Sweeten the deal for good start

Young people can find it tough getting into the workforce but Cara Jenkin discovers help is at hand.

Ten and young adults need to know a good job does not have to come through a university degree, nor do opportunities fall in their lap. As the youth unemployment rate continues to be high, workers under the age of 25 can find a good job.

Young people must be prepared to work for what they get and choose the right options for them if they are to get a job. But just as smart, employers need to give these young people a chance.

The unemployment rate for those aged 15-24 is about double that of the general population, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show. In January, the youth rate was 12.7 per cent — 1.2 percentage points higher than the unemployment rate recorded in January 2015.

It’s a catch-22 for young people and employers, but Lindsay Deligiannis, who works in the field of youth employment, says there are better ways to deal with the problem.

He advocates for a “multi-faceted” approach to getting young people in the workforce, including work experience for older workers, internships and apprenticeships.

WPC Group, in conjunction with the Australian Packaging Company, has been running this type of program for over five years.

“By providing a pathway for young people, we can help make the transition to the workforce,” says Mr Deligiannis.

He says many graduates expect high salaries or good jobs immediately but must be prepared to volunteer, take entry-level roles or go with unskilled workers.

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The program has been successful in providing young people with the skills and experience they need to get a job.

One training program with a 100 per cent success rate in employing workers from disadvantaged backgrounds is a retail program offered by the KMST Institute and The Off Site Training Award by Whitton.

“Whitton addresses the lack of opportunities for disadvantaged young people who face barriers because of their own experiences of disadvantage and discrimination,” says Whitton.

It’s not just about the job, but the opportunity for a good start in a career.

Young people need to learn that hard work, persistence and determination are the key to success.

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JOHNS BIG BREAK IS ICING ON THE CAKE

JOHNS Nottle may have everyone young person's dream job - being leading barista at Krispy Kreme.
Nottle, 23, was out of work but did a pre-employment program through workforce solutions organisation MEET and Renewal SA to get the
basic skills he needed to work in retail hospitality.
It led to his job at Krispy Kreme's new Bolivar outlet.
"It was a great experience and gave me the one shot I needed to enter the workforce again," he says. "Krispy Kreme... reward hard work and
heart with an amazing work environment and options to progress in the business."
The Renewal SA Works Program is a joint initiative with training organisations and
employers to provide training and employment programs.
Housing and Urban Development Minister Stephen Mullighan says 4500 training
opportunities have been given to jobseekers, many of whom then find work.
Details: renewal.sa.gov.au/works

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**TIPS TO GET A JOB**

**RESEARCH VACANCIES**
Research employment rates and job vacancies in the industry before committing to study, or consider alternative forms of employment in the field until a vacancy comes up. If the job is the career dream, be prepared that top marks alone will not guarantee a job. You may need to move to the country or interstate to get a break.

**START AT THE BOTTOM**
Earning even the average salary is not likely for young people who have just
finished their study or training. They also cannot walk into a senior role before they are 25.
Start at the bottom of an organisation, be prepared to be paid a lower salary than expected, and perhaps even start in a lower role than intended - then work your way up.

**GET PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE**
This is not necessarily occupational experience, as many young people lack basic work skills such as answering a phone and arriving at work on time. Volunteer or take on a part-time/casual job during study to gain what are called "employability" skills that every worker needs.

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**CONSIDER OPTIONS**
University can be a good way to learn about a subject and career options, yet so could an apprenticeship. A gap year may also lead to a career epiphany. No one is locked into their path and doing something is better than nothing - even if it is casual, entry-level, or volunteer work. Avoid being pushed into a path if it's not what you want to do - consider what you enjoyed at school.