous) identified the same challenges facing young people as raised by referrers, employers and the trainees themselves. Most notable included: lack of self-esteem and confidence, poverty, depression, health conditions, learning difficulties and housing issues. It was important that potential trainees had a positive attitude to work and could adapt to a work routine.

The financial incentive was perceived to be important.

“Having that bit extra in their pockets can have a big impact on how they feel about themselves. They are able to give money back into the house as well. It’s an added bonus – usually not the main reason they come to us.” (Project Co-ordinator)

Matching trainees with the right placement and the right employer has been identified by others as a key reason for WorkingRite’s success. The trainees abilities, experience, wants and needs were evaluated and advice offered to help the young person in choosing what sort of placement they were interested in. Very few difficulties had been found in finding a placement that the young person was willing to try.

Engaging Employers

Local relationships with local employers was seen as key. The project was able to offer a range of local placement opportunities as well as some in other city locations.

“Local employers feel as if they are giving something back to the community – it’s why a lot of employers buy into it. Local people, local jobs, local opportunities – I’ve worked on other programmes and can see a difference working a huge area and a small one.” (Project Co-ordinator)

Overview

The key benefits of the WorkingRite approach were consistent with those identified by trainees, employers and partners:

- Focus on work placement and less emphasis on classroom based training
- Tailored one to one support
- Ensuring trainees are ready for working in a supported environment
- Sourcing employers willing to give extra support
- Matching trainees to work placements they are interested in
- Giving trainees a second chance where appropriate
- Supporting employers and trainees throughout
- Requiring employers to make a contribution ensures a greater degree of commitment
- Local employers
- Positive impact on local economy – local employers, taking on local people who spend in the local economy
- Small numbers – seeing trainees as individuals, able to give one to one support
- Knock on effect on other local young people – see young people a bit older getting a job and earning money - aspirational

The benefits for the trainees were:

- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Work experience and developing skills
- Able to work as part of a team
- Improved communication, understanding the importance of communicating
- Mature attitude to work – understanding what employers expect from staff
- Many being kept on as employees and given Modern Apprenticeship opportunities

“Might be a case of coming in for an interview – head down, won’t speak – some of them feel they’ve never had anything good in their life. As you go through the reviews and you get to the middle and the end of the placement there is eye to eye communication, starting to be proud of themselves and when they move onto full time employment you see a whole change in their demeanour.” (Project Co-ordinator)

“The attitude to work their attitude is just like school, they don’t realise the opportunity they are getting. But then they start to mature and realise how important time-keeping and attendance are and they start showing the employer they are keen.” (Project Co-ordinator)

A variety of circumstances might prevent a trainee from completing their placement such as not liking the placement, problems at home, housing issues, drug and alcohol misuse, caring commitments or just not being ready for work. For some trainees it was possible and appropriate to offer another placement and some of those who participated in 2 placements went on to a positive outcome after the second placement. It was still felt that there were benefits (as detailed above) for those who had participated and left early or those who were not kept on by their employer at the end of the placement.

“They may not see it at the time but any experience of going to work, getting up and getting out and learning new skills has got to add something.” (Project Co-ordinator)

“Often they realise what they have learned and moving on to another job they get how important it is to be on time, follow instructions without moaning.” (Project Co-ordinator)

3.6 Case Studies

These five case studies have been chosen to give a more detailed flavour of some of the trainees experiences.

Case Study 1

Case Study 1 had recently moved into the area to live with his Father having experienced abuse with his alcoholic Mother previously. He had left school with few qualifications, very low self-esteem and confidence and admitted to using alcohol to escape his feelings. He was referred by the Housing Association. He had a genuine interest in becoming a joiner and had some experience of this working with his Father. It was felt important to secure a placement quickly due to his state of mental health and although he was resistant to training he was open to trying something different as no joinery placements were available.

He was placed with a sheet metal business but only attended for 2 days and was then ignoring phone calls from the Project Co-ordinator. It was possible to make contact through the Housing Officer and his Father. He admitted that he didn't like the placement but had not known how to communicate this. After some consideration he was offered a second placement and this time WorkingRite were able to offer joinery. The placement went well, his employers were delighted with his progress, he was kept on and is now doing his Modern Apprenticeship. The employer was very positive about the project.

This trainee spoke very enthusiastically about the project saying *"I knew what I wanted to do but I didn't know how to do it. After the first placement went wrong I thought that was the end of it, I'd blown it but she gave me a second chance and it's just gone on from there"*.

Case Study 2

The second case study was also referred by the Housing Association. The family were struggling financially and there were tenancy issues. Case study 2 was dyslexic and had mild learning difficulties. Initially his confidence was very low and he was very nervous. He expressed an interest in painting and decorating having previously tried this on a school placement and was placed with a contractor working with the HA.

Expectations on the placement were high, long working hours and early starts all over the city. Feedback was positive throughout his placement although he needed a lot of support from his mentor and initially struggled with basic tasks. With practice and perseverance over the long placement he was able to bring his skills up to scratch and was offered a Modern Apprenticeship. His employer viewed him as a good, steady employee – had the placement been shorter he may not have been offered a position as it took him longer to develop his skills than would usually be tolerated.

"He had a good attitude but he was slow to pick things up, we were patient with him and that has paid off – he has shown us that he deserves his job." (Employer)

Case Study 3

Case Study 3 was referred by DRC who he was engaged with as a result of family problems. His brother was in jail for dealing drugs and there were fears that he might follow a similar path. He left school at 15 and went to WorkingRite at 16. He interviewed well and his placement went smoothly, at the end he was also offered a Modern Apprenticeship. The employer highly valued the support offered by WorkingRite to link with the Glasgow Guarantee Fund and help identify college places.

Case Study 3 was seen to have matured significantly into a hard working young man with a new attitude.

Case Study 4

Case Study 4 self-referred after reading about WorkingRite in the HA newsletter. He was placed with a firm of heating engineers assisting the engineers. He was very quiet, lacking confidence and not good at communicating. Although his employers were very pleased with him after 3 months he approached WorkingRite and asked for another placement in an office. It became apparent that during quiet periods his employers had asked him to help in the office and ultimately he had enjoyed this more than working with the engineers. WorkingRite approached his employer to establish if they could support him moving into the office – based on good attitude and attendance they were willing to give him this opportunity.

At this time Case Study 4 began having a lot of absences and sickness. His employer and WorkingRite continued to work with him to reinforce a positive attitude to work and encourage a shift away from behaviours that might be acceptable at school but not in work. However, the final straw came when he had been away for the weekend and phoned his placement to tell them he wasn't coming back. WorkingRite contacted him and persuaded him this was inappropriate, he came home after all and went into work the following day. Six months on and he is still working in the office, the sickness and absence problem has been resolved. In this instance the patience and support of the employer and the persistent support of WorkingRite have been key to success.

Case Study 5

Case Study 5 had previously been on other employability programmes with large groups of young people and no real prospect of employment. By the time he was referred to WorkingRite he was disillusioned and frustrated. He was placed with a garage but it became apparent to WorkingRite that the employer was unprofessional in his management of the trainee. Ultimately WorkingRite pulled him out of the placement and found another placement in a smaller garage with a more supportive mentor. The placement went smoothly but the employer was looking for more enthusiasm and spark from the trainee. At the end of the placement the trainee decided he wanted to apply for another job. Aftercare was provided and he was given help to prepare a CV and coaching on how to apply for jobs. He is now working for ScottishPower and despite not being offered a job at the end of his placement he commented that without WorkingRite he wouldn't be where he was now.

3.7 Secondary Data Regarding Outcomes

Trainee No	Date participated	No of placements	Time on each	Outcome
1	10/3/14-18/4/14	1	6 weeks	Left early
2	10/3/14-20/6/14	1	15 weeks	Left early
3	17/3/14-11/4/14	1	4 weeks	Left early
4	18/3/14-2/8/14	1	20 weeks	Full time employment
5	17/3/14-16/5/14	1	9 weeks	Stopped engaging
6	24/3/14-30/5/14	1	10 weeks	Full time employment
7	7/4/14-23/5/14	1	7 weeks	Left early
8	14/4/14-11/7/14	1	13 weeks	Stopped engaging
9	28/4/14-15/8/14	1	16 weeks	Full time employment
10	2/6/14-19/9/14	1	16 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
11	2/6/14-22/8/14	1	12 weeks	Stopped engaging
12	2/6/14-6/6/14	1	1 week	Stopped engaging
13	9/6/14-20/6/14	1	2 weeks	Stopped engaging
14	16/6/14-30/1/15	2	10 & 20 weeks	Full time employment
15	16/6/14-3/10/14	1	16	Stopped engaging
16	28/7/14-5/9/14	1	6 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
17	5/8/14-2/5/16	2	14 & 21 weeks	Offered MA at end but declined.
18	12/8/14-19/12/15	1	19 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
19	18/8/14-13/2/15	1	26 weeks	Full time employment
20	20/8/14-26/10/15	1	10 weeks	Stopped engaging
21	9/9/14-16/1/16	1	19 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
22	23/9/14-6/1/15	1	15 weeks	Stopped engaging
23	15/10/14-30/1/15	1	16 weeks	Offered employment at end but declined due to 0hr contract
24	15/10/14-20/10/14	1	1 week	Stopped engaging
25	20/10/14-6/2/15	1	16 weeks	Attendance issues – employment not offered at end.
26	5/11/14-5/5/15	1	26 weeks	Offered employment at end – young person changed his mind.
27	6/11/14-27/2/15	1	17 weeks	Full time employment
28	11/11/14-2/12/14	1	3 weeks	Stopped engaging
29	9/12/14 – 17/7/15	2	32 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
30	15/12/14-12/6/15	1	26 weeks	Full time employment
31	27/1/15-6/3/15	1	6 weeks	Stopped engaging
32	2/2/15-21/8/15	1	29 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
33	23/2/15-31/7/15	1	23 weeks	Full time employment

34	2/3/15-14/8/15	1	24 weeks	Secured modern Apprenticeship
35	4/3/15-20/3/15	1	3 weeks	Stopped engaging
36	25/3/15-1/5/15	1	5 weeks	Stopped engaging
37	30/3/15-21/8/15	1	21 weeks	Secured Modern Apprenticeship
38	30/3/15-6/7/15	1	14 weeks	Stopped engaging
39	21/4/15-29/5/15 9/6/15-26/9/15	2	6 weeks 16 weeks	Went to college
40	18/5/15-4/9/15	1	11 weeks	Stopped engaging
41	19/5/15-3/6/15 23/6/15-10/10/15	2	2 weeks 10 weeks	Went to college
42	26/5/15-29/5/15	1	1 week	Stopped engaging
43	4/6/15-2/6/15 23/6/15-10/10/15	2	13 weeks 12 weeks	Stopped engaging
44	23/6/15-27/6/15	1	1 week	Stopped engaging
45	3/8/15-2/9/15	1	3 weeks	Stopped engaging
46	12/8/15-23/10/15	1	12 weeks	Left – health condition
47	19/8/15-24/8/15 5/10/15-26/2/15	2	1 week 21 weeks	Secured modern apprenticeship
48	24/8/15-8/1/15	1	20 weeks	Went to college
49	31/8/15-23/10/15	1	8 weeks	Full time employment
50	2/9/15-16/10/15	1	7 weeks	Full time employment
51	7/9/15-29/1/16	1	21 weeks	Secured modern apprenticeship
52	8/9/15-16/1/16	1	19 weeks	Secured modern apprenticeship
53	14/9/15-5/2/16	1	21 weeks	Full time employment
54	28/9/15-13/11/15	1	7 weeks	Secured modern apprenticeship
55	28/9/15-16/10/15 3/12/15 - current	2	3 weeks current	Full time employment likely
56	6/11/15-16/2/16	1	15 weeks	Not offered employment due to timekeeping/attendance
57	30/11/15-current	1	Current	Modern apprenticeship likely
58	7/12/15 – 15/1/16 19/1/16 - current	2	6 weeks current	Outcome not known yet
59	5/1/16-current	1	Current	Modern apprenticeship likely
60	19/1/16-25/3/16	1	10 weeks	Secured modern apprenticeship
61	29/2/16 – current	1	current	Outcome not known yet
62	1/3/16 - current	1	Current	Outcome not known yet

4. Key Issues Arising from the Research

The WorkingRite project in Whiteinch & Scotstoun is playing a very important role locally as evidenced by the Housing Association, SDS, DRC Youthwork, employers and the young people themselves.

The research has highlighted the key differentiating factors that have led to positive destinations for 33 of the 62 trainees to date.

- Focus on work placement and less emphasis on classroom based training
- Tailored one to one support
- Ensuring trainees are ready for working in a supported environment
- Sourcing employers willing to give extra support
- Matching trainees to work placements they are interested in
- Giving trainees a second chance where appropriate
- Supporting employers and trainees throughout
- Requiring employers to make a contribution ensures a greater degree of commitment
- Local employers
- Positive impact on local economy – local employers, taking on local people who spend in the local economy
- Small numbers – seeing trainees as individuals, able to give one to one support
- Knock on effect on other local young people – see young people a bit older getting a job and earning money - aspirational

The benefits for trainees have been identified as:

- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Work experience and developing skills
- Able to work as part of a team
- Improved communication, understanding the importance of communicating
- Mature attitude to work – understanding what employers expect from staff
- Many being kept on as employees and given Modern Apprenticeship opportunities

There were no significant recommendations for changes or improvements to the project which is very unusual in project evaluation. One referrer thought it would be useful to have a leaflet to give to young people.

Appendix – Topic Guides

WorkingRite Whiteinch & Scotstoun Project Trainee Topic Guide Draft 1

Background

I'm an independent researcher and WorkingRite have asked me to carry out an evaluation of the project that you are taking part in. I'm going to be talking to trainees and some of the employers who provide placements as well as the Project Co-ordinator and some of the people that refer you to WorkingRite. I'm trying to find out how taking part in this project is helping you. At the end I will write all my findings up into a report and WorkingRite can use that to help them improve the project and maybe run more of this kind of scheme in the future.

Any questions so far? I'm going to be asking lots of questions and it's important to remember there are no right or wrong answers. Everything you say is anonymous and confidential in that I'm not going to tell the Project Co-ordinator or anyone else your individual comments, so hopefully you can be open and honest about your experience.

Before WorkingRite

- Tell me about what you were doing before WorkingRite? – describe a typical day?
- I want you to think back to that time and tell me how you felt about your life?
- What did you want to be doing? – did you have any ideas about to achieve that?
- What did you think the future held for you?

Route to WorkingRite

- How did you first find out about this project?
- What was your first impression? – What did you think it would involve?
- What were your impressions of the Project Co-ordinator/Mags? – What did she tell you about the project?
- Why did you want to take part? (If not mentioned – how important was the money in you choosing to do the project?)
- Why did you think you were selected to take part in this project?
- What did you expect to get from taking part?
- Had you ever done anything else like this? – how did it compare?

Experience of WorkingRite Project

- When did you start with the project?
- How have the Project Co-ordinator/Mags helped you? – did you need/receive any personal protective equipment e.g. boots, high vis jacket etc?
- Did you know what sort of work placement you wanted to do? – how did you decide what you wanted to do?
- Have you started or finished your placement? If so can you tell me about your placement (or placements).
 - What sort of company is it? – where is it?
 - How many people work there? – how did you get on with the other people?
 - What sort of tasks were you asked to do?
 - Did you enjoy the placement?
 - What did you learn from your placement? (If not mentioned prompt on new skills, working as part of a team, importance of being on time, workplace experience)
 - Did you stay on the placement for the full 16 weeks? – If not, what happened next? (If another placement repeat questions above.)

- Did you have any issues with timekeeping, attendance or sickness? – how did that impact your placement?
- After your placement did you feel any more or less confident about your abilities? – why?
- What do your family think about the progress you have made?
- Do you think you have changed or your attitude to work has changed – how has it affected you?
- What aspects of it have been hard or has there been anything you didn't like doing or didn't want to do?
- If left early – why didn't you complete the 16 weeks? – was it worth taking part? – why?
- If placement completed or left project ask:
 - What happened at the end of the 16 weeks or when you left?
 - If kept on – how did you feel about that? Are you still working there?
 - What did you do next?
 - What are you doing now?

Future

- What do you expect to be doing in a years time?
- What would you like to be doing?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years time? – have you thought about how you could achieve that?
- If you were in charge of this project would you do anything differently? – what? – why?
- If you were talking to a friend who was thinking about doing this what would you tell them? – should they do it? – why? Why not?
- If this project didn't exist, what would you be doing now?
- From your point of view is it worth taking part? – how worthwhile, important or helpful are the skills you have learnt so far?

Sum Up and Close

WorkingRite Whiteinch & Scotstoun Project Partners/Referrers Topic Guide

Introduction

My name is Sinead Assenti and I'm an independent researcher. I've been commissioned by WorkingRite to carry out evaluation research with their staff and partners as well as trainees and employers involved in the project.

Background

- Please tell me a little about your organisation and it's remit?
- What is your role in your organisation?
- Can you tell me about the relationship between your organisation and WorkingRite? – How do you work together? – To achieve what aim?
- Is there a good fit with your organisation and WorkingRite? – why / why not?

Perceptions of WorkingRite

- What do you understand to be the aims and objectives of WorkingRite?
- How would you rate the work that they do? (probe on why positive or negative) Do you value the contribution they provide?
- What would you say they are particularly good at?
- Are there any areas where they could they improve the way they offer their services?

Evaluation of the Project

- How did you first find out about the project?
- What were your first impressions of the idea of the project? – did you have any concerns at this stage?
- Tell me a bit about how you are involved in the pilot project? – what is your input?
- What sort of challenges / difficulties were the trainees facing before they started?
 - What was their self esteem/confidence like?
 - What was their motivation to participate like?
 - Did they have positive future aspirations?
 - What were their social and team working skills like?
- Tell me about how you have been involved with them since the pilot started? – what has your role been?
- If still in contact, have you seen any changes in the trainees?
 - In what ways have they changed? (probe for effect on self confidence, motivation, aspirations, social and team working skills)
 - Will these changes help them when they leave the project? – in what respect?
- Is there any other support that WorkingRite could offer as part of this project that you think would be useful?
- How valuable and worthwhile do you think the project is?
- How important is this project in the local area of Whiteinch & Scotstoun?
- What other options are locally available? – how do they compare?

THANK AND CLOSE

WorkingRite Whiteinch & Scotstoun Project Employers Topic Guide

Introduction

My name is Sinead Assenti and I'm an independent researcher. I've been commissioned by WorkingRite to carry out evaluation research with employers as well as trainees and staff/partners involved in the project.

Background

- Please tell me a little about your company? – what do you do? – how many staff do you have? – where are you located?

Perceptions of WorkingRite

- What do you understand to be the aims and objectives of WorkingRite?
- Since you have been involved with them, what would you say they are particularly good at?
- Are there any areas where they could they improve the way they offer their services?

Evaluation of the Pilot

- How did you first find out about the project?
- What did the Project Co-ordinator/Mags tell you?
- What were your first impressions of the idea of the project? – did you have any concerns at this stage?
 - If so – how did the Project Co-ordinator/Mags overcome your concerns?
 - What appealed to you about the project? – what was less appealing?
 - What were your expectations? – what did you envisage it would be like to take part?
 - Why did you agree to take part?
- How well prepared were you before your trainee started? – did you feel you had been told everything you needed to know?
- Thinking back to when you first met your trainee – what were your impressions?
 - Did you have any concerns about their ability to fit into your company?
 - Any concerns about your own ability to support them at work?
 - What was their self esteem/confidence like?
 - What was their motivation to participate like?
 - Did they seem to have positive future aspirations?
 - What were their social and team working skills like?
- Tell me about what it has been like having a trainee from WorkingRite?
 - Have you experienced any challenges or difficulties?
 - Have there been any issues with timekeeping, attendance or sickness?
 - If so, how big an impact has that had on the placement or on your attitude to the young person?
 - Have you been able to overcome these? – is there anything else that could be done to make it easier for you?
 - Do you feel you have had the right amount of support from the Project Co-ordinator/Mags?
- Have the trainees changed since they started working with you?
 - In what ways have they changed? (probe for effect on self confidence, motivation, aspirations, social and team working skills)
 - How do you think your trainee will have benefited from working with your company?
- What have the benefits been for your company?
- Would you take on another trainee in the future? – why / why not?
- What advice would you give to other companies thinking about taking part?

THANK AND CLOSE

WorkingRite Whiteinch & Scotstoun Project PC Topic Guide

Referral and Getting to Know Trainees

- Tell me a bit about how the young people are referred to you?
- How valuable is your relationship with the housing association in referral?
- Are there enough referrals locally for the project to be sustainable?
- Typically what sort of challenges are the young people facing when you first meet them?
- What are you looking for from a young person when you interview them?
- How important is the money in trainees decision to try WorkingRite?
- Tell me about the process a young person goes through once they have been accepted as a trainee.

Finding Placements

- How do you help the trainees to decide what sort of placement they would like to do?
- You have a lot of local relationships with employers – how important is it that you are able to offer local placements?
- You also have good relationships with contractors through the housing association – can you tell me about that?
- Have you experienced any challenges or difficulties in finding suitable placements for trainees? – how were these overcome?

Placements

- I'd like to create 5 case studies for the report that demonstrate the typical experience that trainees might have. Can we talk through the project experience for each case study?
 - How were they referred?
 - What specific challenges were they facing?
 - What sort of placement did they want?
 - How did the placement go?
 - What happened after the placement?
 - How did they benefit individually from your support?
 - How did they benefit from the placement specifically?
 - What are they doing now?
 - What are employer attitudes to the project?
 - Is there any other support they would have benefited from?

Project Overview

- Thinking about the way the project is structured just now...
 - What do you think are key aspects of the project that have the potential to make a difference to the trainees?
 - In what ways do you see trainees developing and becoming more work ready?
 - What events or situations can occur that prevent a young person from completing all 16 weeks?
 - Are there still benefits for trainees who don't complete their placements?
 - How valuable and worthwhile do you think the project is? – why?
 - In what way can this project help where another project might not?
 - What sort of outcomes would you expect for the young people involved if this project hadn't been available?
 - How could the project approach be improved to further benefit those taking part?
- How important is this project to the local community?

- How does the relationship with the Housing Association impact on the project?