

Student to Professional

A research and data led study

STP: Student to
Professional



gradconsult



LEARNING OUTCOMES



Through this session attendees will:

- Explore the nine key psychological shifts from Student to Professional life, with real examples
- Identify where student/early careers hires are struggling most with the shifts and how this differs from managers views
- Discover how to apply the STP model to onboarding, induction, and ongoing development

OUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



Rigorous. Research informed. Practically applied.

50+ focus group/interview participants
100+ articles, blogs, surveys and journals
15 pilot partners: 8 university, 7 employer
1,087 participants in the psychometric
700+ workshop/webinar attendees
22 workshops and webinars
7 months: July 2024 - January 2025

NINE STP SHIFTS



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03

Student life

Quest for perfection



Failure avoidance



Clear tasks and deadlines



Student as consumer



Friends and peers



Diversity in bubbles



Regular, objective performance feedback



Clear next steps and structure



Wellbeing and social life provided for



Pragmatism

The transition from striving for perfection and maximising effort in education, to recognising that in the workplace pragmatic decisions are often required and efficiency is paramount.

Fortitude

The transition from education where you're encouraged to avoid failure, to the workplace where there is rarely a single right answer and failure is seen as an inevitable part of learning and improving.

Task navigation

The transition from education where tasks have clear directions, deadlines and complete information, to the workplace where tasks are often more ambiguous, with changing deadlines and incomplete information.

Accountability

The transition from being mainly focused on own personal experience and priorities in education, to the workplace where you are expected to contribute to wider objectives and team goals.

Professional Interaction

The transitions from interacting and socialising with friends and peers in education, to building professional relationships and networks in the workplace.

Diverse collaboration

The transition from studying with people that have similar values and perspectives, to working with diverse groups of people with different social, political, academic and age profiles.

Self-assessment

The transition from education where feedback is consistent, structured and frequent, to the workplace where feedback may be more subjective, less structured and irregular.

Career navigation

The transition from education where there is a clear pathway for progression and it is the same for everyone, to the workplace where progression can be unique to the individual, the steps and timelines can vary and are not always clear.

Self-sufficiency

The transition from education that has a structured environment with lots of help and support available, to the workplace where individuals may need to be more independent and self-sufficient.

Mentimeter

Quest for efficiency



Failure is inevitable



Ambiguous tasks and changing deadlines



Employer as consumer



Colleagues and hierarchy



Full life diversity



Irregular, subjective performance feedback



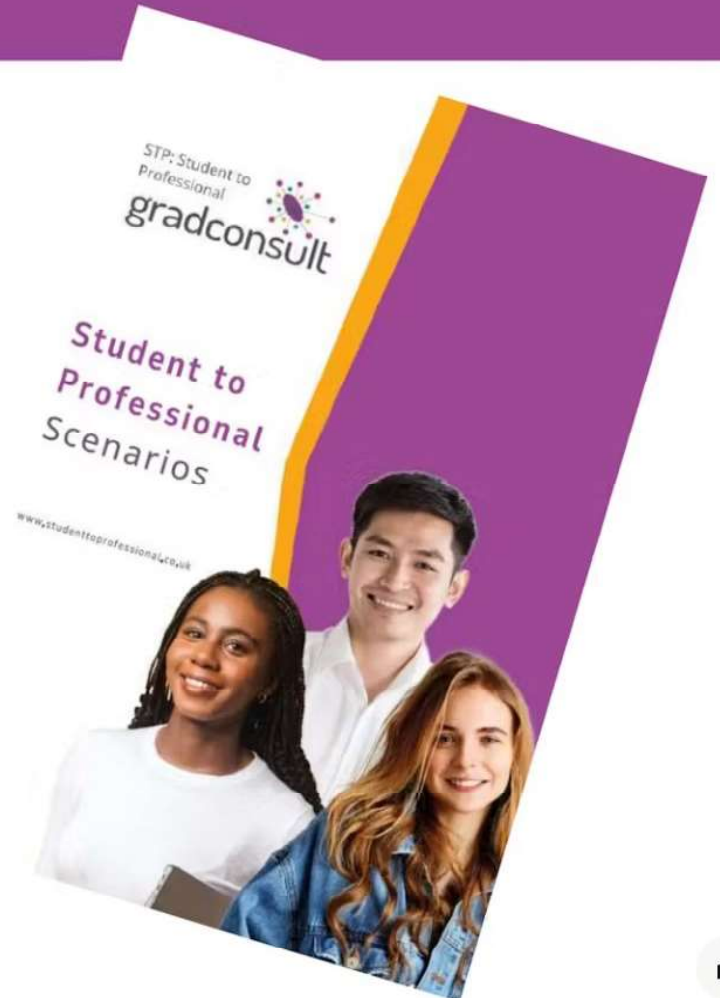
Career self-navigation



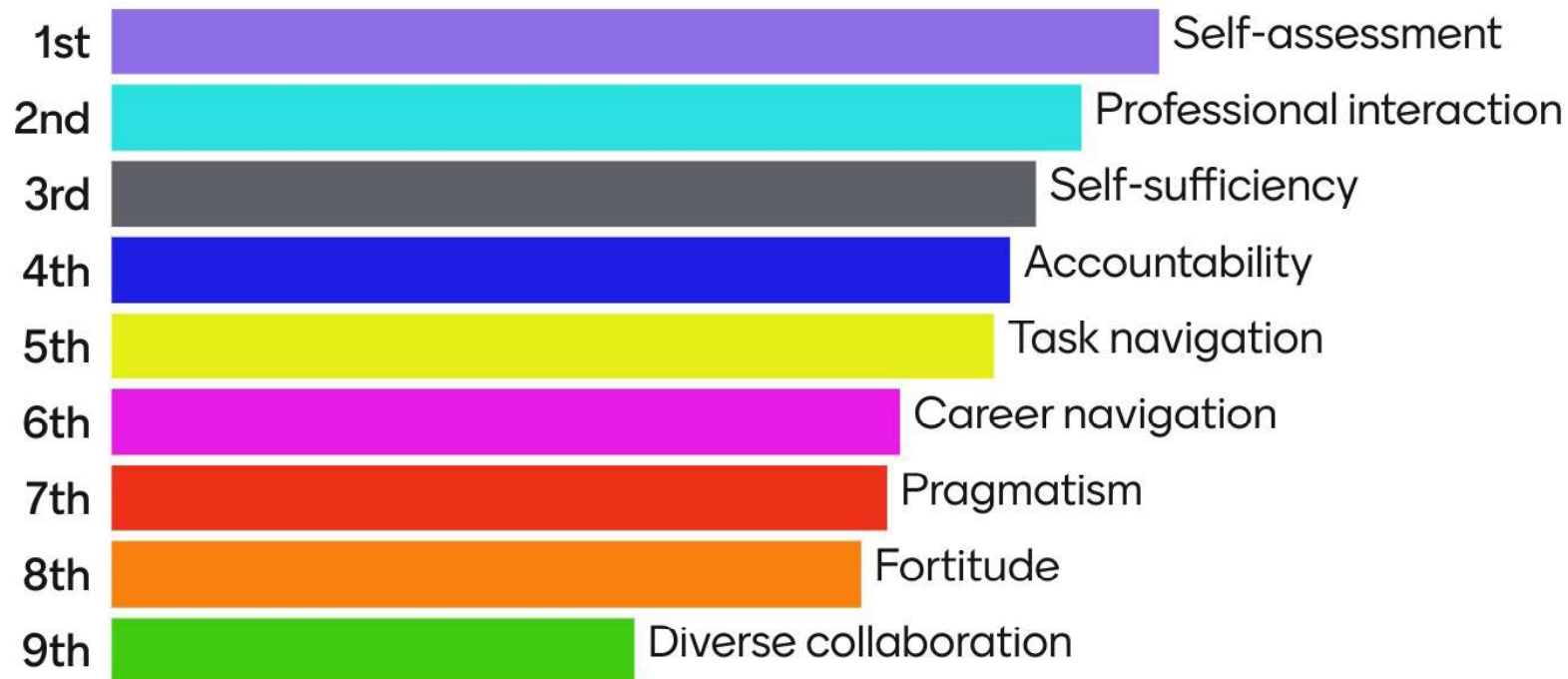
Wellbeing and social life my responsibility



HOW THEY SHOW UP: SCEANRIOS



Force rank the 9 shifts. 1 = Most challenging. 9 = Easiest.



THE MOST/LEAST CHALLENGING SHIFTS

Self reported in psychometric

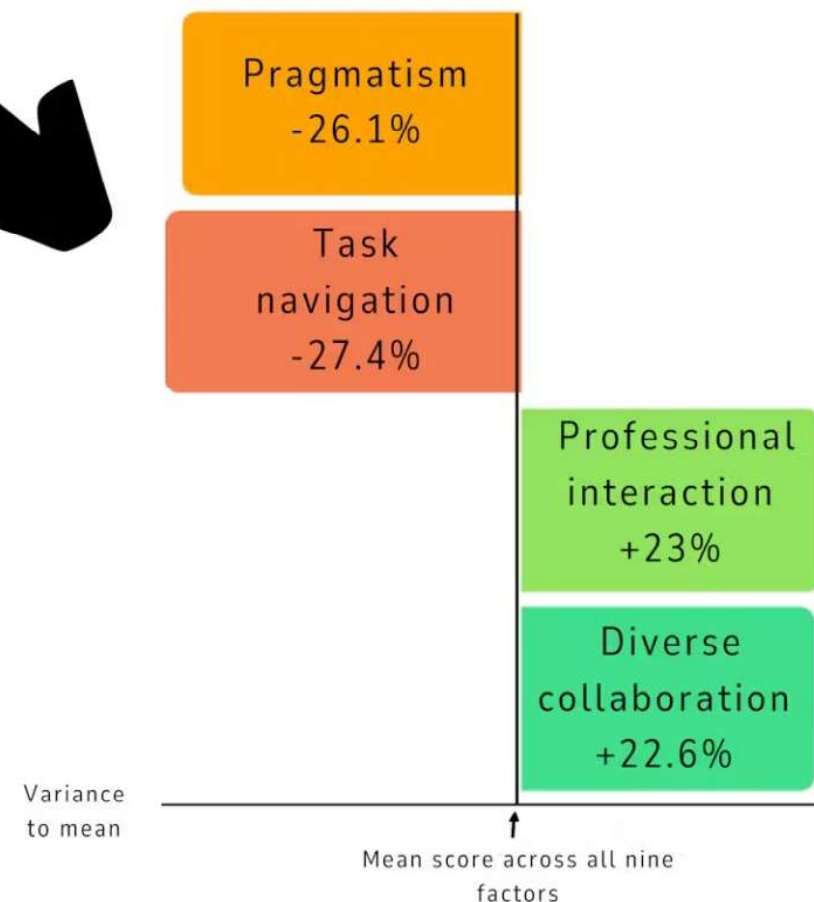
Most challenging: Pragmatism and Task navigation.
Easiest: Professional interaction and Diverse collaboration.

Manager reported in workshops

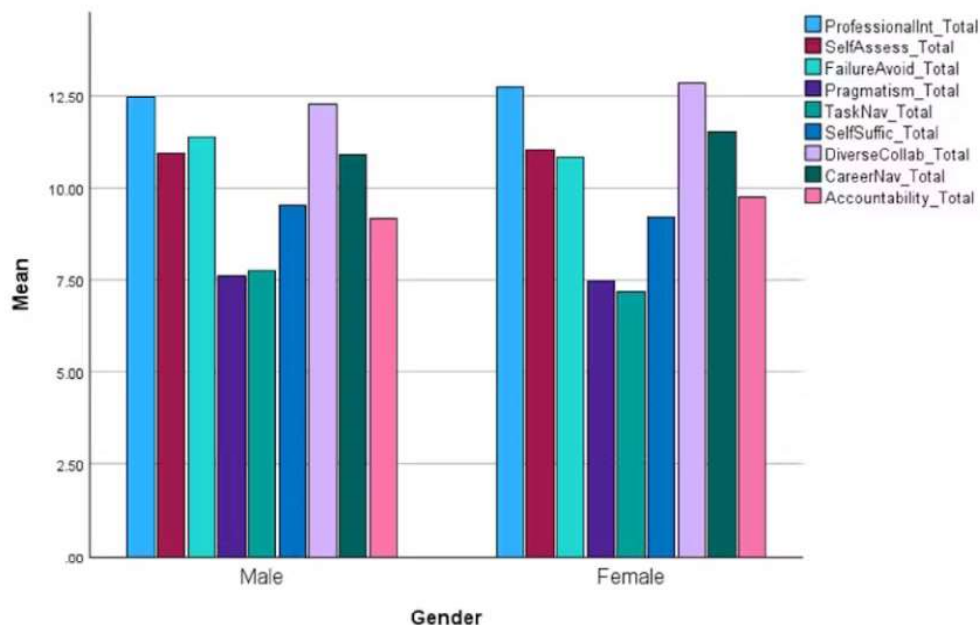
Most challenging: Self-sufficiency and Task navigation.
Easiest: Accountability and Diverse collaboration.

Insight

- EC hires are better at Pragmatism and Accountability than they perceive.
- Less good at Self-sufficiency and Professional interaction, than they perceive.

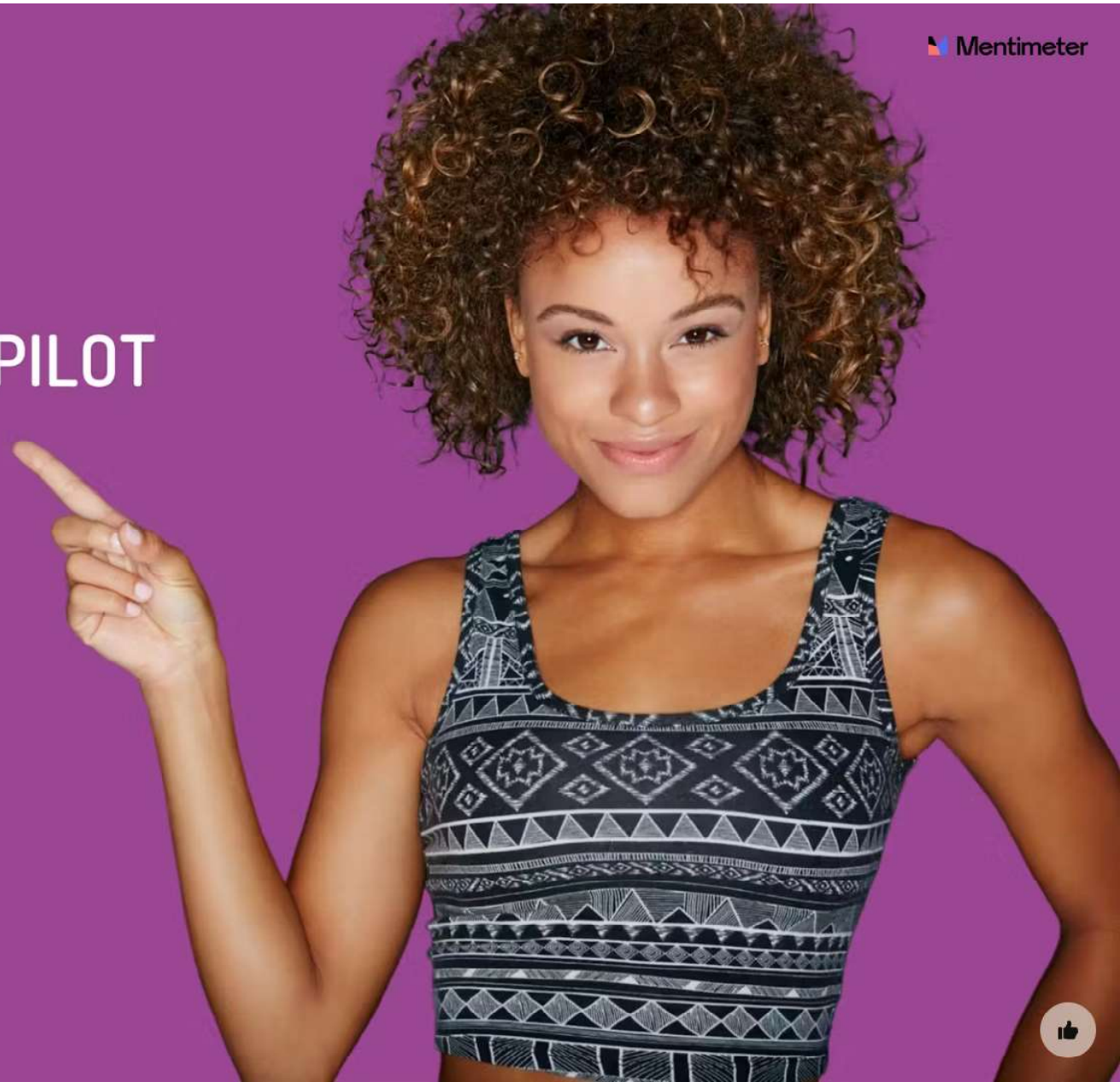


OBSERVED DIFFERENCES: GENDER



- No statistically significant difference in mean total scores for men and women.
- Pattern of responses is similar between men and women e.g. both men and women scored lower on Pragmatism and Task navigation than the other shifts.
- However, interesting differences are observed at a factor level:
 - Men rated themselves significantly higher than women on Failure avoidance ($p=0.02$) and Task navigation ($p=0.01$).
 - Women rated themselves significantly higher than men on Diverse collaboration, Career navigation ($p<0.01$) and Accountability ($p<0.01$).

HEAR FROM OUR PILOT PARTNERS



THE FCA (AND M&S)



What we did...

- Early career hires
- Line managers
- HRBPs
- Early careers champions

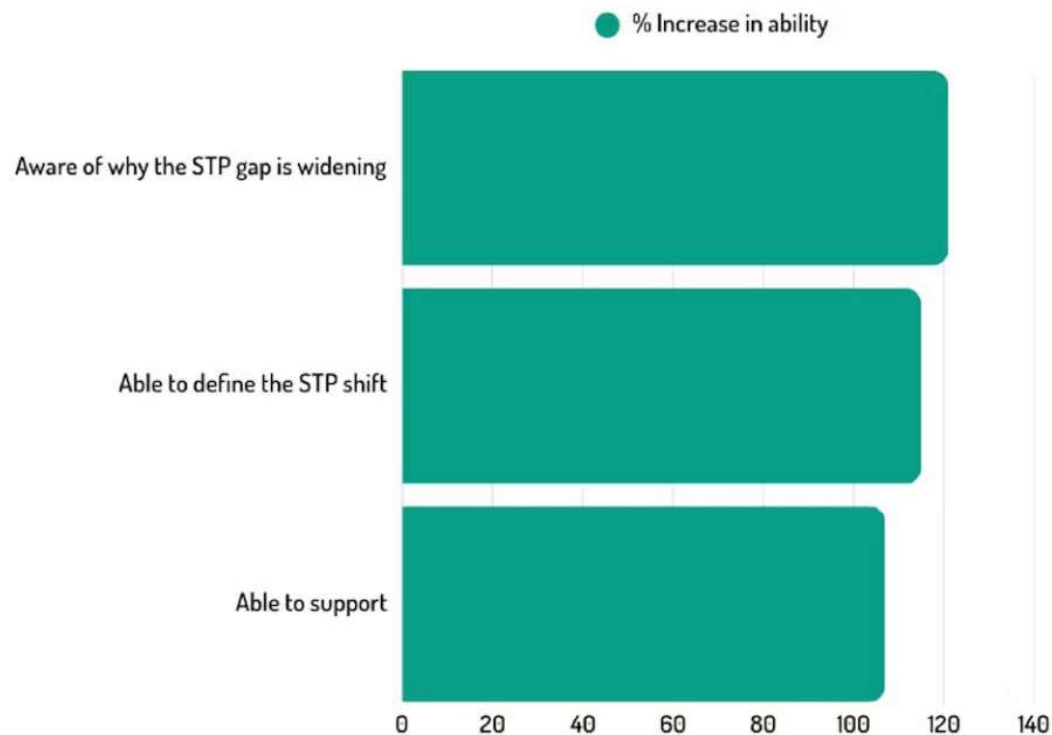


What impact it had

- Grads and apprentices understanding starting point
- Navigate their own development
- Support line managers to coach/give feedback
- HRBP's feeling engaged and able to support
- Ambassador light bulb moments (and check reactions)
- Informed the development programme review and offer



Manager workshops



"Thanks for a fantastic session and for turning around the feeling of 'It's a 3 hour meeting am I going to get anything from it?' that I had before we started! I am energized again & can't wait for my apprentice's STP to help support him further."
Line manager workshop attendee

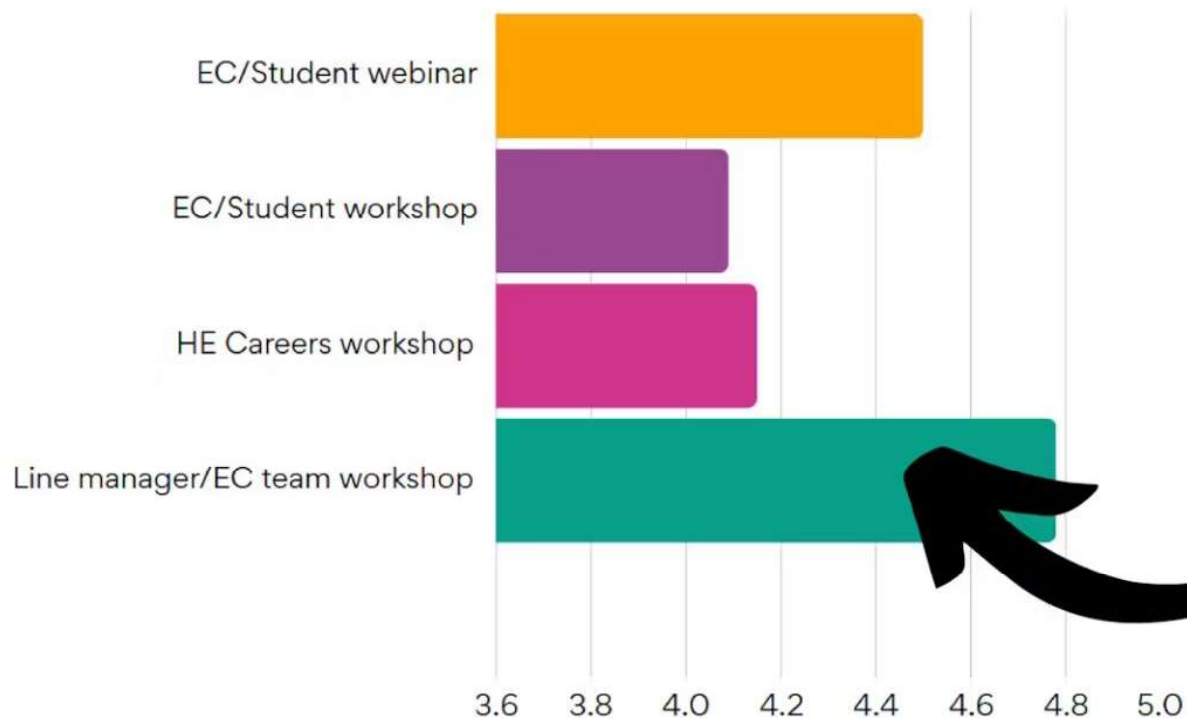
What we did....

- Degree apprentices
- Before they started
- Line managers
- Practical application post intervention

What impact it had

- Line manager check point calls feedback
- Kirkpatrick evaluation
- 50% managers reporting increases in confidence

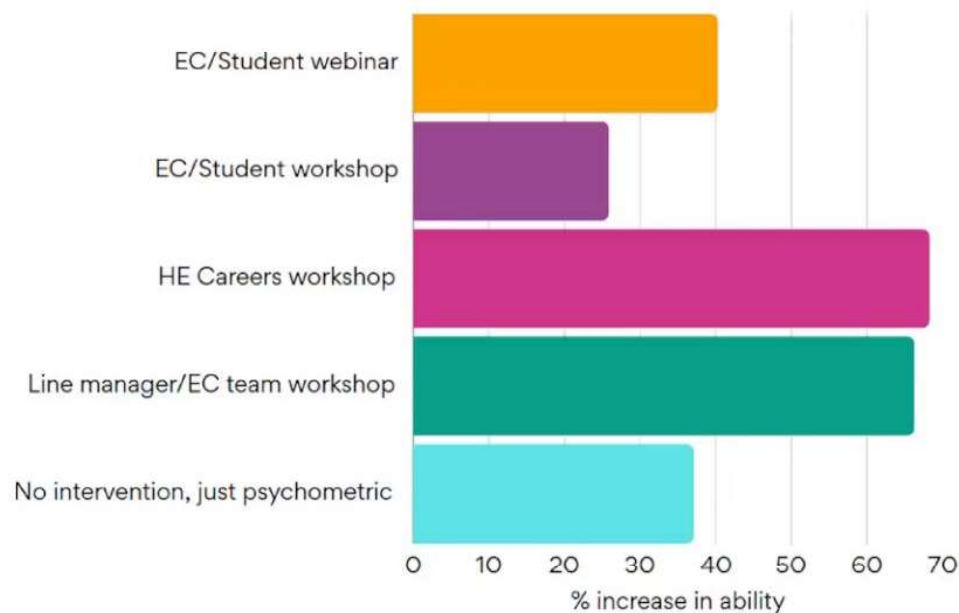
DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS



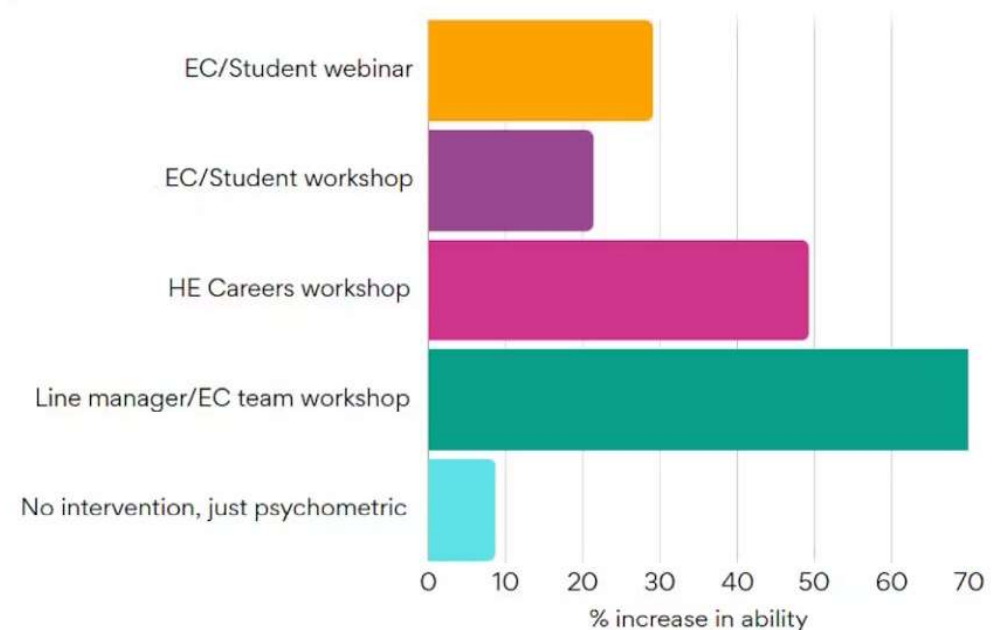
- Our pilot partners opted into a range of workshops and webinars alongside the psychometric.
- These development interventions were exceptionally well received, with all groups rating them as good (4) to excellent (5) overall.
- **Line managers saw the greatest benefit and learning impact from their workshops.**

DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS: LEARNING IMPACT

Able to identify the STP transitions



Able to explain why STP is important or widening



The STP delivered the most impact when accompanied by wrap-around development interventions.



DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS: LEARNING IMPACT

Able to navigate or support the STP transition



Why is the EC/Student impact lower?

- Students and early careers hires reported the highest levels of ability prior to interventions
- Far higher than line managers, early careers professionals and HE careers professionals
- As a result percentage increases appear small
- Dunning-Kruger effect in action!

DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS: LEARNING IMPACT



Students and early career hires



- Try not to say yes to EVERYTHING so you don't become overwhelmed in your first week.
 - Good to be proactive and can take own career path - no curriculum.
 - It's ok to ask for guidance, it's not a test!
 - Being proactive in organising the tasks/ work you have to do is important as work is more progressively collaborative than university work.
 - I'm expecting more ambiguous goals and subjective feedback, both of which make me nervous.
 - Listening to my peers discuss problems they are having that are similar to mine gave me comfort.
 - My feelings and concerns are natural, and many people feel the same way about changes. This should not stop me from taking action.
-
- I find the emphasis on pragmatism invaluable, as it highlights the necessity of balancing quality with time constraints.
 - I've been finding working from home very lonely having come from a college environment surrounded by friends. It was good to know others were struggling too and discuss how to deal with this.



DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS: LEARNING IMPACT



- Understanding the widening gap and the 9 factors - was like a lightbulb moment for me.
- Knowing I'm not alone - it has stopped me wondering if my people management skills were failing.
- Just to take time out to understand why we are seeing the differences we are, how we can identify them through the STP report and results and best of all how we can work on them to improve!
- Allowing me to empathise with graduates and the difference in how they are thinking and feeling as opposed to what I would think from many years ago when I started working.

Line managers



APPLYING THE STP MODEL



Using the STP provided valuable insights, with one-to-one coaching proving particularly impactful. In the internship programme, students were encouraged to share their reports with supervisors to develop personal and professional goals, and learning was adjusted to support these objectives.'
Bev Herring, Head of Careers and Employability, Aberystwyth University

Employers

- Student development workshops
- On-boarding - prep to step
- Insights programmes, apprentices, grads, interns, placements, offboarding
- Development interventions for managers, people teams and EC hires
- Tailored development programme planning
- C-suite/board presentations
- Test-retest evaluation

Universities

- Student development workshops
- Preparation for placement
- 121 coaching
- Graduate transitions programmes
- Targeted in curricula inputs for lower GOS courses
- Internships/graduate programmes - for participants and manager (inc SMEs)
- Academic/employability conferences
- Test re-test evaluation

NEW for 2025: Resources (videos, coaching questions, templates, guides, scenarios)



FIND OUT MORE



www.student-to-professional.co.uk



Case studies



White paper



Brochures
Options and costs



FIND OUT MORE

Easy/short reads

- Our original article on the transition from employment to education (or student to professional as it has become known) <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/transition-from-education-employment-rebecca-fielding/?trackingId=KF0%2B2MJbSOKJZCgftmmmbw%3D%3D>
- Generation P for perfection (a good summary of the research on the rise of perfectionism as a behavioural trait) <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/generation-p-for-perfection/>
- The stats on disability, neurodivergence and mental ill health in this article 'the disability disclosure gap' <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/disability-disclosure-gap-rebecca-fielding/?trackingId=KF0%2B2MJbSOKJZCgftmmmbw%3D%3D>
- What is helicopter parenting and what are the impacts <https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/what-is-helicopter-parenting/>
- Quick overview of the 'fragile perfects' phenomenon <https://www.tes.com/magazine/archive/introduce-failure-lives-our-fragile-perfect-students-urges-grit-expert>
- Why is the gap from student to professional widening <https://insights.ise.org.uk/development/blog-why-is-the-gap-from-student-to-professional-widening/>
- The problem with losing 'osmosis learning' <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20211004-the-problem-with-losing-osmosis-learning>
- First degree qualifiers by highest qualification (1st/2:1 etc) on entry and classification of first degree, academic years 2014/15 to 2022/23, stats <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/outcomes/breakdown>
- The persistent irony of the Dunning-Kruger effect <https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/persistent-irony-dunning-kruger-effect>
- The British Psychological Society, Psychological testing: A test user's guide https://cms.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/ptc02_test_users_guide_2017_web.pdf

Academic sources and studies

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- Curran, T., & Hill, A. P. (2022). The rise of perfectionism as a behavioral trait. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 26(2), 111-136.
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- Tomlinson, M. (2022). Transitions from higher education to employment: Navigating liminal spaces. *Studies in Higher Education*, 47(5), 1034-1050.

STP White Paper

Thank you
Any questions?

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