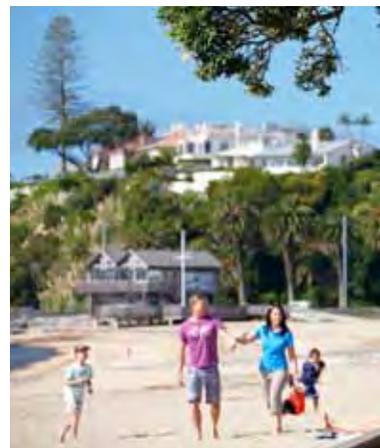


careersnz  
mana rapuara aotearoa



# A Career Capable Auckland: realising our potential

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A MORE  
PROSPEROUS AUCKLAND, THROUGH  
EFFECTIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT



If New Zealand is to succeed at **creating a sustainable high-performing economy and a prosperous society**, we need to secure the economic and social success of Auckland and its region. Auckland's success will be built by a **highly competent, flexible and career capable** population.

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## Foreword

The success of Auckland and its region has a crucial part to play in New Zealand's overall prosperity. A successful Auckland needs people to be highly competent, flexible and career capable.

A career capable city is one where young people and their families are provided with high quality skills, training and career development information and support. An Auckland where there are strong links between business and education, and people are encouraged to develop their careers. An Auckland that makes the most of its human potential.

We won't achieve this without active collaboration. For that reason, Careers New Zealand, Fuji Xerox New Zealand, Business New Zealand and the Employers and Manufacturers Association have come together to sponsor this publication.

We need more emphasis on building strong links between business, industry and education, so our skills and career management competencies will meet the needs of the 21st century economy. We are all committed to raising Auckland's performance in this area.

The Committee for Auckland's recently released publication, *Fuelling our Economy – Proposed Skills Agenda: Auckland workforce skills from the Employers' perspective*, also highlights the need for partnerships and collaboration. It focuses on developing the right academic and personal skills to take Auckland forward. *A Career Capable Auckland* focuses on building the career management competencies of its people and organisations. Read together, these publications present a strong vision for Auckland's future workforce.

*A Career Capable Auckland* outlines Auckland's challenges in developing a skilled workforce, and recommends actions that will add value to our regional economy. These include helping young people through the transition between school and the workplace or further study. We need to actively support people who are disengaged or under employed. We need to support migrants to Auckland to realise their full potential. It's about good talent development and career development support.

We support Auckland Council's goal of making Auckland the world's most liveable city, and part of that is creating a flexible workforce, responsive to emerging needs and economic drivers.

Together, we can make a more prosperous Auckland through effective career development.

Our nation's economy hinges on Auckland's success, and a prosperous Auckland means a prosperous New Zealand.



Graeme Benny

Chief Executive  
Careers New Zealand



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# INTRODUCTION

## **Auckland needs to be a career capable city if we are to reach our potential**

Our economy needs highly skilled people who are managing their own career pathways and charting a course that ensures they move confidently through the 21st century. We need all Aucklanders to develop and evolve, including those currently not contributing to their full potential. Our pathway to enhanced prosperity in Auckland is about getting this right.

This publication, which is for employers, educators and individuals, is the start of a blueprint for developing our workforce so we can realise Auckland's potential and move confidently into the future. It outlines some of the key challenges ahead for the business sector, the education sector, community organisations, families and individuals in developing the career management competencies needed to take Auckland forward.

It provides insight into the issues facing some of the most disadvantaged Aucklanders and makes recommendations that Careers New Zealand and the Capable Auckland career network believe will make a difference.

## **Career development**

To prosper in a rapidly developing and changing labour market, Aucklanders need to develop career management competencies (see Appendix 1). They need to become more self-aware, explore relevant options and opportunities, evaluate their choices, plan for the future and take action.

These career management competencies are essential to help individuals navigate their careers and lives successfully in the 21st century.

Employers and industry play an important role in supporting the acquisition of these competencies. It makes good business sense to provide that support because effective career development increases labour market flexibility and supports getting people into roles where they can be most productive. As the recent *Australian Green Paper on Career Development* states, "both individual needs and national productivity benefit from career development".<sup>1</sup>

## Connecting business and education

For Auckland to become career capable, we need better dialogue between education and business. While Auckland schools and tertiary organisations have developed innovative responses to the needs of the 21st century, many of these developments are not well understood by industry. Likewise, business leaders remain concerned that the education system is not providing the right set of skills, knowledge and attributes in our young people. The truth lies somewhere in between and will only be illuminated by effective dialogue and working together to provide solutions.

Collaboration between the education and business sectors will ensure there is a good pathway into the workplace for all young people through schooling, tertiary education and training. Too many of our young people are not reaching their potential. Youth disengagement and unemployment remains a major challenge for our city. Recent studies continue to identify the need for a better match between the skills employers want and the skills the education system delivers.

Individuals also have a responsibility to engage in lifelong learning, to acquire new skills and equip themselves to meet their own goals. They need to take responsibility to develop, learn and be productive. Families have a role to play in supporting each other to do this. Throughout this publication, we have highlighted stories about individual Aucklanders and organisations that are developing sound approaches to career development resulting in a positive difference.

**Together, we must address these issues.**



# 1. CURRENT GOLD: ENGAGED AUCKLAND WORKFORCE

**Careers New Zealand and Capable Auckland believe a highly motivated, focused and skilled workforce is an important key to the future success of the city, and this requires a strong career development focus at all levels of business and community.**

With a population of just under 1.5 million, a third of New Zealanders choose to live in Auckland. It is a diverse eclectic population of 11% Māori, 16% Pasifika, 59% Pākehā and 22% combined Asian ethnicities.<sup>2</sup> Twice as many Asian people live in Auckland than anywhere else in New Zealand, and three quarters (67%) of all New Zealand Pasifika people live here.<sup>3</sup> This diversity is of huge benefit to Auckland when tapped into in culturally appropriate ways.

Auckland is also home to more young people than any other city in New Zealand, with 37.5% of all New Zealanders aged 15–39 years living in Auckland,<sup>4</sup> creating a unique New Zealand demographic.

However, this diverse population also has challenges.

Approximately 30% of Aucklanders (around 400,000 people) live in communities of high deprivation. The gap between rich and poor is increasing, and new strategies are needed to curb these trends.

Like other cities around the world, we also have an ageing workforce. This workforce carries a richness of experience and wisdom that Auckland must do more to utilise to continue to build a strong future-proofed base in the 21st century.

## **21st Century work realities**

A huge shift is happening globally. We live and work in an increasingly changing world dominated by globalisation and rapid technological advances. In this digital age, lifelong learning is an essential skill.

Just as the industrial revolution changed the world of work in the 1800s, the digital age has revolutionised our world. And as our world changes, so must our approaches to employment and careers. Employers are having to redefine roles, with some jobs disappearing and others requiring new skill sets.

Meanwhile, Auckland faces global poaching of top talent, with many graduates and qualified tradespeople moving overseas. Globalisation means overseas postings are a normal part of career progression, so Auckland needs to attract strong corporate head offices into the city to ensure it is a desirable destination rather than ending up a permanent exit point.

There is also change in types of employment. Technological advances are making labour a more variable cost by making it easier to engage workers on an as-needed basis. In the first 4 months of 2012, full-time employment in New Zealand fell by 3,000, while part-time employment grew by 13,000, according to Professor Paul Spoonley, Research Director at Massey University. Non-standard work (part-time, casual, contract, portfolio and third party) is becoming more the norm.<sup>5</sup>

As the McKinsey Global Institute reports, technology has increased productivity to the point where jobs such as bank tellers and assembly workers are disappearing. “Across the [OECD] nations, part-time and temporary employment among prime-age workers has risen 1.5 to 2 times as fast as total employment since 1990.”<sup>6</sup>

The only thing we can really prepare workers for is further change. Career management skills of flexibility, adaptability, lifelong learning, networking, persistence and resilience are essential in this constantly changing landscape and need to be developed alongside technical skills and work-specific knowledge. Once it was enough to know your trade or your profession. This is no longer the case. Without these career management skills, the mostly highly qualified can struggle to make the most of their qualifications.

“Career development services can help to improve the allocation of labour across regions, industries and occupations when labour supply and demand fluctuate as the result of technological and structural change... It is important that partnerships exist between government, industry and the labour market to identify the required skills needed and the available job opportunities, and to convey this information to individuals to support appropriate career decisions.”<sup>7</sup>

## SNAPSHOT: Encouraging change – Augen Technology Group

Technological change is the only constant in our work, says Mitchell Pham, International Development Director and General Manager of Business Development for Augen Software Group.

“We don’t just advance technology, we also have to continue advancing in the way we work with technology and with our customers to add more value to their businesses as well as our own,” explains Mitchell.

As well as regular internal training, to keep staff engaged and forward looking, Augen runs a technology advocacy programme that involves individual employees exploring potential products identified as the next hot technology.

“We open this up to all staff, which means we get great staff buy-in on new advances. The more adventurous staff like having something else to work at on the side, and because they take personal ownership, they often come back with better ideas. It is a low-risk way of bringing change en masse.”

These advocacy projects are done around other work, so time commitment is discussed in advance, and staff meet regularly with the General Manager of Technology to ensure they’re on track.

“To be successful, you have to be connected, and connection involves collaboration,” Mitchell adds, “and making sure that you involve others and draw on others’ strengths if you find an opportunity you can’t pursue on your own.”

### Auckland in the 21st century

As we continue into the 21st century, bruised by recession, how will Auckland respond?

Is Auckland going to be able to contribute strongly to economic recovery in a way that future-proofs the city with an involved, motivated, technologically advanced workforce, or are we going to increasingly miss out on economic opportunities because of loss of people, skills, knowledge and economic potential?

The economic and social outcomes of Auckland are dependent on individuals who understand the importance and value of building career management competencies over a lifetime. Auckland also needs organisations to play their part by providing encouragement, incentives and the appropriate environment to support their employees’ development and their company’s growth.

Auckland’s track record is mediocre. We have people not reaching their potential

in jobs they don't particularly enjoy. We have people who have dropped out of school or the workforce because they or their families see no future – let alone a career – in the workplace. Many people don't have the tools or the access they need to successfully navigate their way into the workplace, but they should be playing an essential role in the future of Auckland. What is happening with these human resources?

Everyone needs more purpose if Auckland is going to be a wealthy, vibrant, economically successful city. Careers New Zealand advocates stronger career development support/guidance at all transition points in the careers and lives of all Aucklanders, from school to retirement.

### **New Zealand's business capital**

Auckland plays a significant role in the economy of New Zealand. As the largest and most diverse, vibrant and populated city in New Zealand, Auckland is New Zealand's business capital. It is the main international gateway into New Zealand, the distribution hub for the North Island and home of choice for 31% of New Zealand's businesses. The headquarters of several of New Zealand's biggest companies are located in Auckland, such as Telecom and Fletcher Building. It is also the country's banking hub, with the head offices of Westpac, BNZ and ASB New Zealand located there. Many smaller entrepreneurial companies are based there too.

Also there are a number of business incubators in Auckland where entrepreneurs can apply for help to turn innovative ideas into businesses.

Although still in recession mode, Auckland generated just over a third of New Zealand's total GDP in the year to September 2011 and grew faster over the year to December 2012 than the rest of New Zealand. While hit harder by the recession than other New Zealand regions, Auckland is growing faster than the national average.

### **Future growth**

The Department of Labour's 2011 *Skills Challenge Report* predicts the bulk of new jobs in New Zealand over the next 10 years will be in aged care and healthcare, wholesale and retail trade, business and financial services and communication services.<sup>8</sup>

There will also be strong growth in sustainable practices, technologies and industries that will require 21st century skills and knowledge.

Between the March 2011 and March 2012 quarters, construction made the largest contribution to employment growth in Auckland, adding about 4,800 jobs. The next largest contributor was professional, scientific and technical services, with an increase of about 4,400 jobs, followed by about 3,900 in financial and insurance services.<sup>9</sup>

This indicates a lot of potential growth for Auckland, and growth needs a career capable workforce. Right now, much of our workforce is not reaching its potential, yet a number of Auckland businesses are talking of skill shortages. A recent Manpower Group talent shortage survey found about half of New Zealand employers were struggling to fill key positions, up 11% on the previous year.<sup>10</sup> Then there is the drift over the ditch – in 2011, 35,000 Kiwis departed to Australia.<sup>11</sup>

### Skills required

The challenge of meeting skills needs for Auckland has been simmering away for some time, exacerbated by a growing global mobility of workers and companies.

*Fuelling Our Economy*, a recent 2012 study by the Committee for Auckland and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment,<sup>12</sup> identified a range of key skills shortages for Auckland industries, including health and medical, information and communications technology, electronics and engineering. There were also skills gaps in professional management, particularly when looking for international, sales or specialised large-client marketing expertise.

In addition to core competencies, the study also identified that non-cognitive skills are critical but widely lacking. “Skills such as self-discipline, agreeableness and conscientiousness are developed first in early childhood, so even if we start now, growing a workforce with well developed personal skills is a long-term strategy,” says Committee for Auckland Chief Executive Heather Shotter.

An integrated organisational strategy is one approach to addressing skills needs.

Jenna Clarke, Acting Manager, Centre for Workforce & Leadership Capability, Ko Awatea, Health System Innovation and Improvement, of Counties Manukau District Health Board (CM Health), says CM Health is committed to providing sustainable health services that meet the future needs of their population.

“We are one of the largest employers across our district, with over 6,500 employees. Future health service delivery is challenged by an ageing population with increasing health needs, a global shortage of highly skilled and experienced health professionals and a changing demographic in the workforce and the local population. To meet these challenges, we need the right staff, in the right place at the right time,” says Clarke.

She explains CM Health also has a commitment to growing a health workforce that reflects the local population. Growing the health workforce in Counties Manukau requires alignment, collaboration and innovation – the development of a “seamless pipeline” that develops talent into health professionals throughout education, training and employment. Ko Awatea, CM Health’s new centre for health services innovation, is a central hub for this activity. Jointly funded and utilised by CM Health, the University of Auckland, Auckland University

of Technology (AUT) and Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT), Ko Awatea provides a space and approach that bring education, the current workforce and innovation together with health expertise from around the world.

“To increase our workforce supply at entry level, we promote health careers to over 400 high school students in our Health Could B 4 U programme, as well as facilitating Health Science Academies established in two local high schools with funding provided by The Tindall Foundation. The two schools work collaboratively with a third school where an additional Health Science Academy has been set up in partnership with the Pasifika Medical Association with funding from the Ministry of Health. We also provide over 50 Ko Awatea tertiary health scholarships targeted at Māori and Pacific students in our community. Once new graduates are recruited into the organisation, we offer them career development opportunities and ongoing professional development,” says Clarke.

### Career development

For Auckland to continue to be a city where more people want to live and work for the long haul, we need to look at how to expand opportunities. Staff career development opportunities help businesses lift engagement and retention, use talent effectively and upskill their future workforce. Opportunities to provide career development exist in every business, so a key to success is understanding how career development can be incorporated.

“Providing opportunities for lifelong learning and appropriate training or career management is a responsible approach by a company when considering its employees’ wellbeing and contribution to the business,” says Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA) Executive Officer Mike Burgess. Ideally, employers and employees will accept shared responsibility in identifying training needs, skills development and career planning, says Burgess.

However, for some employers, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs), there are challenges around offering career development support, says Burgess. These include a lack of information about career development, not having an HR resource in their organisation to take care of this aspect of business and a sense that it is time consuming. “They also can’t assess the likely benefit,” says Burgess.

Organisations can also have problems with distinguishing between career development and role progression. At times, it can be a challenge to help managers in particular to see that career development and planning is much more than progression from one role to another, says Counties Manukau District Health Board (CM Health) Career Development Consultant Joanna Budai.

Career development happens when we develop a skill, enhance our knowledge or gain experience, Budai says, and people identify their career development needs by going through a career planning process that involves self-assessment,

exploring options and goal setting. The self-assessment process is an important part of career development because it helps drive performance development and keeps people engaged, says Budai, and it is strongly emphasised at CM Health.

As well as assessing an employee's performance, performance reviews should also look at opportunities to support the career development, aspirations and specific professional requirements of employees.

“The organisation's strategic direction and the needs of the population it serves (as in the case of a DHB) need to be aligned with development opportunities throughout the performance development process,” says Budai. Having conversations with employees about their future goals and the skills they would like to develop (commonly referred to as career conversations) should also be encouraged in an informal way throughout the year, not only during performance reviews, she adds.

“Career development from an organisational perspective is about finding the link between the individual's aspirations, work/life balance, motivators, skills, knowledge and experience and the organisation's needs for workforce planning, succession planning, strategic goals and work that needs to be done,” explains Budai. Another very important aspect of good organisational career development is the training of managers so they understand the career development process and therefore have effective career conversations, says Budai.



## SNAPSHOT: Using external career professionals

Recognising people's talents is very important, says Augen Software Group International Development Director and General Manager of Business Development Mitchell Pham. Augen has a number of staff development programmes, including personal growth measures, professional mentoring, downward mentoring and a leadership development programme.

Augen also commissions a professional HR consultant's services for a number of hours each year. Any employee can book a session to discuss their current career, its progression and their aspirations. This enables them to begin a discussion about change with senior management.

### **Career clarity**

Mitchell describes this as an empowerment programme that also encourages professional development. "Usually, it simply gives the employee more clarity about what they want to do within the organisation. Since we started this service, a couple of employees have left looking for new challenges, which is fine, and one or two have felt they were on the wrong track and have gone back to university or back to their home country," he explains.

It has been on offer for many years and is a permanent part of the HR budget. "We started the service because we don't have HR expertise. We saw this programme and realised that it was something very useful we could offer."

He says there are no winners if people are unhappy because they're in the wrong role. "We don't want unhappy people. In the past, we would sometimes have unhappy employees who didn't know why they were unhappy, and we didn't understand why they were performing poorly. This service helps us figure that out. You can measure all sorts of things, but it is not until you talk through the career counselling process that you get that other level of understanding."

Research by Competenz (the industry training organisation for the engineering, manufacturing, baking, and food and beverage manufacturing industries) into how medium-sized businesses approach productivity revealed that the majority of respondents believed having more highly trained people was the way to improve productivity, but most invested in changing processes instead.<sup>13</sup>

"Yet businesses that experienced high growth rates within the last 2 years favoured investment in people over high-decline businesses who favoured investment in process," says Competenz Chief Executive John Blakey.

## SNAPSHOT: Career development at Tasti Products

The desire to retain staff, develop strong back-up capacity within the business and encourage staff to 'think big' about internal career progression has led to a number of career development strategies within Tasti Products, says Human Resources Manager Karl Pointon.

After introducing literacy and numeracy programmes successfully 4 years ago, Tasti Products has more recently developed a tertiary education policy and people-planning days that involve discussion of employee career progression and profiles of each employee.

The benefit is more engaged employees, says Pointon, and a sense of commitment by Tasti Products to employees, which aids retention. It is also much cheaper than recruiting through an agency, he adds.

### Highlighting career opportunities

Tasti Products also develops career profiles of selected employees, tracking their progress through the company. "We use these internally to show staff the opportunities that can open up for them within the business."

Pointon adds this is particularly effective for employees in lower-level jobs. "They never used to see that opportunities were real, so these career profiles show how there are really good opportunities to step up if you are patient."

The career profiles also highlight the importance of gaining experience across other functions within the business, especially for staff wanting to move to management level. "By moving between business functions, staff members build a wider knowledge of how the business operates, which is really important knowledge at senior level."

### Two-way street

Just as a business changes over the years, so will the aspirations, goals and learning needs of many of its staff. Incorporating a career development process will ensure employees are best positioned to work to their capacity and are motivated to give their best, because they are more likely to have a stronger sense of where they're heading.

This 21st century mind shift is a two-way street. An effective career conversation gives the employee a chance to formulate personal career goals and a clearer sense of direction, along with a realistic view of the skills and abilities they have to offer. It can improve their understanding of opportunities and options and increase their motivation within their role.

According to a UK study on how people-management practices influence business performance, “Thoughtful career conversations offer your employees a clearer sense of pathways in the future in your business, a realistic view of their capabilities, a broader understanding of career options and increased confidence and motivation.”<sup>14</sup>

For employers to get the best value out of career conversations they need to actively work on aligning people into roles that best suit their skills, provide opportunities for new skills to be learned and open up new experiences that increase the individual’s awareness of the possibilities within their current workplace.

Individuals also need to take responsibility for managing their career by making the most of opportunities that come their way. In today’s environment, the more a person is in tune with their career needs, the more open they can be to considering and responding to new opportunities that help keep them employable.

### **SNAPSHOT: Seeking opportunities**

Persistence, resilience and staying open to opportunities are all important competencies in career development, as fashion designer Annah Stretton’s varied career demonstrates. Through mentoring, she now helps other women engage more successfully in their careers.

The move from accounting to fashion demonstrates Annah’s ability to believe in herself and make the most of unexpected opportunities. Always keen on fashion, Annah’s early pay packets went on clothes, and when short of money, she made her own. After having her first child, she started working as company accountant for a clothing manufacturer in Morrinsville, but soon realised she didn’t want to be an accountant.

#### **Following true passion**

“So I gave notice, but because I had already infiltrated their design division during many of my breaks, they were aware of my huge interest and passion for design, colour and fabrics. I was offered a trial as part of the design team. I accepted, and the rest is history!” declares Annah.

### **Cultural differences**

Cultural difference is an essential element to take into account when thinking about career development. For example, providing career development opportunities that tap into Pasifika role models and/or mentors in the workplace is one way to embrace cultural difference to the benefit of both employee and employer, according to research by the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.<sup>15</sup>

The research pointed out that managers need to recognise the potential of young Pasifika workers and actively motivate them to overcome their lack of self-confidence and belief in their abilities. Managers also need to develop pathways within their organisation that match the aspirations and competencies of young Pasifika workers.

It is also important to be aware that urban and rural Māori have different needs, including the difference in the way that they may acknowledge – willingly or not – their Māori identity, points out Careers New Zealand Career Consultant Blake Wong-Ling.

He says that Māori and Pasifika emphasis on a village model of support, such as wharekura education, can be very successful for young people, and he also highlights the importance of mentoring and support for youth in employment.

Cultural differences in the workplace also impact on migrant workers, who are sometimes uncomfortable with the more casual nature of New Zealand workplaces, says Navazesh Smith, who delivers workshops to migrant groups in her role as a Careers New Zealand Career Consultant.

“For example, many migrants come from countries where hierarchy is the norm, so they find it hard to relate to the GM of an organisation sitting beside them and having lunch or calling a manager by their first name.

In their eyes, it’s about showing respect. This inability to have an open conversation about their needs should be taken into account when such conversations are the expected norm,” says Smith.

### **Valuing the individual**

Whatever the approach, regular career conversations also help employees feel valued and see opportunities to grow within their role, which makes it less likely that they will look elsewhere.

Anne Fulton, director of career management and outplacement specialists Career Engagement Group, says she often sees individuals leave roles too early before they have maximised the opportunities that exist in their current role. “Career development helps individuals map their aspirations to their current role and their future with their employer. This naturally creates longer retention and commitment,” explains Fulton.

A study of 100 young Kiwis over a 5-year period starting from when they left school found most participants “wanted to be a respected and contributing employee and feel they belonged in a single workplace – even if that workplace might not be ‘for life’. They were eager to exercise a sense of self in relation to their work.”<sup>16</sup>

## SNAPSHOT: The Warehouse career approach

The Warehouse realised many years ago that they needed to develop their own internal talent to be successful, says Jan Jones, Head of People Support for the Warehouse (Store Support Office and Shanghai Representative Office). The company actively offers store team members the opportunities to apply for roles in the store support offices.

### Capability building

“Our capability building is built around our performance and development cycle, which involves one-on-one feedback and discussion between each team member and their manager to plan personal and professional development, progress to goals and future opportunities,” explains Jones. Managers pass on talent information from these discussions to departmental and executive level talent reviews for succession and retention planning.

The line managers receive specific support and training from People Support to help with career discussions, and the Warehouse also uses two psychometric assessments – the Gallup Strengths Finder and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) instrument. These business tools help team members learn more about their strengths and weaknesses and their impact on others.

### Lattice view of careers

Team members are encouraged to look across the business for opportunities of interest that play to their strengths. All vacancies are advertised internally – weekly in an electronic personal email to all team members – and people are also seconded into roles on a short-term basis to allow them to experience different roles in other areas of the business. “We also encourage mastery in roles, so career development is not always up, but can be a deepened experience in a role,” says Jones. “It is also costly to recruit offshore and relocate, so we are keen to grow that internal talent where we can.”

## Gen Y-ers

A 2012 Career Trends survey by Career Analysts and the Career Engagement Group<sup>17</sup> found that over a quarter of the respondents wanted to stay with their employer as long as possible, although 55% of Gen Y-ers didn't see themselves staying more than 3 years. Gen Y – those born in the 1980s and 1990s – are more inclined to look for new pastures. However, even they are less inclined to switch jobs and organisations if involved early on in career development initiatives, according to the survey.

“Gen Y-ers stay engaged if they can see their career goals, believe their values

and interests align with business and see how their role contributes to the business,” says Fulton.

An individualised approach is needed to retain employees, particularly those under 30, she adds. According to Fulton, “Propositions such as career breaks, secondments and assignments that stretch and motivate make it hard to leave an organisation.”

### **SNAPSHOT: Thinking outside the square with employees**

Fuji Xerox New Zealand has enabled employee Iva Kostova to keep a job she loves while giving her the opportunity to pursue graduate study in Scandinavia.

#### **Sabbatical option**

While Iva studies for a year in Sweden, the company is employing her for 20 hours per week. As National Bids and Tenders Manager, Iva will continue to contribute to sales documentation and strategy as well as co-manage her team of four along with a caretaker manager.

Iva will be studying for a Master of Science specialising in managing people, knowledge and change. She says it is an area she is passionate about and one that she feels will make her a better manager for her organisation – plus she wanted to spend time in Europe.

#### **Continuing to learn**

“I think I would really benefit from researching in-depth about how to manage the three most important things an organisation has to contend with – people, knowledge and change. I hope by researching these I can broaden my knowledge to help achieve measurable net positive outcomes for my company.”

She also benefits by remaining in contact on a regular basis with her team and keeping up with what is happening in her area and industry.

“This will make it easier to transition back to my role when I return in July next year. The benefit for Fuji Xerox is that they retain my expertise because what I do is specialised.”

#### **Committed employee**

Iva feels committed to returning to the company because they have demonstrated to her that they value her knowledge and expertise and have found a way to accommodate her desire to study.

## KEY ACTIONS:

### Encouraging employees to become career capable

#### Employers with good talent management strategies retain their employees and increase their motivation.

- Help your employees to identify their interests and strengths, then indicate pathways and roles within the company that suit those strengths.
- Talk about your strategic plans and look at how employees can align their personal goals with your business goals.
- Create career development goals with employees by engaging in career conversations, taking into account opportunities that have arisen or will arise within your business. Encourage employees to be proactive. This provides them with a clearer sense of career direction within your business, increased confidence and motivation and increased self-insight. (See the snapshots of Tasti Products and The Warehouse.)
- Acknowledge that the ability to hold career conversations is an essential skill that needs to be developed in your management team. Careers New Zealand offers support and help in this area.
- Provide opportunities within your business for employees to continue to develop their current and future skills through activities such as projects, work shadowing and secondment.
- Provide flexibility for employees – when possible – around hours, locations and projects through flexi-hours, teleworking, glide time and so on.
- Have your newer employees mentored by your more experienced – 44% of the Career Analysts and Career Engagement Group 2012 survey respondents were interested in mentoring.
- Recognise that career development needs to meet the cultural needs of your workforce, and access the appropriate services to do this well.

***To talk to someone about any of the above actions or to learn more about career development, please contact us.***

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## 2. POTENTIAL GOLD: DISENGAGED AUCKLANDERS

**While Auckland businesses talk of the frustrations of having to recruit talent from the global labour market, there are significant under-developed pools of talent at the other end of the spectrum. For individual Aucklanders, a job provides income, connection, community and self-worth. For the city as a whole, it increases our skill base, productivity and ability to retain industry in Auckland. Careers New Zealand strongly believes it makes fiscal sense to invest in strategies to help people find and keep jobs.**

The recession has worsened an already bleak picture for those Aucklanders who struggle to make ends meet. People on low incomes with little education are increasingly left behind, particularly in an economic downturn. When in work, the disengaged tend to be in minimum-wage jobs – sometimes working two jobs to survive. Māori and Pasifika are over-represented in this group.

Then there are the under-employed – Aucklanders who are unable to find work that appropriately matches their skills and qualifications or are in low-paying casual or part-time work and not covering basic needs.

Developing skills in career development and knowledge of potentially suitable jobs and learning how to navigate and find local work opportunities can make a huge difference to out-of-work and under-employed Aucklanders. In order to achieve the Auckland Council's goal of becoming the world's most liveable city, Auckland's entire workforce needs to be meaningfully engaged.

## SNAPSHOT: Growth in career maturity

By the age of 15, Jock Jones was 'over' school, as his low attendance and lack of interest demonstrated. He tried changing schools, struggling on another 18 months before leaving during year 13 with few qualifications. He got a 1-month WWOOFing (Willing Workers on Organic Farms) contract in Northland but failed to get another and was then turned down for a job on a native-tree block.

Jock's self-belief and confidence dropped. "It all became too daunting, and I didn't follow anything else up. I was back hanging around home," he says.

### Following an interest

Although Jock couldn't imagine committing to a full-time job because he didn't know what he wanted to do, with the help of his mother, he decided to try a horticultural course. As his interest in the course grew, so did his desire to succeed. He also began doing casual jobs in family friends' gardens, putting into practice some of his knowledge.

After passing the course, he did a day's work experience with a successful Auckland landscape architect. She referred him to a landscape designer who offered him casual work and mentored him by talking about the different career pathways within landscaping and horticulture and encouraged him to do further training.

### Developing knowledge

While Jock still isn't sure what he wants to do, he now realises that choosing one pathway doesn't mean he'll be stuck in that role forever.

"I had the attitude that a job is something you need and there's nothing fun about it," says Jock, "but once you find something – even if you're only vaguely interested in it – and start to talk to experienced people about it, you quickly realise a passing interest can become something you can be passionate about. There are dozens of things you could do within that field, the person will say, and you'll feel surprised and a little more open about the future."

## Looking South

Some sectors of Auckland's population are more vulnerable than others – either due to trends that have slowly built up over the years or due to the ongoing impact of the global recession.

Auckland Council's new Southern Initiative, which includes Māngere, Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara, Papatoetoe, Manurewa and Papakura, highlights the importance of ensuring Auckland's fast-growing southern region does not fall behind. All of

Auckland will grow in the next 2 decades, but the South Auckland regions are predicted to grow most substantially. It is already the area of Auckland with the youngest population – but also the highest youth unemployment rates (36% compared to 31% for the region in 2011).<sup>18</sup> These young people are our future and need to be part of the technologically advanced highly skilled 21st century workforce that Auckland strives for.

More than three-quarters of South Auckland's population are Māori or Pasifika. With many lower-skilled jobs disappearing, the need for a higher-skilled workforce is essential for individual, regional and national economic growth. Māori and Pasifika people tend to be over-represented in low-skilled and low-paid jobs, often in industries with low future growth within Auckland.

Strong family, community and cultural bonds are the strength of Māori and Pasifika communities. Successful initiatives highlight the importance of collaboration and acknowledgement of cultural diversity. Collaboration between businesses and communities can lead to positive outcomes, as the Massey Matters project demonstrates (see snapshot below). It is anticipated that collaborative schemes similar to Massey Matters will have a positive and lasting impact on the Southern Initiative.



## SNAPSHOT: Massey Matters

Massey Matters, along with the Enterprising Communities Project and the Waitakere City Workers Educational Association, is working with three organisations to help unemployed local residents upskill for future jobs in Massey, including the expansion of Westgate town centre, which is due to start in 2014.

The pilot Massey Employment Gateways course provided pre-employment workshops over 5 weeks for 24 people. As well as career planning, CV and interview skills sessions delivered by Careers New Zealand, the participants gained workplace certificates for forklift knowledge, food and hygiene, driver licence theory, workplace health and safety or first-aid training.

### Training for community

All the training related to potential work in the community. Forklift knowledge opened up retail, warehousing, light industry and manufacturing jobs. Food and hygiene provided opportunities in hospitality, rest homes and hospitals and early childhood education. Workplace health and safety certificates and first-aid certificates were popular with people wanting work in early childhood education, for example.

During the last 2 weeks of the course, participants met with Massey business people. Enterprising Communities Project Coordinator Lee Hickey said that participants' knowledge of the workplace, their career options and their place in the community were deeply enhanced by this project.

## Communities needing support

A lack of self-confidence and self-belief, along with a lack of clear economic and career goals, holds back far too many young Pasifika people, according to 2011 research by the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Trust and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.<sup>19</sup> The research pinpointed key areas of engagement that were needed to improve future opportunities. One was to recognise the importance of family and Pasifika cultural values for young Pasifika workers who often see prosperity in terms of families and relationships rather than material wellbeing. The research also found that more mentoring, career and leadership development needed to be delivered through senior Pasifika role models and mentors in the workplace.

The PAVE pilot project (see page 44), and C-Me Mentoring (see page 42) are examples of this kind of engagement around education. However, such engagement needs to spread more widely in order to provide more opportunities for our Pasifika communities.

The collectivism of the community can be very powerful and a strong support platform, says Manutai Leaupepe, a University of Auckland Early Childhood Education Lecturer on the Pasifika specialisation programme. But, she adds, it is essential young Pasifika people are encouraged to develop their own unique individuality as well as thinking about how they can contribute to their community.

“Understanding transferable skills is very important, as I found when applying to study, and it is critical that we don’t undermine our abilities, but add richness,” says Leaupepe. Spirituality is another extremely important factor. “You also have to ensure your decisions are shaped by your belief system, your spirituality – never lose sight of that.”



## SNAPSHOT: Seeking success in tertiary

After 10 years working in low-paid jobs, Jamie Tutaua Rihia decided to improve his fortunes and enrolled at university. He had finished high school with no qualifications, but once committed to study, he gained a degree in business commerce and administration (majoring in accounting), a Bachelor of Laws and then a Master of Laws (Hons). Now a senior manager working in the Māori sector services team for Ernst & Young, Jamie says he looks for opportunities where his cultural values are acknowledged and supported.

### First in family

There was no tradition of academic success within Jamie's immediate whānau. Looking back, he says the challenges were daunting.

"I started off university being behind the other students by quite a margin in most areas. They had better computing skills, knew how to study, understood more of what the lecturers were talking about in some of the papers like first-level accounting, economics and finance."

Jamie didn't engage with any of the academic or pastoral support offered at university until he was well into his study. "I was too whakamā [embarrassed] to take up learning opportunities from support services initially. I didn't become an engaged member of the Māori associations until later in university life through friendships and wanting to give back to others going through similar struggles."

### Finding identity

But, he says, he came from a hard-working background and learned early in life not to give up easily on things he wanted.

"Eventually, this allowed me to gain parity with my peers and, in some cases, do better than them. I am a very competitive person and want to succeed in everything that I do."

For Jamie, success was also about finding a sense of his own identity and feeling comfortable about who he was and how people perceived him – something that became more important to him once he began working in an industry where Māori are relatively scarce.

"I am undeniably Māori – you can tell that by looking at me. Some people will form opinions of who they think you are based on first impressions. I am proud of my Māori heritage and have looked for opportunities where I can celebrate it."

## Migrants and work

Auckland attracts the lion's share of immigrants entering New Zealand. Approximately 45% of employed skilled migrants settle in the Auckland region.<sup>20</sup>

Even though the numbers have slowed considerably since peaking in 2003, Auckland still receives 30,000–35,000 permanent and long-term (PLT) migrants each year. PLT migrants include Kiwis who are returning after an absence of 12 months or more. However, the number of PLT migrants leaving each year is increasing.<sup>21</sup>

Many migrants can't find employment in their field of expertise or at levels that match their skills and experience. Often, their overseas qualifications are not recognised or accepted in New Zealand. How often do we hear of a taxi driver who has been a doctor, engineer or HR executive back home?

The two biggest barriers to migrants finding work are a lack of New Zealand work experience and perceived English language difficulties, according to a Human Rights Commission study.<sup>22</sup> Another major barrier is lack of industry or professional contacts.

Migrants are also held back by lack of knowledge of the local labour market and of how to navigate job search in a country that has different procedures, practices and expectations to their home countries. There is also often a lack of understanding of how to transfer their skills to new roles.



## **SNAPSHOT: Migrant finding work**

After 10 weeks of job searching after arriving in New Zealand in 2011, Brazilian migrant Diego Paprocki Abrianos realised his approach to searching for a job wasn't working, yet he had experience, the right qualifications and was good at what he did.

"My morale was really going downhill. Then I heard about Auckland Regional Migrant Services (ARMS). I attended seminars on job search and had a couple of one-on-one meetings with Navazesh Smith, a Careers New Zealand consultant. Everything started improving then!"

### **Job search Kiwi-style**

The seminars helped Diego develop career-related skills in Kiwi workplace knowledge and culture, job search, networking and CV and cover letter writing. He also found he was applying for inappropriate roles because role titles and responsibilities didn't map identically between New Zealand and Brazil.

"Being able to do something about all this really helped me regain my self-confidence."

### **Importance of networking**

After being accepted into OMEGA, an Auckland business-led mentoring initiative that helps skilled migrants into the workforce, Diego was allocated a business mentor. His mentor, who also worked in software development, helped Diego develop his networks as part of his job search. This finally led to success – 7 weeks on from his first career seminar, Diego landed a job through a contact he made at an IT employment seminar.

Diego now works as Software Development Technical Lead at Turners Auctions Ltd, a role he is really enjoying. He hopes in time to offer more to his organisation by moving into a job that utilises other skills and experience he has from Brazil.

Auckland needs to recognise this rich resource of human capital more fully. Migrants arrive ready to contribute – they are usually qualified, they usually have experience and we need them contributing more fully to the economic prosperity of the city.

A lot of these barriers can be overcome through good career development support for migrants, combined with accurate information and support for businesses.

Refugees face different employment issues to migrants. They have often left

homelands devastated by war and/or famine or political persecution. Some have experienced years of minimal education and work opportunities. Others are tertiary educated and have left good careers and are on the back foot in Auckland, trying to re-establish themselves.

### **Beneficiaries**

Of the 16,286 working-aged people on unemployment benefits in Auckland, 3,416 (20.8%) were Pasifika and 4,951(28.0%) were Māori.<sup>23</sup>

According to an MSD review of international literature on potential barriers to beneficiaries,<sup>24</sup> there are five barriers that need to be overcome – transportation problems, family care responsibilities, social and community barriers, financial disincentives and work-related labour market barriers.

Work-related barriers include being disadvantaged because of a lack of job skills, a lack of work experience and low education levels, all of which are intertwined. With technological advances, there is also a large drop-off in demand for unskilled employees. "... those with the least favourable human capital characteristics face the greatest barriers in securing and retaining employment. In addition, being on a benefit long term can result in a deterioration of basic job skills, such as literacy and numeracy, and further limit the accumulation of work experience."

The report also found evidence that some beneficiaries do not know how to approach job search properly and are disadvantaged by a lack of social networks in employment. This impacts on their knowledge of the 'hidden job market' – the large number of jobs that are never advertised – as well as emotional support and mentoring from people working in the industry they're interested in.

When these are combined with literacy and numeracy issues, a lack of computer literacy and limited access to computers, lack of confidence and/or knowledge about the workplace, the inability to present appropriately for employment interviews and poor public transport, the challenges for people on benefits become very clear.

Removing work-related barriers through improving literacy and numeracy skills, building confidence and developing skills in job search and career management competencies are all important steps towards developing the skills required to gain meaningful and satisfying employment.

### **Introducing career development**

These problems are compounded when people out of work do not actually know what sort of work they want or are suited to doing. This is where career conversations and talking about career development play an important role in helping people identify work and study pathways that they can feel hopeful, engaged and motivated about. Once that vital piece of the jigsaw is identified, individual solutions, job-search strategies and support can be developed.

Critically, when a person can see a potential place for themselves in the working world, the motivation to get there is generated by the individual and is more powerful than when imposed by multiple external agencies. Once a career direction is decided on, the individual is better able to be self-determining in their working life and begin to work on developing their career management competencies.

“In over 15 years’ experience in working with very long-term unemployed, I have found that, in almost every instance, movement off a benefit and into work begins through having a focused career conversation to identify the work the individual wants to do and the steps needed to get it,” says Janine Begg, Practice Leader Northern, Careers New Zealand.

### Opening doors

However, businesses need more support if they are going to open their doors to people requiring extra levels of training and support. According to research by Competenz, businesses currently don’t believe it is feasible to hire someone with low or no skills who is coming off a benefit. However, Competenz believes employers would step up if they had the right support.<sup>25</sup>

### Ex-offenders

One group in our community that finds it particularly hard to find employment is ex-offenders, a group also disproportionately represented by Pasifika and Māori and people with mental health and addiction issues.

Yet, as Colin Rose, Community Probation Services District Manager for Auckland City, points out, United Kingdom research shows employment reduces the risk of reoffending by between a third and a half.<sup>26</sup>

Having a criminal record is usually an instant black mark in employers’ minds, says Rose. “Ex-offenders will also often have broken or non-existent employment records due to time in prison or on remand.”

Other big challenges are probation commitments, low academic achievement, particularly with literacy and numeracy, and substance misuse.

Rose says Community Probation Services are committed to overcoming these barriers. “We work with offenders and employers to find ways in which offenders can take on full-time work and still meet their probation commitments. We also work collaboratively with partner agencies to address substance misuse and improve basic skills.”

Career consultants running programmes in prisons hear many prisoners talk of trying to set up in self-employment when they leave prison because their chances of getting work are so slim. “For some, it seems impossible to even conceive of another way of life or to even hope they could make a different life. But the guys

that did turn up to workshops and others I have met really desperately want a chance to get a job,” says Jill Bice, Careers New Zealand Career Consultant.

Rose says employers need to start recognising that offenders do represent a talent pool. “While some employers have an idea of their potential, most will group them all into one basket and write them off as unemployable.”

Employers can attend seminars run by Work and Income on employing ex-offenders. The Community Probation Service runs seminar and workshops for employers, providing information on the skills and work experience of ex-offenders. “The selling point for employers is that they get employees who are genuinely grateful to have been given a chance of a job and who repay the employer with hard work and commitment.”

There is also an opportunity for employers to visit offenders on community work sites to see them undertaking unpaid work for the community and see the quality of their work. Employers who are interested in taking up these opportunities should contact the Community Work Service Manager in their nearest Community Probation Service centre.

### **People with special needs**

People with special needs do not fully participate in the economic life or prosperity of Auckland.

Common barriers into the workplace for people with special needs are discriminatory attitudes, lack of exposure to opportunities and uncertainty about how to accommodate someone with a disability in the workplace.

Businesses can get physical and financial support from organisations such as Workbridge, Elevator and IDEA Services. A full list of organisations can be found through the Association for Supported Employment in New Zealand (ASENZ).

Cameron Calkoen, Project Manager for Carabiner, a mentoring programme for young people with disabilities, says employers tend to only see the disability, not the person.

“Many of our mentors – who are often business people – have not experienced disability, so they don’t know what to expect when they start mentoring, but by the end of the mentoring period, their attitudes really change. Through Carabiner, people learn that someone with a disability is as motivated, passionate and desiring to learn as any other, and it doesn’t matter how they were born or what happened to them along the way.”

Take people with disabilities seriously, requests Calkoen. “We may talk, walk and move differently, but it doesn’t mean we don’t have talents.”

He adds that employers shouldn't be afraid to ask people questions about what they can and can't do during an interview. "We prefer that because then we can tell you and you don't presume things about us – positive or negative."

### **SNAPSHOT: Mentoring leads to job**

Jared Seymour works 2 days a week for Pip Cheshire Architects – a job that utilises his considerable architectural draughting skills. Jared has cerebral palsy, is paralysed down one side and has severe epilepsy (having 2–8 seizures a day), which makes him become fatigued as the day progresses.

#### **Struggling to find work**

After gaining his National Diploma in Architectural Draughting, Jared was struggling to find part-time employment until he met Pip Cheshire through the Carabiner mentoring scheme. Jared's work experience involved learning Revit – the software package used by the office to do work for the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust on the conservation of two huts on Ross Island in Antarctica. He continues to do this work 2 days a week.

#### **Minor adjustments**

Working in an architecture office requires only minor adjustment to equipment for Jared. Pip has supplied a small keyboard that replaces the number pad on the right side, because Jared can't use his right hand, and a cordless optical mouse that can be programmed to suit his needs better.

Employment has made a huge difference to Jared's lifestyle, "I feel like everyone else. I feel like a productive member of society and a member of a team. It provides structure and routine to my week. It validates all the time I spent on my qualification."

#### **Employer happy**

Pip Cheshire was a bit nervous initially about taking Jared on. "I didn't know anything about cerebral palsy, which is such a visible disability compared with mine," says Pip, who has an artificial leg.

Although the staff found it a bit frightening initially when Jared had a fit, no one is bothered any more. "I think if you have a good understanding about what the person may achieve, then it is really not much different to any employee – we are always matching work to studio members' abilities."

“There are many highly productive people in the workplace with physical or mental health challenges. Many others could be contributing more, given the right support and encouragement. There are also many employers who would be more open to employment of people with special learning needs if they had a bit more accurate information about specific health issues along with employment guidelines about recruitment and interview procedures”, says Calkoen.

Careers New Zealand believes access to career development and mentoring combined with opportunities to engage with potential employers is crucial in helping people with special learning needs into the workplace and reaching their full potential.

### Older workers

The number of Aucklanders over 65 years of age is projected to double between 2011 and 2031, rising from 10.5% to 16.6% of the region’s population.<sup>27</sup>

Older workers are an important asset, particularly when we’re faced with a declining birth rate and the challenge of filling skill gaps in our economy. Older workers have experience, knowledge and skills built up over years, and many are not ready to retire at 65 years. Some want to continue being a useful participant in the workforce. Others can’t afford to retire at 65, particularly women who spent time out of the paid workforce bringing up children. Generally, people want to continue working until they feel emotionally ready to reduce their hours.

“It is well documented that older workers are more reliable and committed and tend to take less time off for illness, although when they do get ill, their recovery can take longer,” says Career and Transition Consulting Career Coach Kaye Avery, who runs workshops for people in late-career transition.

She says mature workers provide knowledge and experience, and workers and employers need to find a way to utilise these attributes that will satisfy both sides.

Flexibility around older workers in the workplace can be a win-win on both sides. Older workers remain an active part of their career community, keeping mentally and physically involved in life and socially engaged. The employer continues to employ a loyal worker with decades of knowledge and experience behind them.<sup>29</sup>

Employers who do recognise the value of older workers provide options such as flexi-time, part-time work, job sharing and teleworking.<sup>28</sup> Older workers often take up training roles or are provided with extra equipment to help reduce the physical demands on them.

Another option is phased retirement – an employee gradually reducing their hours over a number of hours or days worked. Yet, according to Avery, most organisations struggle to provide conditions that encourage the best out of employees in their late 50s and 60s.

“HR practitioners need to become more aware of the developmental, physical and cognitive changes that happen to people as they age – one job size doesn’t fit all. Not only do needs, priorities and values of older workers change, but so do their strengths.”

She suggests management training about the ageing process that includes tools to improve managers’ ability to have constructive career conversations that build transparency and trust. “In this way, negotiating a flexi-arrangement, a gradual exit or redeployment situation that will work for everyone is made possible. Workshops on career planning and transition to retirement would also make a big difference to improving personal responsibility and self-efficacy,” says Avery.

In a recent article from Australian HR Monthly, Geoff Pearman states: “Investment in a 55-year-old could well have a payback period of 10 to 15 years if we are able to keep that worker engaged.”<sup>30</sup>



## KEY ACTIONS:

### Engaging the disengaged through career development

**Developing career management competencies enables people to manage their careers over their lifetime. While each group may have varying issues to address, career development and easy access to accurate information, support and opportunities is the common way forward. Businesses can help in several ways.**

- Offer workplace mentoring to help young people find focus and help workers stay on track or develop fresh goals. Older workers are often ideal people to offer as mentors to others in their field.
- Participate in external mentoring programmes, such as OMEGA and Carabiner. As well as giving back to the community, mentoring for an external organisation can increase your networks, bring in new ideas and give you the opportunity to contribute to your wider community.
- Offer work experience, particularly to high school students, but also other people who need community and business support because they don't have the networks to expand their knowledge of the workplace and roles within it.
- Consider ways to collaborate with a school or tertiary provider to develop skills, for example, students teaching computer technological skills to your staff or your staff showing students something significant in the workplace.
- Sponsor a competition or team and add a career development twist, such as work shadowing.
- Acknowledge that some young people may not have had the same advantages as you. Expect to educate school leavers a little to open their eyes to the realities of the workplace. Punctuation, language, presentation – it can all take a bit of time.
- Think outside the square. See the potential in someone rather than the negatives. Attend seminars by your local Probation Community Service centre and Auckland Regional Migrant Services (ARMS) to see if there is someone ready to work who could provide a skill set you need.

***To talk to someone about any of the above actions or to learn more about career development, please contact us.***

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### 3. UNREALISED POTENTIAL: INEFFECTIVE YOUTH TRANSITIONS

**Too many young people are out of work, locally, nationally and globally. Education and training hold the key to people transitioning effectively into a motivated and skilful 21st century workforce for Auckland.**

While many young Aucklanders do successfully transition from high school into tertiary study, trades training or employment, a significant number fall by the wayside. Educational success is uneven throughout Auckland – depressingly low in some areas. These ineffective transitions are of huge concern.

The need for career development is never more evident than when looking at the low transition into tertiary study or employment by our most vulnerable school leavers in Auckland. They need career development support to see a future. People with goals, hope and support don't fall by the wayside.

To want to have a future, young people have to believe in the possibilities opening up for them in Auckland's economy. By developing career management competencies (see Appendix 1), they'll learn how to find opportunities and then act on them. They will recognise the importance of ongoing learning and develop confidence with work and life decisions. They will develop self-awareness and understand how and when to seek support. They will be aware of their own values, interests and attributes.

## SNAPSHOT: Early school leaver finding pathway

Freya Colah left school the day she turned 16, turned off from learning and feeling useless. She got part-time then full-time work at a café. However, 2 years later, she started to feel trapped as she watched her mates head off to university.

### **Professional careers help**

Her worried parents booked her an appointment with Careers New Zealand Career Consultant Navazesh Smith, who analysed her skills and abilities, values and interests. Through these exercises, Freya realised she had developed skills through her café job and had a strong interest in customer service and people. It was quite a revelation. This then led to exploring careers involving those interests.

Freya says the career counselling made a huge difference to her outlook on her future – something her parents didn't know how to help with. "It was a very difficult time for us. I'm willing to learn and work really hard, but I didn't know what opportunities were there for me."

### **Landing an apprenticeship**

After completing short courses in customer service and effective communications, Freya got a 3-year apprenticeship with Sky City. She is now fully qualified and is working at Sky City as a full-time senior bartender. Her dream is to get a full-time position in sales and events.

Young people need to be able to explore and test potential career ideas against the realities of the world of work through school and tertiary studies, work experience, hobbies and other experiences.

Ideally, this age group needs to be exposed to multiple life and learning experiences, but many have little opportunity to expand their horizons beyond their own neighbourhood. Some do not have the self-belief or confidence to do anything that sets them on a path apart from family and friends. The young people with well connected, well networked parents tend to have the advantage over their peers.

A study done by NZCER found nearly 80% of students named family as their most useful source of career information. Peers were another strong influence.<sup>31</sup> This highlights the need for us all to provide support to help families keep up to date with the latest career information so they can fully support their young people.

Alongside the support of family and peers, many Auckland teenagers need the support of their wider Auckland community to help broaden their horizons in these early stages of their career development.

## Young Aucklanders

In June 2012, over 8% of our 15–19-year-olds were not in employment, education or training (NEET). That means a significant number of Auckland’s potential workforce of 15–19-year-olds have lost their way while at high school age.<sup>32</sup>

This is a significant issue when you consider that most trades and pre-degree qualifications require applicants to have NCEA level 2, which generally takes 4 years of high school to achieve. For these young people, the connections between learning, opportunity and the workplace are tenuous – or non-existent.

Statistics for slightly older youth are even worse – 16% of Auckland’s 20–24-year-olds were NEET as at June 2012.

Māori and Pasifika youth are disproportionately represented in these statistics.<sup>33</sup> The largest and fastest growing sector of Auckland’s youth population is Māori and Pasifika. Although Māori and Pasifika student achievements in NCEA have made ground in the past 3 years, there is still a large gap between the achievement levels of Māori and Pasifika and those of Pākehā and Asian students. These qualifications need to be lifted if young Pasifika and Māori are to improve their employability.

Dr Heather Carpenter, Director of Careerworks Hawke’s Bay, and author of *Your 21st Century Career*,<sup>34</sup> points out: “When young people have no clear idea of the process required or the skills they need, they cannot easily connect the pieces in a way that makes sense for them.”

This is a personal tragedy for each young person falling by the way. It is also a tragedy for Auckland. After all, our youth are our city’s hope for future prosperity.

## Making a difference

This disconnect can be halted, and there are a number of great strategies making a difference through schools, government bodies, private providers and businesses. For example, programmes such as Gateway and C-Me Trades at School are creating stronger links between individuals, schools and communities, including church groups. Private providers such as Best Pacific Institute of Education, Martin Hautus and NZMA provide wrap-around services to bridge disengaged students into further learning.

The Youth Guarantee scheme includes a series of initiatives including vocational pathways, trades academies, fees-free places, careers education and learner support. Youth Guarantee offers learners more choice on what and where they learn and provides effective transitions across education and work for learners 16–17 years of age.

Vocational pathways are a central element of the Youth Guarantee scheme. They provide learners with clear pathways to achieve NCEA level 2 or equivalent and a tool to plan their future learning and career possibilities.

Auckland Council recently launched Youth Connections across Auckland – a project designed to prevent young Aucklanders from falling through the gaps. The project aims to contact and track school leavers every year to identify if they are in jobs or training and follow up if they are not.

### Young Māori

Many young Māori students miss out on a tertiary pathway because of poor information, non-achievement in NCEA, problems negotiating the tertiary system and other barriers to continual engagement with higher education, says Maria Paenga from Māori in Tertiary Education (MITE).

The need for support, connections and a sense of fit are really important for Māori considering tertiary study, says Dr Lynette Reid (Ngāti Porou), AUT Senior Lecturer in Career Development.

She says young Māori need the support of whānau and peers, support that comes when whānau and peers understand the rationale behind a career choice and feel informed about the qualification and employment options. The whānau are particularly strong influences, she says.

Therefore, it is essential to have access to readable and digestible information on career decisions. “And the information needs to be presented by people who are easy to relate to and are knowledgeable and can provide accurate and current information. That is essential,” states Reid.

She adds that the young person also needs to feel comfortable about their connections to the tertiary provider. “Have they met anyone from the tertiary provider such as the liaison officer or Māori support person? Who do they know in the tertiary institute? Are their peers and whānau also there? If they feel they will fit in and understand what will be required of them, they will have a much better chance.”

“To grow and succeed, young Māori need to think about who they are, where they have come from and where they can find future opportunities. Studies show it is a lack of direction and lack of self-identity that is holding back young Māori who do not participate or have success at high school,” says Reid.

Initiatives such as KATTI (Kei a Tātou Te Ihi)<sup>35</sup> encourage young Māori to remain at high school to gain the qualifications they need to enter further study. “Young Māori are introduced to pathways and learning opportunities that reflect Māori needs from year 10, with the aim of having them eventually contribute as highly educated leaders. Many KATTI students have successfully gone on to further studies,” says KATTI Chairperson Valeria Edwards.

## SNAPSHOT: Education the key

Tetoki Tepaki heard about KATTI (Kei a Tātou Te Ihi) in year 10 when he was talked into attending a KATTI workshop. “It got me thinking about education and life and goals. It was like a light bulb going off in my head that really helped change my way of thinking.”

### **Staying at school**

KATTI encourages young Māori to remain at high school to gain the qualifications needed for further study. KATTI alumni help facilitate workshops for high school students. Tetoki’s involvement with KATTI, alongside the intense support of Western Springs College Rumaki immersion unit, helped him stay on track and start developing good career management competencies. He completed high school successfully and went on to degree study at Unitec.

### **Exposure to success**

One of the most inspiring aspects of KATTI, says Tetoki, is the exposure to young Māori people doing positive things in higher education. This was significant to him because no one else in his family had gone on to tertiary study. “Until then, I only knew people who worked in factories and orchards. KATTI helped me realise I could do something else. Now I’m a mentor for KATTI so I am standing with my fellow peers who I looked up to years ago when KATTI was first introduced to me, and together, we are encouraging and mentoring our younger generation.”

## **Young Pasifika**

While many young Pasifika people are achieving highly, the Ministry of Education reports there are still too many underachieving in comparison to the non-Pasifika population.<sup>36</sup>

The need for better decision-making around high school subject choices has been identified by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs as key to getting Pasifika students into higher education and better careers. Yet, the Ministry says, Pasifika students are the least likely students to be encouraged at school into NCEA courses that lead to university or higher-level training.<sup>37</sup>

## SNAPSHOT: Support into trades

### **C-Me Trades at School**

C-Me Trades at School is a good example of how pastoral care and mentoring helps Pasifika youth make it through school and into trades, says C-Me Project Manager John Kotoisuva.

Trades at School is a mentoring programme set up by Kotoisuva to manage and facilitate the transition of Pasifika and Māori youth from senior high school into industry.

### **Relevant learning**

C-Me engages industries and polytechnics with schools and parents, partnering the students with companies who provide on-the-job training during the school holidays. Polytechnics also provide relevant training, and all students learn industry safety and practical skills.

“This means students get a feel for real-life, on-the-job training and find a practical purpose for staying at school,” says Kotoisuva.

Professional career development is included, with Careers New Zealand providing three workshops on career development and CV development workshops for the C-Me students over the last 6 months.

The workshops include a Career Malaga – a Careers New Zealand cultural career development resource.

### **School and community**

Kotoisuva says C-Me helps industry as well as young people because the programme provides an opportunity for companies to have their business truly represented in the education sector as well as giving them an opportunity to source talent in high schools that may otherwise fall by the way. C-Me liaises with education, private industry, public and community sectors to facilitate personal development, skills enhancement and employment opportunities.

A huge strength in the Pasifika community is the value of collective support and responsibility, says Careers New Zealand Career Consultant Hana Seumanu-Ikenasio, who is currently involved in a couple of projects to improve the relevance and reach of career information into Pasifika communities.

“Agencies need to ensure services are relevant to Pasifika families. Careers information is not useful if it doesn’t align to outcomes such as NCEA achievement or getting a good job and vice versa. We can no longer work in a fragmented way for our communities. Things need to be linked better,” says Seumanu-Ikenasio.

## **SNAPSHOT: Tertiary success due to Pasifika family and community**

Manutai Leaupepe's career journey exemplifies the importance of family and community support, along with goals and career development. The University of Auckland Early Childhood Education Lecturer left school at 16, married her husband Aukuso and had her first child at 18. Ten years later, after helping out for many years at her children's kindergarten, she was inspired to become an early childhood teacher.

"We had this wonderful head teacher with energy oozing from her who always made teaching look so exciting, and she encouraged me to train," says Manutai.

### **Community support**

"It is really important to find someone to talk to about your interests and aspirations and to get involved with groups that will support you," says Manutai. "The collectivism of community can be very powerful and a strong support platform."

Manutai strongly believes young Pasifika don't get enough credit for their achievements from their own community and society in general – something she sees as essential for developing self-confidence and a good future. "The messages need reaffirming." She adds it is also essential that young Pasifika people are encouraged to understand transferable skills. "It is critical that we don't undermine our abilities, but add richness."

### **Road to success**

It was years of parenting and considerable transferable skills that opened the doors to training in early childhood education. She started studying 4 weeks after having her sixth child – her husband Aukuso gave up work to look after the children. She gained a Diploma of Early Childhood Education Pasifika and Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education), then worked as a kindergarten teacher while doing a Bachelor of Education extramurally through Massey University. In 2004, she became a Lecturer in Early Childhood Education. Despite having nine children and a full-time job, Manutai still found time to complete a Master of Education. She now has a PhD in her sights.

### **Need resilience**

Having resilience and a focus are essential, says Manutai. "I had a vision from when I first started studying of walking across the stage at my graduation with my family looking on. Seeing and visualising your future is important. I set a firm goal to graduate with a master's at 35 years and gain a PhD by 50."

### PAVE pilot

One initiative is the pilot PAVE programme, which is designed to reach out to the people most influential on a young person's decision-making – their family (aiga). The 2012 pilot engages directly with Pasifika families and their community to equip parents with the relevant skills and knowledge to assist their children to make good career choices.

Approximately 30 aiga are involved in the pilot set up by Careers New Zealand Pasifika consultants in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Labour Group.

The Pasifika career consultants held introductory workshops within the community, then offered to continue to work with the families in their homes. The workshops include subject choice, career development and labour market information.

“We believe it is in the homes that we will make the most impact for Pasifika families. We shape all our content around families being collective and part of a wider community network,” explains Seumanu-Ikenasio.

### Young refugees

Young refugees face challenges in transition above and beyond the Kiwi young person. The refugee experience is often one of trauma and displacement before arriving in New Zealand. Creating a new life can be hard, particularly if you've had a broken educational background or are having to learn English and have very little experience of a western workplace. When young people are starting over, it is hard for them to find role models and career pathways.

Initiatives like the Refugee Youth Action Network (RYAN), recently set up in Mt Roskill by Refugees as Survivors New Zealand, help young people access mentors, computers and other resources so they will keep on track at school and develop leadership potential. Such ventures need support and are vital if these young people who have been welcomed into Auckland are going to create a happy and prosperous future.

## SNAPSHOT: Finding your career focus

Rahwa Kahsay was born in Sudan to Ethiopian parents and moved to New Zealand under the family reunification scheme. Now 23, Rahwa is completing a degree in international communications majoring in public relations. She is also doing an internship for 22 hours a week in a social networking role with Amnesty International.

“I believe I’ve found what I am passionate about, and this internship opportunity has opened my eyes on so many levels – from the organisational and workplace experience to everyday interactions with members of the public,” says Rahwa.

### Advice to other teens

Career planning deserves your devoted attention, focus and commitment, declares Rahwa.

“Take all the time you need, but always aspire to live up to your potential. Tomorrow will never deny you an opportunity. Young people need somebody to talk to who will listen and assist them through this journey. There is a tested and proven way, and each and every single one of them is entitled to it. They need not embark on this journey alone.”

### Finding career focus

Careers New Zealand online tools helped Rahwa learn how to explore and research and ask the right questions, she says.

“I can’t imagine having seen the horizon without those materials that I navigated through as a lost and scared teen. I salute Careers New Zealand for their continued commitment to assisting young people during the hardest period of their lives.”

## Young migrants

Migrant students often have less career choice than their Kiwi peers. “Many migrant parents prefer their children to enter high social status jobs such as law, medicine or engineering, irrespective of the young person’s desires or interests,” says Careers New Zealand Career Consultant Navazesh Smith.

Migrant parents are also sometimes worried their children will pick up ‘foreign’ ways that do not fit their cultural and family expectations. Taking a gap year, for example, makes them nervous, adds Smith.

Accessible career development information helps migrant parents learn about the New Zealand approach to the workplace and employment and provides them with tools to encourage their children to explore their own career path. Without serious career exploration of the options, it is very hard to navigate through tertiary study,

making it easy to fail – and Auckland loses a potentially great contributor and gains another heavily indebted citizen.

According to Auckland Council Diversity Programme Advisor Austin Kim, the biggest challenge for job-hunting migrants is that they are not connected enough to mainstream businesses and communities. And they're not the only ones. "I also work with the '1.5' migrants – young people who came to New Zealand in their teens and were educated here but are caught between two cultures."

Kim is developing a council programme that will offer a forum for young migrants to learn more about New Zealand employers and network with businesses in a friendly environment.

The value young migrants can add to workplaces and businesses will be emphasised, along with the importance of networking beyond your community, he says.

### Common strands and issues

What do these groups of young people have in common when it comes to making career decisions?

Very often, they have a limited understanding about themselves, their career ideas and how to navigate the potential on offer from the city they live in, along with limited opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge to make the most of their world.

Many of the young people in the groups mentioned above do not have the same networks as other young people and are restricted by limited pathways and knowledge. There are two major problems with this. One is that it is hard to be inspired when you don't know what you don't know. The other is that lower-skilled jobs are declining across the world and new horizons and different aspirations are required to forge a successful future in the 21st century.

We need to help Auckland families and communities develop a more in-depth understanding of the career and educational demands of the 21st century, including the huge increase in skills needed in today's world. Auckland also needs businesses and organisations to work in a collaborative way with schools and tertiary institutions to find solutions to the barriers that prevent stronger growth for Auckland and Aucklanders' career prospects.

When young people engage in career development, they become more self-aware and more capable of creating and meeting career goals as school leavers.

Such career management competencies continue with them as they progress through their lives. Career development helps young people work out transitions from school to work or further study and, ultimately, how they can contribute to

their current workplace and the bigger picture of Auckland, the region, the country and the world.

“People need to develop career management skills as much as they need to develop maths, science, language and technical skills,” says Canadian career expert Phillip Jarvis.<sup>38</sup>

### Supporting the transition

There are a range of services supporting career development and career transitions, including career education programmes in schools, Careers New Zealand website and tools, and private career practitioners. There are also many programmes helping young people learn about the realities of the workplace and new industries or jobs. The Gateway programme, trades academies, STAR funding, Workchoice Day, C-Me Mentoring Trust and the MPIA Career Ready Day are a few of the great examples of initiatives run in schools that open students’ eyes to the working world. These programmes depend on the co-operation and input of local businesses for their success.

Gateway, for example, involves employers offering regular short work experience to secondary school students. Alloy Yachts take on Gateway students regularly, using it as a ‘try before you buy’ opportunity with young apprentice hopefuls. “We also see it as a way to raise awareness of the potential of the industry,” says Human Resources Manager Graeme Eddy.

“It costs us nothing more than a bit of admin and supervisory time, and that is repaid with free labour.”

Eddy says Alloy Yachts never feel that time has been wasted if Gateway students ultimately don’t want to work for them. “The experience will still help the student in making a career choice. We require a highly skilled workforce, and we have had to build that because there haven’t been the skills to buy, so we see the Gateway programme as a source of potential apprentices.” However, not all students can access a Gateway experience.

St Dominic’s College Gateway Coordinator Sue Dunn finds employers are more interested in interviewing students for apprenticeships if they’ve had Gateway placements. “If an employer or industry is recruiting, they would much rather interview a Gateway student who they’ve invested their time into training a little in the ways of their industry than to start the recruitment process from scratch and hire an unknown who may or may not be a good match.”

For students, it is a great way to help them make an informed decision about their career.

“To commit to expensive study or full-time employment in an industry you are not sure about is scary, not to mention foolhardy,” says Dunn.

## SNAPSHOT: From Gateway to apprenticeship

Hands-on work experience through the Gateway programme opened up a building apprenticeship for Auckland Grammar School student Taylor Edwards.

“I left school after year 11 because I had the basics I needed, and I was offered two apprenticeships after working for builders through the Gateway programme.”

### **Well presented**

Before leaving school, Taylor had gained his forklift licence, first-aid certificate and Site Safe building and construction passport and had completed the first six building unit standards of his apprenticeship through Gateway, making him even more employable on a building site.

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) helped organise his work placements. The first one was 2 weeks' full-time work experience with TP Builders over his school holidays. Then he did another 2 weeks full-time in the next holidays with Harris Built. His Gateway work experience was done in the holidays because his father didn't want him out of school in the critical year 11 year.

### **Exploring options**

Taylor says the opportunity to explore work in a practical hands-on setting helped him find a career path he enjoys. “I decided I would like to build stuff, not fix stuff, and I always like to stand back and see what I have achieved. Building does this. Doing Gateway confirmed building was the right trade for me.”

Kiwi teenagers need help from the world outside their peers and family in order to widen their horizons and get a taste of the reality of the world of work in these early stages of their career development. Sometimes the first opportunity a high school student has to learn about the world of work is through mutually beneficial relationships that expose young people to the reality of the business world, such as BusinessNZ Challenge Young Enterprise Trust or the Onehunga High Business School.

Careers New Zealand sees relationships like these along with work experience as some of the most simple and effective strategies to help people of all ages build up confidence and experience. Formal and informal opportunities need expanding.

## KEY ACTIONS:

### Encouraging the potential of Auckland's young people

**Young people need support to successfully transition from school to work. Here are some ideas of how businesses and individuals can provide that support.**

- Offer work experience or work shadowing that provides meaningful experiences to help young people develop a deeper understanding of the roles available in your organisation or industry. It doesn't have to be a long period of time but should include an outline of the career progression possible within your business.
- Supply a letter or note when they finish that says you provided work experience (as long as they lived up to expectations). As you know, an employer recommendation opens doors.
- Be open to an occasional chat on the phone or over coffee with young people to talk about what your company does, the skills you like to see in employees and how your business fits into the greater scheme of things with Auckland. This is called informational interviewing and needs to be encouraged more to help students in their exploration.
- Contact your local high school to find out about Gateway and explore whether this is an initiative you could become involved in.
- Acknowledge some of your employees come from families with world views that are different to your own. Take time to understand their view so you learn what is important to them.

***To talk to someone about any of the above actions or to learn more about career development, please contact us.***

*Email: [capableauckland@careers.govt.nz](mailto:capableauckland@careers.govt.nz)*

*Call Careers New Zealand on 0800 222 733*

*Visit [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)*

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