



Youth Panel Peer Evaluations Report





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Introduction

Greater Manchester's Hidden Talent (GMHT) is a voluntary youth employment programme co-funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and managed by GMCVO.

Building on learning from the *Greater Manchester Talent Match* programme, it is a two-year investment creating greater cohesion within communities by helping hidden young people aged 18-25 progress towards employment and improve their self-esteem and wellbeing.

Hidden young people are not in employment, education or training and not claiming any benefits.

The Youth Panel

The Greater Manchester's Hidden Talent Youth Panel sits at the heart of the programme. Hosted by Greater Manchester Youth Network (GMYN), the Youth Panel are valued participants in the planning, design and evaluation of our work.

Members are aged 18-25 and have at some point experienced barriers to employment. As such, they keep the programme accountable to the needs and viewpoints of our target groups. From listening to and working with our Youth Panel we have a better understanding of the diverse needs of marginalised and vulnerable young people and the barriers to employment that they face.

As part of the GMHT programme, the Youth Panel conducted peer evaluations with each of our Delivery Partners: organisations in each of the local authorities of Greater Manchester that deliver the programme on behalf of GMCVO. These evaluations were an opportunity for young people engaging with GMHT to have their say on the support they receive, influence the development and evaluation of the programme, and meet the Youth Panel to influence their work.

These evaluations were originally designed for [Greater Manchester Talent Match](#), and worked extremely well on that programme. Inspired by the success of these evaluations, this model was brought into the new programme. The Youth Panel carried out evaluations with each of our Delivery Partners, speaking to three or four young people from each organisation.

This Report

This report breaks down the seven main questions the Youth Panel asked young people who are participating in the Hidden Talent programme, and displays the results of the evaluation as closely to the way the data was collected by the Youth Panel as possible. This report is not a comprehensive analysis of the Talent Coach model but a representation of the views and voices of the young people who are engaging with the programme.

Our Delivery Partners for Greater Manchester's Hidden Talent are -

Bolton: Bolton Lads and Girls Club and Bolton Solidarity Community Association

Bury: Streetwise @ Early Break

Manchester: Manchester Young Lives

Oldham: Upturn Enterprise

Rochdale: Upturn Enterprise

Salford: The Broughton Trust

Stockport: Stockport Homes Group

Tameside: Reform Radio

Trafford: G-Force

Wigan: Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire, Merseyside

Greater Manchester: 42nd Street and Greater Manchester Youth Network

Methodology

Designing the questions

The GMHT team supported the Youth Panel to design questions to find out how beneficiaries felt about their time on the GMHT programme. The Youth Panel wanted the questions – and interview style – to be as accessible as possible. Having members of Youth Panel ask the questions, young people would be more forthcoming than if asked by a member of the programme team.

The questions were designed to be informal, and the answers open to the interpretation of the interviewee. The way the Youth Panel interviewed the young people promoted peer-to-peer exchange, and gave young people a voice at both ends of the process: both in asking the questions and also in answering them. Interviews were facilitated at the offices of the Delivery Partner. This provided the young person being interviewed the safety and comfort of a known location, and allowed the Youth Panel to experience the different Partners: to see their offices, meet their staff, and find out about their impact within the local community.

For Question One, the Youth Panel settled on **‘What have you enjoyed about working with your Talent Coach so far? (If anything)’**. They felt that it was important to start the questionnaire on a positive note, while still leaving room for a young person to express any negatives they might want to address.

The next two questions were designed to find out what the young people had gained from the programme, and how they would describe their Talent Coach, and the support their coach had given them. **‘What words would you use to describe your Talent Coach?’** and **‘What have you personally learned, gained or developed through working with your Talent Coach?’**. It was decided, as these were self-reflective questions, to provide the young people with a cardboard cut-out person to write their answers on, or to act as a prompt, to reflect the young person, and on the reverse the Talent Coach, in these questions.

For the next three questions, a rating scale was used, to help generate quantitative, as well as qualitative data. These questions were **‘How would you rate the support from your Talent Coach?’**, **‘How would you rate your experience of being on the Hidden Talent programme/working with your Talent Coach?’** and **‘How useful are you finding the Hidden Talent programme/your time with your Talent Coach?’**. These were given to the young people on a sheet as a Likert Scale.



i) A young person answering a question about what they have gained on the programme



The last question was inspired by the large number of peer referrals: young people who refer themselves after hearing about the programme from a peer: **'Would you recommend working with a Talent Coach? Why?'**. The young people were then given space to ask their own questions.

Making the questions accessible

The Youth Panel wanted the conversations with beneficiaries to be relaxed, friendly and informal. They chose to use the term 'conversation' rather than interview to reflect this approach. They spoke to young people without staff present to create a space where beneficiaries felt more comfortable about being honest. They also chose to provide young people with the option of how the conversation was recorded: formally writing things down, being creative with flip chart and pens, or just chatting things through. The decision to ask open questions allowed people to discuss as much or a little as they were comfortable with.

Changes to the format

After the first round of evaluations was concluded, a couple of issues with the existing format were identified. The existing method had many benefits, but it was extremely time consuming for the Youth Panel, especially the travel to each Delivery Partner. There were logistical challenges travelling to some of the remaining Delivery Partners including the fact that the Reform Radio offices are not in the locality they serve, making it impractical for their beneficiaries to travel there to be interviewed. Furthermore, a second evaluation was needed for G-Force due to low turnout at the first visit.

It was decided that interviews with G-Force; Reform Radio and Early Break would take place at GMYN's offices in the city centre, and for Talent Coaches to travel with the young people to this venue. The Youth Panel made significant effort to put the young people at ease, including offering refreshments and using their media room, which is a quiet, comfortable space. This was also an environment where the Youth Panel felt more comfortable, so their ease in the situation would hopefully contribute to the interview.

This change was not wholly successful, as only young people from G-Force attended their scheduled session. Young people from Early Break and Reform Radio were then sent online surveys in order to collect their feedback.

Question One – Working with your Talent Coach

This question asked beneficiaries what they liked about working with their Talent Coach. The answers were universally positive, with everyone discussing positive attributes of their Talent Coach. The 1-2-1 approach of the model and work style was consistently praised by all young people who discussed it, as well as the way – for those who had gained employment – their Talent Coach still continued to offer support.

Below is an anonymised record of some of the comments young people made about their Talent Coaches. The comments have been kept as close to the words of the young people as possible –



and only paraphrased where necessary, to accurately reflect the views of the young people on the programme.

“They provide support from the very beginning”

“You can have a conversation with [the Talent Coaches] and they actually listen and help you”

“Very supportive, good at keeping in touch, and very friendly”

“very down to earth, very realistic, and doesn’t run or hide from the truth”

“[They’re] someone you can open up to and I enjoy talking about the work we can do together”

“she got me back on my feet and talking to my family again”

“[They are] really supportive, and have a way of making me feel like I can carry on”

“[They’re] a person who would do anything for anyone”

“[They] saved me from a lot”

“It feels like we’re actually doing something to get a job”

“They always give me feedback: applications are draining but I know they are there to support”

“They’re easy to talk to”

“They made me feel comfortable”

“They come across as a friend, not a taskmaster”

“They’re easy-going, organised, and helpful”

“They refused to give up on me”

Question Two and Three – Describing you, and your Talent Coach

Young people provided words or phrases – either verbally or using the prompt cardboard cut-out “gingerbread men” – that described what they had learned, gained, or developed from the programme; and how they would describe their Talent Coach as a person.

There was some overlap from the first question, but these two questions were intended to promote self-reflection about what qualities of their Talent Coach young people liked, and what skills and attributes they felt they had positively developed on the programme.



ii) One of our Talent Coaches working with a young person on Greater Manchester’s Hidden Talent

Figure 2 shows the answers to the question ‘**What have you personally learned, gained or developed through working with your Talent Coach?**’. On the inside of the silhouette are answers that young people gave relating to personal development: such as confidence or self-worth. Around the outside are answers relating to practical skills, qualifications, or training such as CSCS courses.

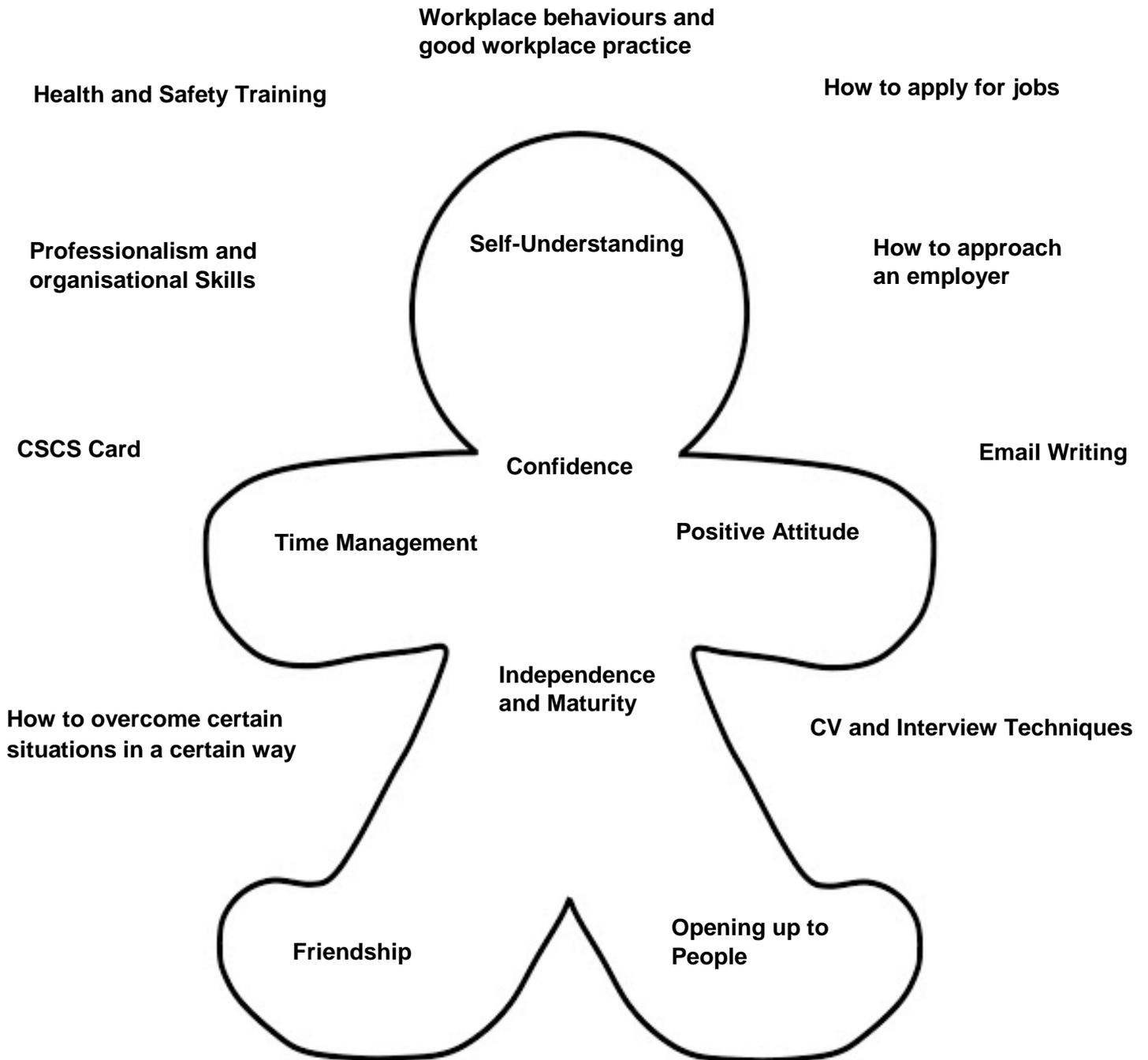
Due to the flexible way the partnership works on GMHT, it was noticeable that these answers differed across organisations. For some Delivery Partners, beneficiaries particularly discussed support with confidence and mental health related issues, whereas for other Partners young people were much more likely to discuss practical training such as Health and Safety qualifications. One young person was particularly excited to share that they were about to engage with a bee-keeping qualification.

Figure 3 shows the answers to the question ‘**What words would you use to describe your Talent Coach?**’. The Youth Panel allowed interviewees to use as many or as few words as they wished – or just to let the young people discuss their Talent Coach in general conversation, including one young person who described their Talent Coach as being “up to scratch”, and discussed the previous work they had done with their Talent Coach on other projects the organisation hosted.

Many of the terms used for this question were consistent across different organisations, so Figure 3 demonstrates a range of answers.



Figure 2: What young people learned, gained, or developed



Workplace behaviours and good workplace practice

Health and Safety Training

How to apply for jobs

Professionalism and organisational Skills

Self-Understanding

How to approach an employer

CSCS Card

Confidence

Email Writing

Time Management

Positive Attitude

How to overcome certain situations in a certain way

Independence and Maturity

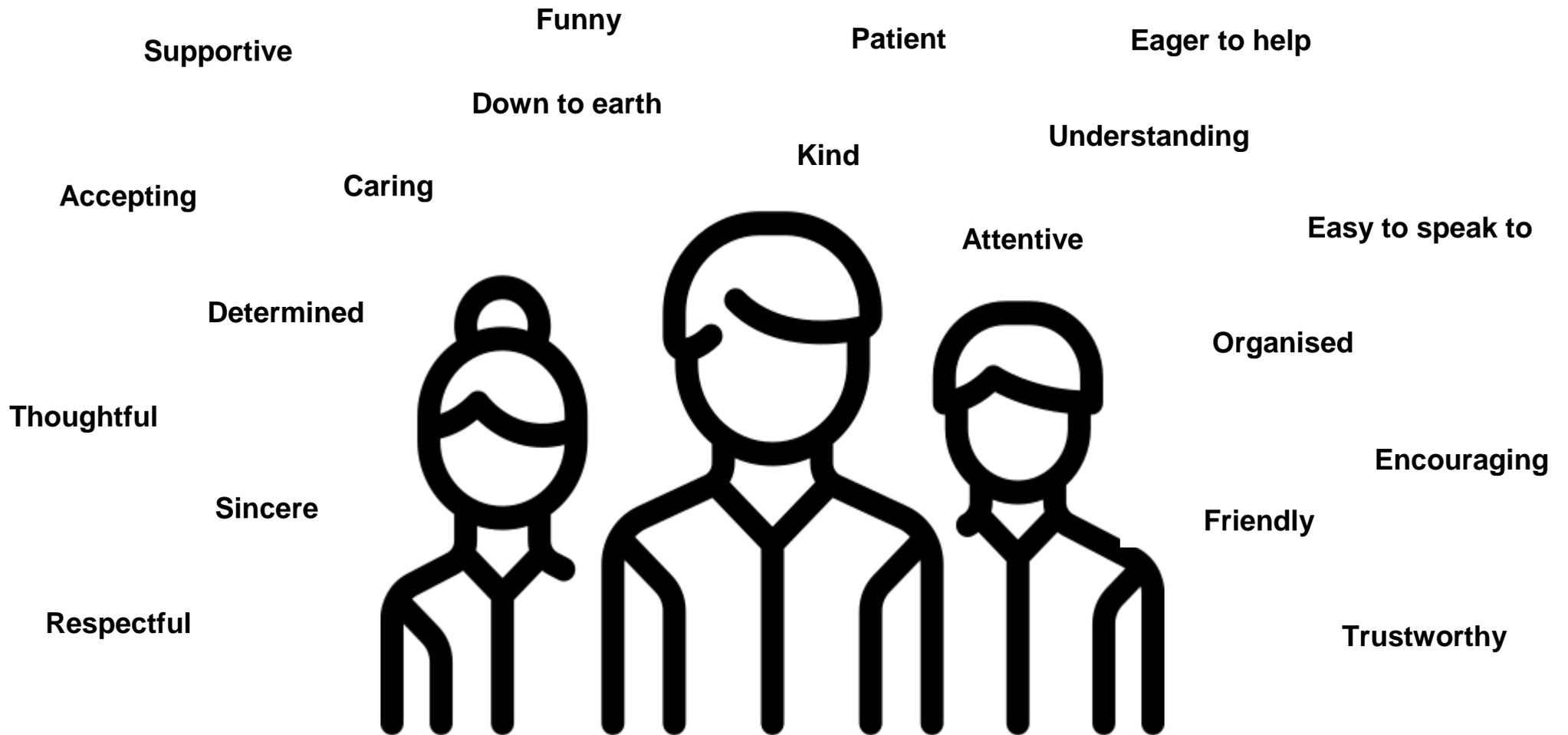
CV and Interview Techniques

Friendship

Opening up to People



Figure 3: Words used to describe the Talent Coaches





Question Four, Five, and Six – Rating Scales

Young people were asked where they would rate the answers to the questions on a 0-10 Likert scale, with 10 being the highest score and 0 being the lowest. The Youth Panel felt it was important to also provide a colour gradient from red-green to further emphasise what different points in the scale meant.

Figure 4 plots the average answers to these questions on the chart, with an arrow for the average answer for each Delivery Partner Organisation, calculated by the mean average. There were no significant outliers to these answers, and the largest range was 5%. The lowest scores were still extremely positive, and all points on the scale were given above 80%.

The below table provides the colour key.

KEY:	
Bolton Lads and Girls Club:	RED
Early Break:	ORANGE
Manchester Young Lives:	YELLOW
Upturn Enterprise:	GREEN
The Broughton Trust:	BLUE
Stockport Homes:	PURPLE
Reform Radio:	PINK
G-Force:	BROWN
Groundwork:	BLACK

Question Seven – Would you recommend to others?

This last question was inspired by the amount of young people who found out about the Programme through word of mouth. This tended to be the question to which young people gave the most detailed answers – possibly due to it being the question at the end of the interview, meaning that they were more relaxed and more willing to expand on their points.

Some young people used this question, and the follow up opportunity to ask questions of their own, or to give the Youth Panel information about their own journey on the programme.

As Figure 5 demonstrates, there are a wide variety of reasons that young people would recommend the programme. Some took this from personal examples, whereas others chose to discuss how the programme might support others.



Figure 4 – Likert Scale

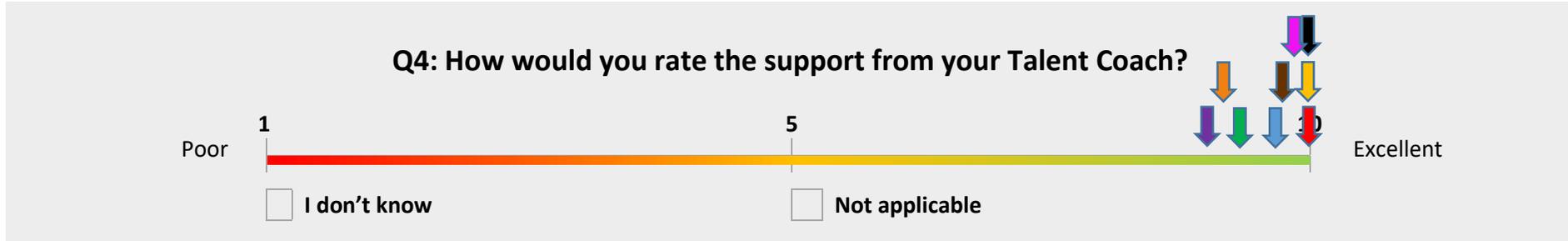




Figure 5 – Recommending the programme to others

Skills developed

‘They don’t teach this enough in schools – it’s really important to have here’

‘Definitely recommend working with a Talent Coach – they will help you with CVs and Jobs, and will always try’

‘...working with a talent coach is a good way to expand your horizons.’

Relationships with Talent Coaches

‘Yes, definitely – it can make someone’s life a lot easier because they are people you can open up to’

‘Without a doubt, to anyone: they are so nice, genuine, and caring’

‘They are like a friend; it’s been nice being on this programme’

‘This is a programme that is actually worth it: they give you an actual opinion’

‘I can’t imagine the numbers of young people you have helped. She’s helped me more than you know’

‘It feels like they actually want to help you, you’re not just a box to tick’

‘It feels like the people here want to help everyone’

‘There is someone out there willing to listen and help’

‘They think of solutions to problems that I would never have come up with’

‘Despite current events they have still been looking to find something for me, despite everywhere being very limited in what they are able to provide.’



Support with confidence and mental health

'They made me feel confident in my ability – they showed me why shouldn't I get this job?'

'Yes, it feels like they help a lot with confidence – it's got me out of the house'

'They have taken me from where I was and lifted me from the pits of despair'

'I'm in a better place now. I'm not depressed, I'm happy.'

'They have given me the ability to do anything that I want to do'

'It has given me hope that I can work and have a future and I believe they help others./'

Other feedback

'They need to advertise this more, I couldn't recommend this enough'

'It's the only place I've been that's helped me'

'I would definitely recommend it to a friend – I've been given more opportunities because of the intensive support they can provide'

'I think this is great for young people, I definitely recommend it'

'I hope it carries on'

'I have enjoyed everything'

'Amazing, so good, really helps'



Conclusion

Results from the evaluations show consistently positive feedback from beneficiaries about their relationships with their Talent Coaches, and the work that they do. The support that beneficiaries receive from their Coaches was consistently rated as Excellent across all organisations.

These evaluations have also highlighted the variety of skills and personal development that beneficiaries identify that they have gained as a result of their engagement with the programme. This indirectly reflects the varied caseload that different Talent Coaches support and their bespoke approach.

Finally, beneficiaries consistently indicate that they are enjoying their time on Hidden Talent, and that they are finding it extremely useful. This is also reflected in the number of beneficiaries willing to recommend the programme, as well as the quality and variety of their endorsements.

Moving Forward

This report will be shared with GMHT stakeholders including the Youth Panel; Delivery Partners and the Strategic Steering Group. It will also be shared with the programme's funders and used in future funding bids. Finally, it will also be shared with external stakeholders from the youth employment landscape that the programme seeks to influence, including local authority youth employment partnerships.

Learning from this evaluation model will inform the evaluations for the final year of the programme. The future model will need to be much more flexible in order to accommodate the fact that face to face meetings between Youth Panel members and programme beneficiaries may not be possible when the process is due to resume in autumn 2020. As such, the Youth Panel will be asked to design a combination of sessions that can be delivered both face to face and virtually via Zoom, as well as surveys that beneficiaries can access online or via text.

Acknowledgement

The GMHT team would like to thank all of the young people who took the time to chat to the Youth Panel, and provide their opinions on their experience of the programme and their time spent working with their Talent Coaches.