

Education to Employment: Designing a System that Works

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Two crises, one paradox

In this new era, high levels of youth unemployment and shortage of people with critical job skills are considered as main crises while they have paradox. In order to address youth unemployment, two fundamentals need to be in place: skill development and job creation. According to report by Mourshed et al., (2012) entitled “Education to Employment: Designing a System that Works”, it is needed to focus on skill development, with special attention to the mechanisms that connect education to employment. Moreover, this report sought to improve the quality of knowledge on moving young people from education to employment and to examine why high levels of youth unemployment coexist with significant skill shortages.

However, many education providers and employers are struggled to understand what interventions make a difference in improving student learning outcomes but in this report, it was revealed that there is not much incentive for stakeholders to pursue such interventions and no single stakeholder has an informed perspective on the entire education-to employment system; as a result, excellence is very much the exception.

The education-to-employment journey is fraught with obstacles. In building this fact, education-to-employment system can be considered as a highway with three critical intersections:

- (1) Enrolling in postsecondary education, (what youth decide to study)
- (2) Building skills, (what skills youth acquire)
- (3) Finding a job.

As employers have a simple priority to recruit the best candidates, naturally focus on the third intersection (finding a job) and engage little on what youth decide to study (the first intersection) or on what skills they acquire (the second). Besides, education providers are mostly concerned with the first two intersections—attracting students to their programs and delivering high-quality instruction and work placement is a lower priority. Lack of such an integration and collaboration between education providers and employers create numerous limitations for education-to-employment transition system.

Although, there are number of successful plans such as China Vocational Training Holdings (CVTH); KOSEN schools in Japan; IL&FS Skills in India; Apprenticeship 2000 and Automotive Manufacturing Training and Education Collective (AMTEC) in U.S; Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Australia and Korean Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (KRIVET), in which companies participate to develop talents based on their required skills not only

because it is regarded as a good form of corporate social responsibility but also because it is a great way to recruit.

What all these prosperous plans show is that it is possible to build a sturdy bridge between secondary school and employment. To do so, however, it requires a high degree of trust and cooperation. Education providers need to prove that they can deliver on workers' business needs. Employers need to work with providers to create the right training. Students need to step up and get the qualifications that the business community wants. And then they all need to find one another.

To sum up, three required interventions for transformation of education system are proposed:

- Collect and disseminate data to educate stakeholders, build transparency, and manage performance
- Initiate more sector-wide collaborations to build industry consensus and share costs of improving education and training
- Create an education-to-employment "system integrator" that coordinates, catalyzes, and monitors activity

Last but not least, it is highly recommended to different stakeholders to interact intensively and frequently together in order to facilitate the school to work transition. Moreover, they have to go well beyond their traditional areas of activity: employers got involved in education, and educators played a bigger role in employment.

Reference

Mourshed M, Farrell D, Barton D. (2012), "Education to employment: Designing a system that works", *McKinsey & Company*.

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