

## The Issue

It's a big investment taking on a new graduate and companies want students to fit in quickly, apply their skills and become productive employees.

## Employers' questions and what we learnt

### *Can graduates take what they learnt at university and apply it in the workplace?*

Your graduates will have developed a wide range of capabilities at university. However, taking learning from one place to another is difficult. It is known as the **transfer challenge**, but employers can help.

### *How can we help graduates relate their university learning to their jobs?*

Asking graduates to analyse tasks and relate components to past experiences helps them build bridges between what **they already know and what they need to do**.

### *Will graduates need to adapt their talents to the workplace?*

Yes! Knowledge and skills are **situated**. Even though graduates have relevant learning, they **need to learn, practice and adapt** to your ways of doing things.

### *How can we help graduates fit in and become productive?*

Graduates cannot work independently until they know what their company is about and what is expected of them. **They need plenty of guidance and feedback if they are to maximise your ROI**.

### *Should we look to "re-educate" graduates and forget what they learnt at university?*

All knowledge is built on previous understanding – that is how our minds work. Suggesting people ignore what they already know makes future learning very difficult and it shatters confidence.

## Analysis

Use these questions to determine whether you are helping new recruits to transfer their learning from university

## Supporting new recruits

- Do you set high expectations and explore how tasks draw upon the attributes graduates gained at university?
- Do you help students realise how and what they need to learn?
- Do you make it safe to make mistakes and do you recognise progress?
- Do you listen to graduates, working with them to analyse how they can bring their skills and knowledge to bear in their new roles?
- Do you help students learn the written and unwritten rules of your organisation?

## Supporting their managers

- Do managers get full information on new graduates' university discipline, their strengths, interests and experience?
- Do your managers understand the learning transfer challenge and how to support people in transition?
- Do your managers have links with local universities and have a positive and up to date view on the purpose of higher education?

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