



## Improving the employment prospects of young Australians

There are more than 260,000 unemployed young people across the country and the youth unemployment rate now stands at 12.9 per cent.<sup>1</sup> In response to the challenges faced by young people in getting a job the Department of Employment, as part of its *Surveys of Employers' Recruitment Experiences*, recently asked more than 1000 employers<sup>2</sup> what they thought could be done to improve the employment prospects of young people.

### What employers are telling us:

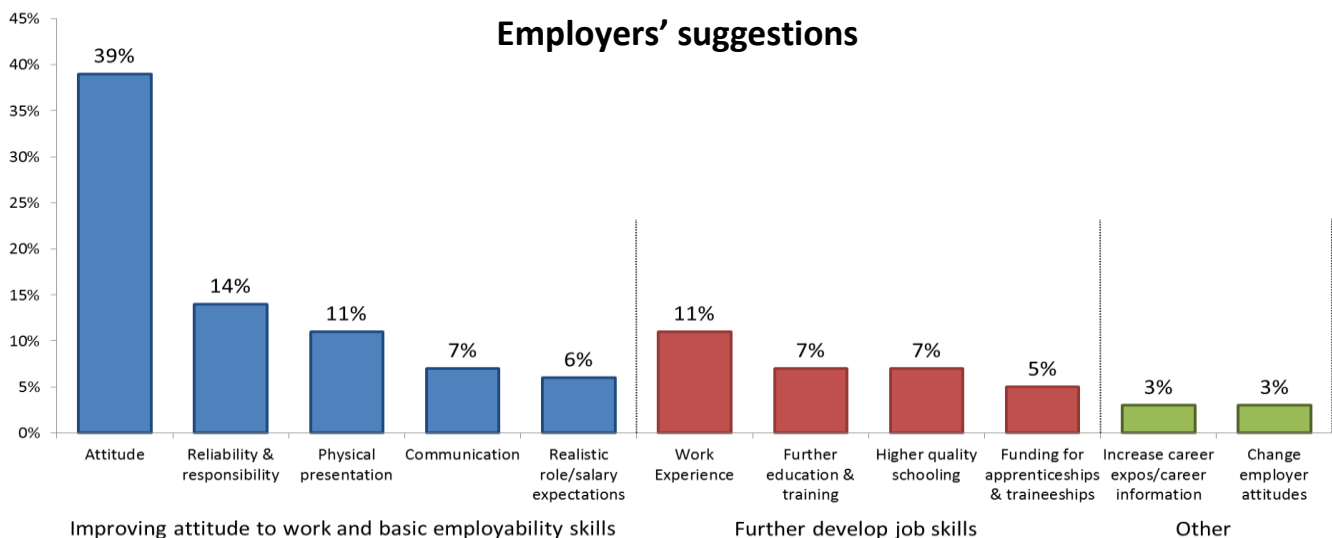
- Making basic adjustments to their attitude and physical presentation is the most effective thing that many young job seekers can do to improve their employment prospects.
- Work experience can be a great way to prepare young people for work.

### Summary Results

Around half of the responding employers said that the best action many young people can take to enhance their employment prospects is to improve their attitude or physical presentation. Employers reported that the lack of commitment to work displayed by many young people resulted in them not having the necessary enthusiasm, reliability, or initiative required to make an effective contribution. In terms of physical presentation, many employers commented on the clothing worn by young people and the importance of physical presentation at interviews.

Work experience, often while they are still at school, was viewed as an effective way to help young people learn about workplace expectations and to build basic employability skills which employers say are essential, but are often lacking in young job seekers. Other employers emphasised the positive impact that education and training has on labour market outcomes. This is supported by official data which show that people who hold higher level qualifications have better employment outcomes and higher earnings than those who have not studied since leaving school.

A number of employers suggested that career expos were an effective way to link young job seekers with local opportunities while others said that employers themselves need to take a more realistic and patient approach to hiring and developing young workers.



<sup>1</sup> ABS, *Labour Force, Australia*, April 2014, seasonally adjusted data.

<sup>2</sup> The results in this report are based on 1151 responding employers who were surveyed between October-December 2013 in the Gladstone, Bundaberg Hervey Bay and Central Victoria regions. Some employers provided more than one response.

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