Masterclass: Progression
Training that supports people and business success

March 2022

Today's session

Social Mobility Commission

Today we will cover:

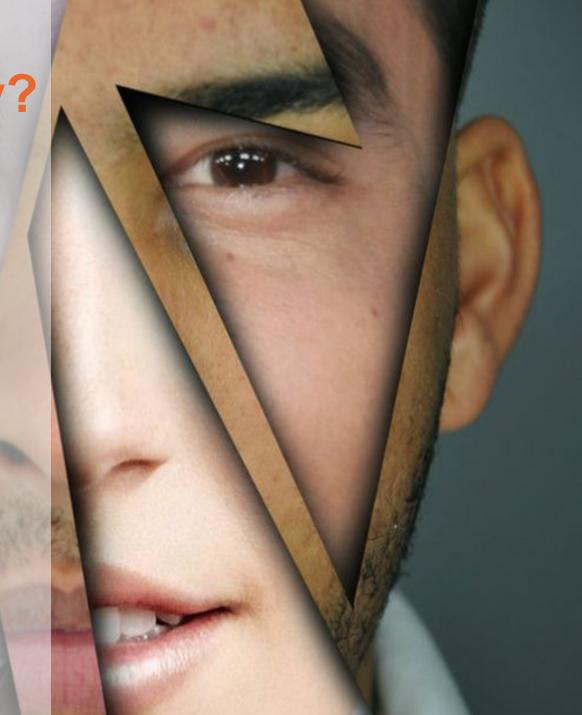Introduction to social mobility and progression, SMC

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Q&A session

What is social mobility?

Social mobility is the link between a person's occupation or income and the occupation or income of their parents. In other words, it's about **ensuring your background doesn't determine your future.**

Progression

Progression is often the last thing people tackle. Interventions may be ineffective if the rest of the building blocks aren't in place i.e., the culture, structure, support and opportunities so staff can take your efforts seriously.

ATTRACTION MYTH
There is a suggestion that the challenge of diversity is concerned mostly with the early career pipeline, i.e. outreach is the solution[1]

FUNDED TRAINING
Employer-funded training is **more likely** to be given to those from higher socio-economic backgrounds in every category of job. When offered, it might not be accessible to all (e.g. delivered digitally, not offered flexibly, or time off not given)[2]

RETENTION MINDSET
Fast-paced, customer- and profit-focused industries have a tendency to view frontline staff as disposable and replaceable and therefore organisations did not prioritise investing in staff development [3]

CONFIDENCE
Individuals often lack confidence in their ability to progress and have low expectations of employers to provide training and access to progression [3]

LONGER PROGRESSION TIMELINE
Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds take a year and a half longer on average to reach senior roles than their more advantaged colleagues [1]

INCLUSION NOT REALISED
Many organisations still tilt their norms towards those from a privileged backgrounds[4]

JOBS NOT CAREERS
Frontline staff often don't see their jobs as a career and report having other more important priorities in their life [3]

CAREER PATHS
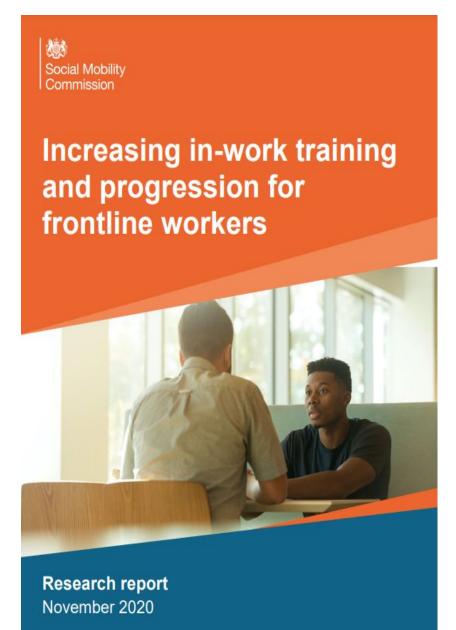Individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds often self-select into operational or technical roles, which often cause bottle necks on progression[4]

1: Bridge group: Pathways to partnership: challenging the myth of meritocracy, 2020
2: Social Mobility Commission, State of the Nation 2018-19, 2019
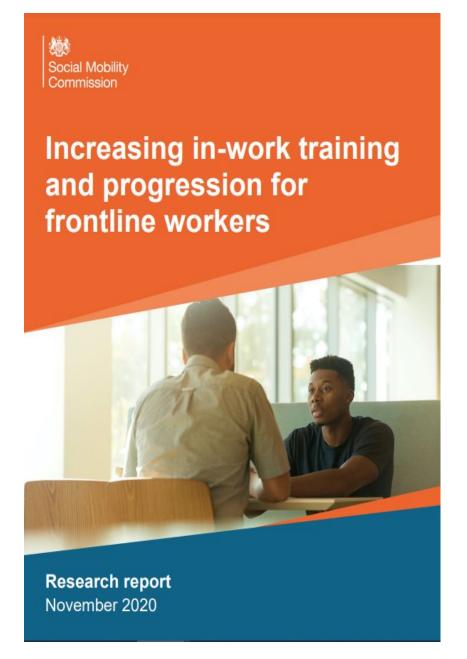3 Social Mobility Commission, Training Progression Research (2020)
4. Social Mobility Commission, Navigating the Labyrinth (2021)

Findings

Increasing in-work training and progression for frontline workers

Research report
November 2020

1. **Social mobility was rarely reported to be a priority for organisations in these sectors.** There was generally low engagement with the concept of social mobility; few leaders in these sectors saw it as a priority or within their remit.

2. **These fast-paced sectors are customer and profit-focused.** There was a tendency to view frontline staff as replaceable, therefore not worth investing in their progression.

3. **Frontline staff in these sectors tended not to see jobs as careers.** Low expectations of these sectors to provide training and access to progression, particularly where there was seen to be a lack of meaningful opportunities.

4. **Organisations did not work with frontline staff to develop opportunities that were appealing or in an appropriate format** (e.g. opportunities were more commonly offered to higher-skilled, office-based staff).

5. **Channels to communicate training and progression opportunities to frontline staff were not always effective** (e.g. no line management meetings to discuss training needs or aspirations).

6. **Organisations tended to have a short-term focus.** Hindering investment in longer-term gains, such as training staff to retain them.

Source: Social Mobility Commission, Increasing in-work training and progression for frontline workers, November 2020

Solutions

Four key steps for organisations to support in-work training and careers guidance around progression:

1. Strategic leader buy-in is essential to develop and embed an effective progression culture.

2. Review company structures and ways of working to enable access to meaningful career progression opportunities at all levels.

3. Create an environment where it is the norm for frontline staff to expect to have training and career conversations with their managers.

4. Embed measures throughout the business that prioritise and support individuals to progress at their own pace.

Increasing in-work training and progression for frontline workers

Research report
November 2020

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Source: Social Mobility Commission, Increasing in-work training and progression for frontline workers, November 2020

Employer's Masterclass

Social Mobility at the DWP

Socio-econo mic Diversity

Being successful doesn't necessarily make you great. What makes you great is when you reach back and help somebody else become great.

Joel Osteen

Supporting Development

Confidence

Networking

Applications

Believing

Ownership

Development Programmes

- Aspire
- Summer School
- Operational Delivery Leadership Programme
- Future Leader's Academy
- Beyond Boundaries
- Catapult
- Online Learning Platform

Summary

Outreach Work

Flexible work locations

Line Managers and Diversity

Staff Networks

Performance discussions

Shadowing/Work Experience

Q&A

Next steps:

Complete our feedback survey

Find more resources on
www.socialmobilityworks.org

Next event:

Masterclass: How to talk about class in the workplace
Date - April tbc

- Submissions close on 27 May 2022

- Annual benchmarking tool of best practice in social mobility

- Every entrant receives a bespoke feedback report on performance

- Open to employers of any size, sector and stage of their social mobility journey

- Public launch in Q4, featuring the Top 75 Employers and Key Findings Report of data trends and insights

Register your interest: socialmobility.org.uk/index/

SMF is here to help: employerindex@socialmobility.org.uk

Top 75 Employers

01	Browne Jacobson	16	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	31	BBC	46	Home Office	61	The British Land Company PLC
02	KPMG	17	DLA Piper	32	Sparta Global Limited	47	Eversheds Sutherland LLP	62	Radcliffe Chambers
03	Herbert Smith Freehills LLP	18	Santander	33	BEIS	48	Osborne Clarke	63	RPC LLP
04	Grant Thornton UK LLP	19	Baker McKenzie	34	Lewis Silkin LLP	49	Goldman Sachs	64	abrdn
05	Severn Trent	20	Department for Work and Pensions	35	Hogan Lovells	50	Shepherd and Wedderburn	65	GCHQ
06	PwC	21	Aviva plc	36	Legal & General	51	DWF Law LLP	66	St. James's Place Wealth Management
07	Accenture	22	Civil Service Fast Stream and Emerging Talent	37	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer	52	Macfarlanes LLP	67	Taylor Wessing LLP
08	HMRC	23	Cabinet Office	38	Jones Laing Lasalle	53	Clyde & Co LLP	68	Mishcon de Reya LLP
09	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP	24	Allen & Overy	39	MI6	54	MI5	69	Ashurst
10	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	25	Capgemini UK	40	City of London Corporation	55	Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	70	White & Case LLP
11	Ministry of Justice	26	Crown Prosecution Service	41	Phoenix Group	56	Burges Salmon	71	Schroders
12	Deloitte	27	Slaughter and May	42	Shoosmiths	57	FDM Group Ltd	72	Auto Trader UK
13	CMS	28	Linklaters LLP	43	Simmons & Simmons	58	Department for Education	73	NEWTON EUROPE
14	Penguin Random House UK	29	DfT	44	Brodies LLP	59	Addleshaw Goddard LLP	74	Mayer Brown
15	Squire Patton Boggs	30	Pinsent Masons LLP	45	Fujitsu	60	Mears Group plc	75	Lloyd's