

**GENERATION WORK**

# Young Adult Reflections

## What is a Good Job Match?



## INTRODUCTION

During in person and telephone interviews sixty-seven employed young adults shared their insights about what constituted a good employer match. Some also drew upon their experiences to make recommendations for workforce providers. Their hindsight advice included encouraging workforce providers to share with young adults more information about:

- › How companies operate
- › What company work settings are like
- › Benefits and advancement opportunities
- › Company hiring entry points, and information about where company growth is occurring, and where the industry is headed

They also advised that workforce development providers spend more time during their job search and training programs with young adults to help them identify:

- › What motivates them
- › What their achievements are
- › Where they have been creative or innovative in other jobs or in their life in general
- › Where they have been responsible or used their time well to balance different work, family and life demands
- › Where they have been stable or particularly effective during difficult situations


Some noted that co-workers who were more comfortable talking about these kinds of topics were likely to be more highly regarded by supervisors.

Young Adults answered the following question:

**Now that you have been working a while what criteria do you use to determine if this company is a good match for you?**

“

“Previous graduates who are placed in different companies should be invited to come to our classes and talk about what their job is like, and if they thought that the pay they were receiving was fair given what they are required to do.”



The most frequently mentioned Young Adult responses are presented below in order of frequency, highest to lowest. These comments were mentioned by at least 60% of the respondents.

Young adults thought that the company would be a good match if it offered:

- Room to advance
- Supervisor availability to answer questions
- A reasonable work environment where there are breaks and time to rest and connect with other workers
- Recognition and possible perks for doing a good job
- Supervisory or management positions to people of color
- Company events that create a family-focused environment
- Equal opportunities for advancement for people who work at the same performance level, even if they have less education
- An opportunity to get timely and helpful feedback from supervisors that tells them what they need to do to fix problems, and/or to advance
- A process and willingness to listen to and use employee feedback to make worksite improvements
- An opportunity to talk to employers about career goals, and ways to potentially meet them
- Opportunities for people from different ethnic groups and gender identities to be hired and promoted
- Tuition reimbursement
- Salary that was fair and likely to increase over time
- Investments in training for all employees and not just to ones who the supervisor feels most comfortable talking to
- Supervisors who are not too busy or overworked, and who have strong ties to both front line workers and to management
- Straightforward information about their work schedule and the reasons (tenure, work cutbacks, seasonal variations) that lead to changes in work schedules

## SUMMARY

Many important factors influence how young adults feel about their job. Salary is important but not at the top of the list. Some young adults say that they wish they had spent more time investigating whether a company or training program was really the best place for them. Also, many were practical and stated that a good job match was less important at this time in their life than the opportunity to get some job experience and income stability. “Still,” one young woman said, “I think I would have been smarter to think more before getting a job where I did, because you don’t really do as well as an employee when your interests and skills don’t fit a job really well. You run the risk of having a bunch of jobs that don’t last long.” Another young person said, “I am glad I knew people who worked at this company before I got hired because I knew what the environment would be like, and had a good idea I would fit in, and that they would want an employee like me.”

Prepared by:

## Business Government Community Connections



*Port Jobs is supporting local efforts which connect young adults to good jobs and career pathways in King County. Port Jobs is the local lead for the Seattle Generation Work partnership. The Annie E. Casey Foundation launched Generation Work in 2016 to explore new ways of connecting young Americans with the knowledge and experience they need to succeed in the job market. The initiative includes partnerships in Cleveland, Hartford, Indianapolis, Philadelphia and Seattle. All are dedicated to weaving together best practices from the adult education and training field. The particular focus is on demand-driven workforce development strategies which integrate and are driven by positive youth development practices, such as mentoring and work-based learning, to better prepare young people ages 18-29 for work.*

*Port Jobs regularly convenes Seattle Generation Work partners to share what they are learning and brainstorm ways to align, coordinate and leverage resources. In support of these efforts, Port Jobs engaged Business Government Community Connections (BGCC) to interview young adults served by Seattle Generation Work partners. The interviews garner young adult feedback about their experiences prior, during and after receiving services into Generation Work learning community meetings and planning. Results are shared to ensure young adult voice informs the work of all partners.*

*Port Jobs would like to thank the young adults who shared their experiences and offered their feedback. Your valuable input will help our partnerships and programs more effectively support the career and educational goals of young people living in the King County region.*

**For more information about Generation Work please visit <http://portjobs.org/index.php>**