



THE WINDmills principle

Realising Potential in the
Knowledge Driven Economy

when the
wind blows...

Our working lives are shaped by many forces.
What matters is how we react to them.

some people
build walls

We can simply accept – or even resist –
the influences and opportunities that come our way.

others build
windmills

Or we can take control and turn them to our own advantage.

Today the wind of change is blowing
harder... and changing direction more
frequently than before.

This brings even more problems if you
build walls... but even greater rewards
if you know how to build windmills.

This document challenges policy makers,
practitioners and each of us personally to
realise our full potential by developing
The Art of Building Windmills.



Executive summary – build windmills not walls

In a changing, global, knowledge-driven economy, the UK Government attaches great importance to employability and lifelong learning and places strong emphasis on its link with competitiveness and economic regeneration.

At the heart of this approach is a need for individuals to take greater responsibility and control for their progression in learning, work and personal development.

Indeed, for businesses, communities, regions and the nation itself to grow, we need to create informed learners equipped with new self-reliance skills, values and ways of thinking. They will need the ability to identify and interpret the changing needs of their local economy and then contribute to meeting them. At the moment, however, UK plc faces two fundamental challenges:

- There is a major national gap in career management skills. Individuals are not fully equipped with the mindset, skills, tools and techniques to take real responsibility for their own lifelong learning and to realise their full potential
- There is a lack of linkage – and therefore synergy – between the initiatives driven by supply and those driven by demand. This loop needs to be closed if we are to realise fully the sustainable business and economic benefits of lifelong learning and employability

This document challenges current thinking and argues the need for radical new support structures, processes and mindsets in order to create real competitive advantage in the future. These include:

- Significantly enhanced career management provision capable of moving individuals from low value-adding employment into higher impact roles
- Employer friendly, employee development tools based on career management, which link career development with business competitiveness
- Dedicated, demand-driven workforce development brokerage services which link employability and competitiveness on a sub-regional basis
- Greater connections between employability, business and economic growth initiatives
- Integrated and sustainable funding support

As an indication of what can be achieved through such approaches, this document outlines a sustainable career management process that is already being used to underpin lifelong learning and enhance employability.

This process has proved transferable across the lifelong learning spectrum and has benefited more than 10,000 individuals. It has been incorporated into tailored programmes for women, school pupils, underemployed adults, teachers, employers, volunteers, practitioners and policy makers.

This document also presents an example of an associated workforce development brokerage service that enables a flexible pool of employable talent to maximise its impact on small business competitiveness and economic growth.

Also included is hard evidence of the mutual benefits gained. The service has helped 3,000 unemployed individuals into full-time employment, enabled 1,500 small businesses to become more competitive and created 1,100 new jobs.

The challenge to everybody is simply this: how can we harness the latent pool of highly skilled untapped talent for the economic benefit of UK plc?

When the wind blows... do we build walls or windmills?

The need for a new approach to career management

THE PRESSURE ON INDIVIDUALS TO TAKE CONTROL

Employers are experiencing unprecedented change. Companies are responding by adopting new and more flexible ways of working to remain competitive. In future, employees and potential employees will have to develop new employability skills to meet the challenges that change is creating. In today's world of work it is true to say that:

To be employed is to be at risk.
To be employable is to be secure.

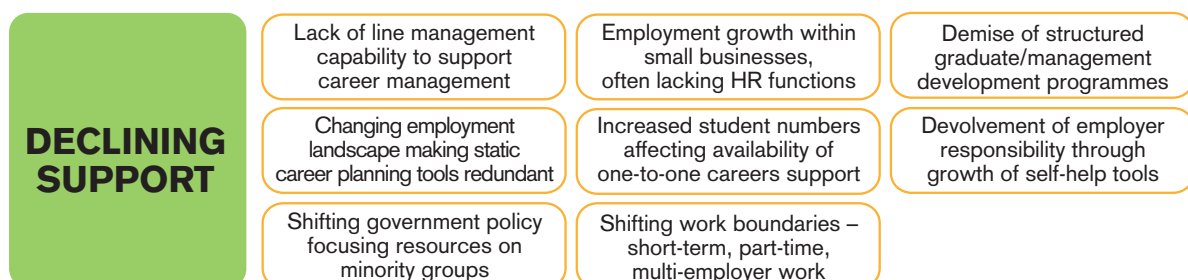
To stay employable individuals will need to:



In the past, individual career management tended to apply a 'quick fix' approach, usually limited to developing a CV to obtain a job. This worked well in a climate of clear career paths, regular progression and job security. It fails to work in today's world of career uncertainty. Now there is a growing need for individuals to take control of their own development, growth and lifelong learning if they are to stay employable.

THE DECLINE IN EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

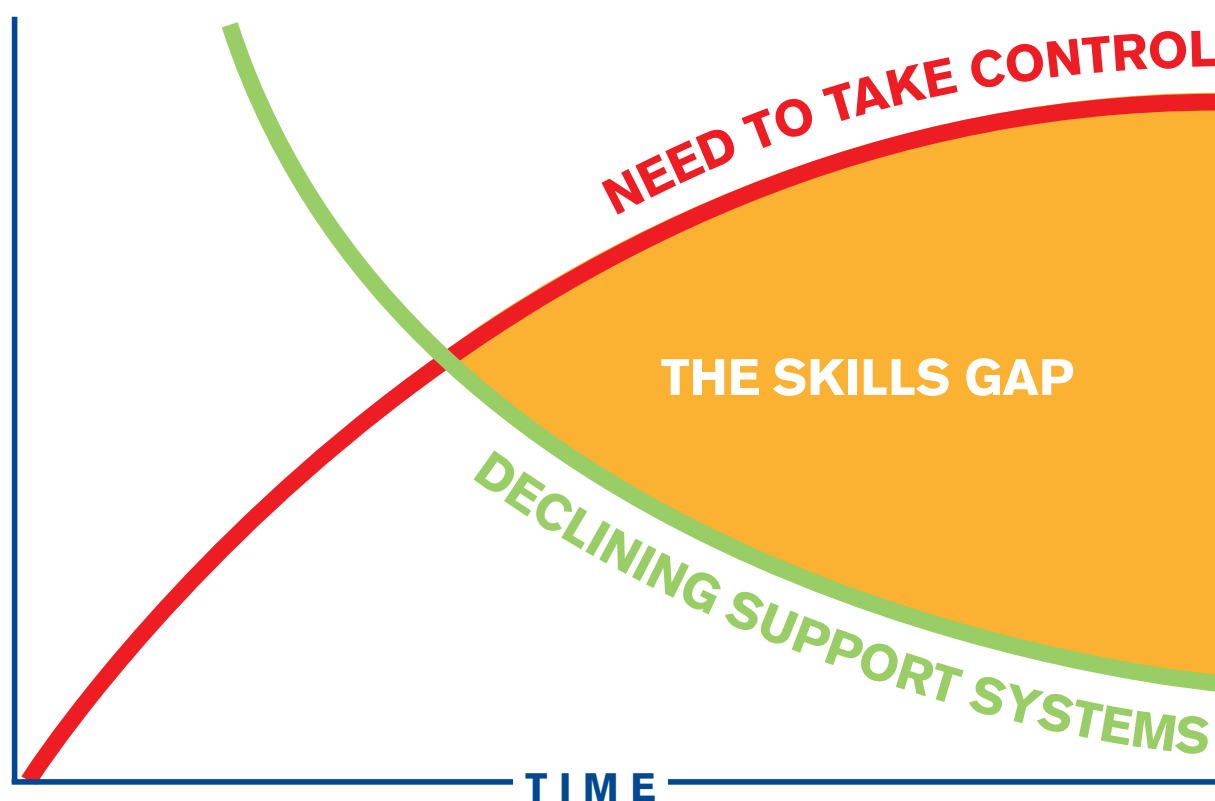
While the need for the individual to take control has increased, there has been a corresponding decline in the support systems and structures available from learning and employment providers. Reasons include:



THE NATIONAL GAP IN CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS

THE SKILLS GAP

Our experience shows that a very large proportion of the population are not self-starters and need high levels of self-reliance skills, supporting structures and confidence if they are to realise their full potential in the knowledge-based economy. However, they are frequently not equipped with the tool kit of career management skills to take control.



A SOLUTION

To address this need, the GIEU has developed The Windmills programme, a unique approach to career management. This process enables individuals to develop the skills they require and take a broader, proactive, self-sustaining approach to managing both their learning and their work.

The Windmills career management process

THE PROCESS – STIMULATING PEOPLE TO THINK

The process at the core of the Windmills career management programme is a complete cycle with five distinct stages. The cycle consists of a continuous questioning process, which is designed to stimulate people to think about their situation.



This process enables individuals to become more self-reliant in their approach.

STAGE 1 (Where am I now?) makes individuals focus on their motivation and capability to take control of their careers

STAGE 2 (Where do I want to be?) helps them create a vision of their future

STAGE 3 (How do I get there?) shows how they can position themselves for success

STAGE 4 (What support do I need?) looks at the support they can get from people (through networks, resources or opportunities)

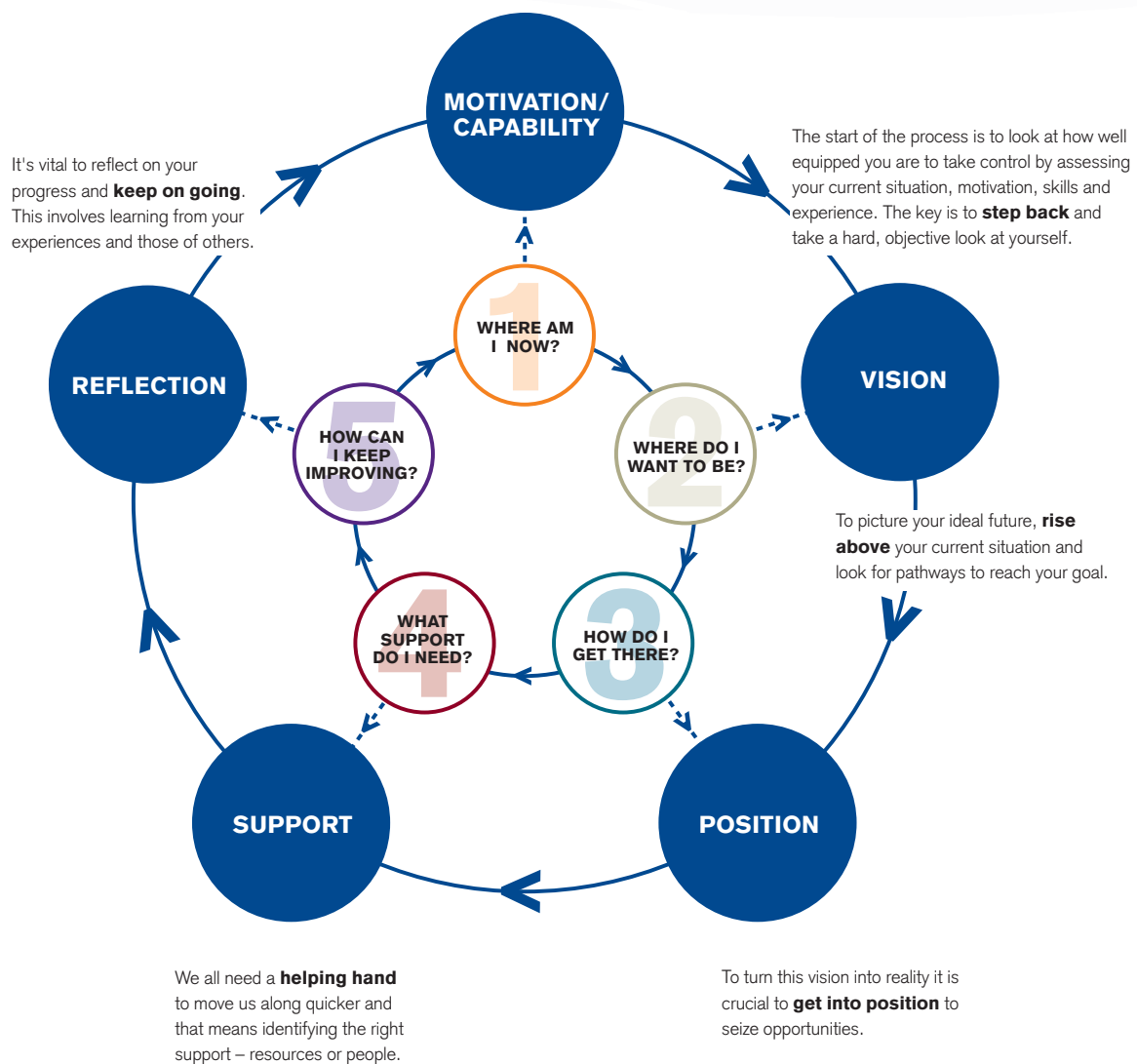
STAGE 5 (How can I keep improving?) explains the value of reflection in continually refining their career management strategy

The programme incorporates a tool kit of creative exercises including card sorts, questionnaires, animal characters, video case studies and open learning support resources. These various tools are designed to motivate individuals and enable them to engage in the Windmills process. The programme is supported by the self-learning book – The Art of Building Windmills.

Starting with Where Am I Now?, each of the five stages in the career management cycle poses a question. The lessons learned from a total of twenty questions are recorded in a Progress File along with a series of Action Prompts. In the final stage of the process, the individual draws these together to produce their own Personal Development Plan.

The whole cycle is clearly shown in the following diagram:

The Process – encouraging people to act



The four key messages underpinning the process are:

- You need to take control of your career in order to realise your full potential
- What you put into the process is what you get out. Managing your career is a time-consuming business
- Your motivation is crucial – you may need an effective coach or mentor to help you sustain the process
- Managing your career is a job for life, not a one-off exercise that sets you up for life

To cascade understanding of the Windmills process locally, regionally and nationally the GIEU has developed a comprehensive resource for trainers. This pack enables key champions to engage in the process themselves and tailor delivery of the programme to their specific client groups.



The Windmills Principle

DERIVING VALUE FROM LIFELONG LEARNING – CASE STUDIES

One over-riding finding from our work is that successful career management is vital to underpin effective lifelong learning. The potential of the Windmills programme to be transferred right across the spectrum of business and lifelong learning has already proved to be vast. The scope is indicated by these 10 case examples.

1. TACKLING SOCIAL EXCLUSION

3500 unemployed people into full-time employment.

"It helped me to examine my skills, my likes and dislikes and to piece together my ideal career. It has placed me, and nobody else, in control of my career. I now have a structure and tools to ensure my career continually evolves and that I stay ahead in the job market".

Juanita Charles (recently employed Merseyside resident)

2. STIMULATING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Embedded career management within 40+ HE and FE curriculum developments from ICT open learning to core modules

"An extremely interactive resource – user-friendly and appropriate at any stage of a graduate's career".

Kim Farr, (Head of Careers, University of Salford)

3. DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

3000 students made more employable

"Outstanding, inspirational and enlightening – succeeding in making every person in the room stop to reflect about their career path. This session is probably the most important one on the course".

Tammy Goldfield, (UMIST Careers Advisor)

4. ENHANCING INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Supported IAG Partnership nationally.

"I have found the learning and workbook to be very useful, especially in developing my own personal skills portfolio, preparing for interviews and, most importantly, helping me decide what to do next in my career. It definitely makes the whole career search/job application process a lot less daunting and is a definite learning curve experience".

Unemployed Graduate, University of Northumbria

5. ENCOURAGING UP-SKILLING

500 underemployed people realise their full potential.

"It gave me confidence to start applying for other jobs and breaking away from the fact that I was secure in an easy job but unsatisfied".

James Clayton (recently gained new Assistant Manager position, Retail Sector)



6. IMPROVING WORK/LIFE BALANCE

An enabling process within DfEE's work/life balance agenda:

"I have achieved confidence in making career decisions, which is a big change for me. I have also learned to see my career in a more positive and holistic way, instead of simply measuring everything by money".

H A O'Keefe (participant, Women's Professional Development Programme)

7. IMPACTING ON BOTTOM LINE

Added indirect benefits to business performance in 70% of cases

"It has freed me up to look more strategically at the business and expand into new markets".

Peter Gaskin, Owner of Cater Needs

8. SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Providing new dimension to business enterprise support

"Being self-employed means I have no mentor or 'mirror' to help me see myself. I now have started to see my strengths and weaknesses and can motivate myself".

Olwen McLaughlin – Entrepreneur

9. ENHANCING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Tailored programmes to meet personal and business needs

"It has broken down a big scary monster into small tactical moves... I am now looking a step or two ahead instead of waiting for things to happen".

Employee, United Utilities

10. ENHANCING BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

Created real competitive advantage

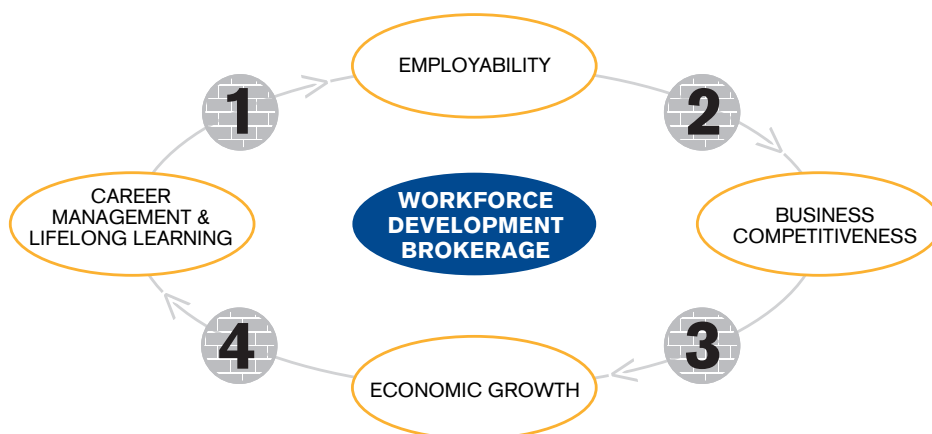
"A company such as BT that is at the forefront of technological change is very aware of the immense business benefits to be gained from having empowered people on the team and the programme delivers just that".

Rob Green, Head of Regional Campaigns, BT

Career Management and Economic Growth

The Windmills Programme offers a viable and successful approach to career management. But this alone will not guarantee economic growth for UK plc. Career management is the vital link between lifelong learning and employability. Employability in turn needs to be linked to business competitiveness and business competitiveness must link in to economic growth. Finally economic growth has to stimulate and inform future lifelong learning.

These four elements – lifelong learning, employability, business competitiveness and economic growth form a complete cycle. Maximised economic growth will only be produced if the necessary links are in place to complete the cycle or 'close the loop'.



Our National Research has shown four major breaks in the cycle:

1. LINKING LIFELONG LEARNING WITH EMPLOYABILITY

Career management is often missing from the process. Without the capability to link their values and skills with changing business needs, individuals will be less able to maximise their employability, unable to fully utilise their talents to add value in the workplace and unable to gain real value from lifelong learning.

2. LINKING EMPLOYABILITY WITH BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

Many initiatives fail to create links between employability and business needs leading to training for training sake and the development of individuals who cannot fully impact on business competitiveness.

3. LINKING BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS WITH ECONOMIC GROWTH

Learning and business intermediaries rarely recognise the need to link the development of individuals with targeted high growth companies, leading to missed job creation opportunities and low impact on economic growth.

4. LINKING ECONOMIC GROWTH WITH LIFELONG LEARNING

Current funding climates do not create the environment for sustainable personal, business and economic growth due to lack of synergy between initiatives. Complementary funding regimes (eg DTI and DfEE) integrated with longer-term contracting and the creation of more effective brokerage services will ensure that the loop is fully closed.

WHAT WILL BE NEEDED IN THE FUTURE ARE DEDICATED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BROKERAGE SERVICES THAT CAN EFFICIENTLY LINK AND INTEGRATE ALL THE ELEMENTS OF THE CYCLE

It is possible here to draw a parallel with a key concept of the Windmills Programme. Just as the Windmills Programme addresses the needs of the individual – ME plc – effective brokerage services could help address the needs of UK plc.

The programme stimulates individuals to turn changes in the world of work to their advantage by building 'windmills' – rather than to resist them by building walls. As a nation too we are effectively building walls if we cling to existing mechanisms and fail to adjust to today's fundamental shifts in corporate structures, working patterns and employer/employee relationships. The new world of work makes a new approach and new brokerage services vitally necessary.

Clearly, it is not just individuals but employers, intermediaries and policy makers who need to take control of the future. UK plc itself needs to build windmills rather than walls.

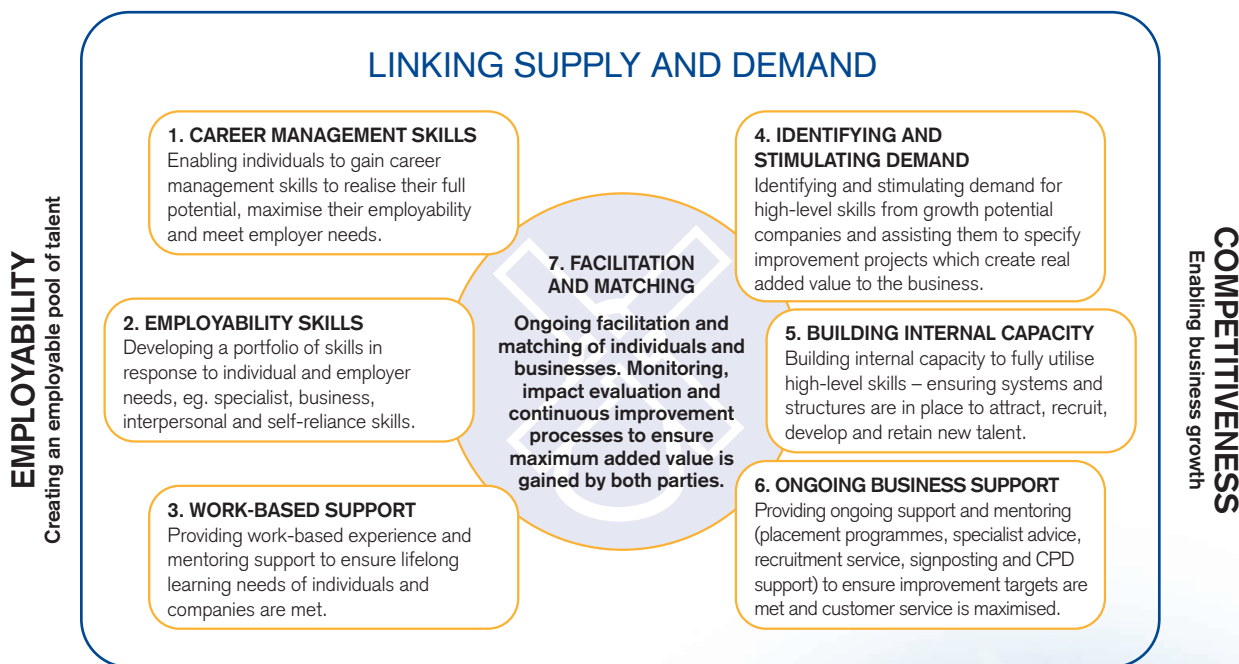
Workforce Development Brokerage Service

A MERSEYSIDE CASE STUDY

There is a crucial need to create dedicated, demand-driven workforce development brokerage services which facilitate linkages between employability, lifelong learning, small business competitiveness and economic growth.

The development of these mainstream activities will be critical to the success of UK plc.

GIEU's experience shows that the use of high-level skills to aid business growth is only truly effective if individuals develop effective career management skills. We have also found that business and economic growth processes can be further enhanced if they are serviced by a sub-regional, demand-driven brokerage service with seven key components.



The success of such a brokerage is dependent on linkage and integration of four key elements which can 'close the loop' and complete the cycle of economic growth:

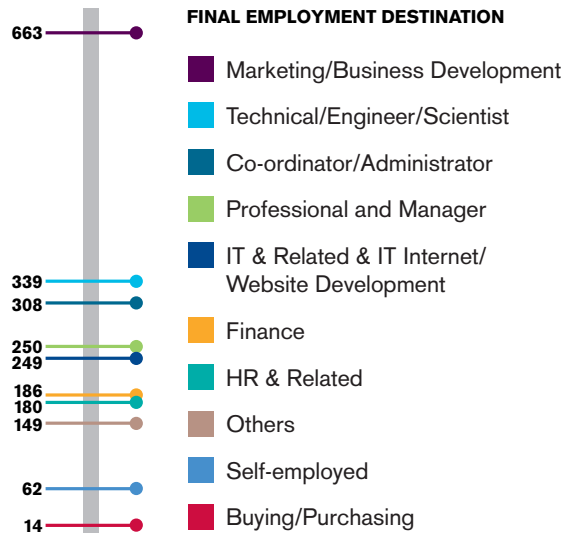
1. Linking lifelong learning with employability. Career management forms the core component of the process to move individuals into higher impact roles
2. Linking employability with business competitiveness. This calls for integrated operational activity dedicated to matching supply and demand
3. Linking business competitiveness with economic growth. This requires responsiveness to local labour market needs, a focus on growth businesses and the potential to impact strongly on economic development by fully utilising higher level skills
4. Linking economic growth with lifelong learning. The need is for a supportive and sustainable funding climate that can harmonise the agendas of employability and competitiveness

Making An Impact – Walls to Windmills

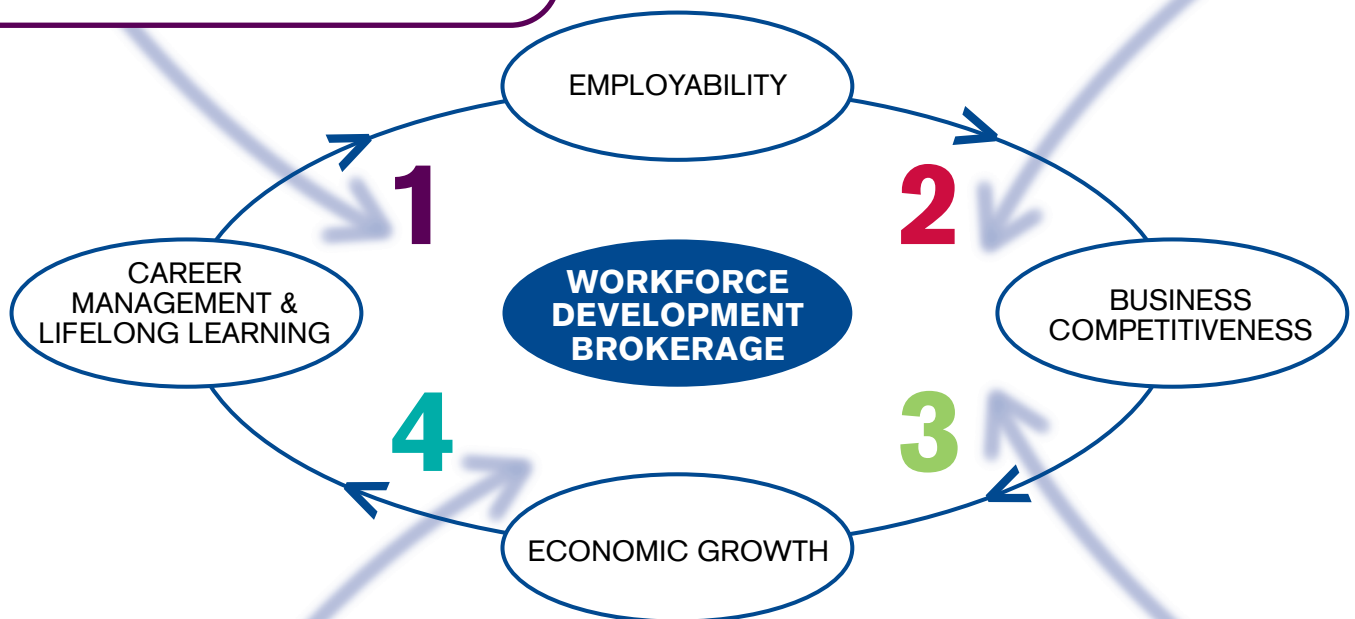
LINKING LIFELONG LEARNING WITH EMPLOYABILITY

(Creating a Pool of Talent)

2400 unemployed/underemployed individuals
gained full-time employment



The GIEU has operated a workforce development brokerage since 1993 and has impacted on all the components of the economic cycle at a sub-regional level. Rigorous evaluations over the past 5 years demonstrate the difference made.

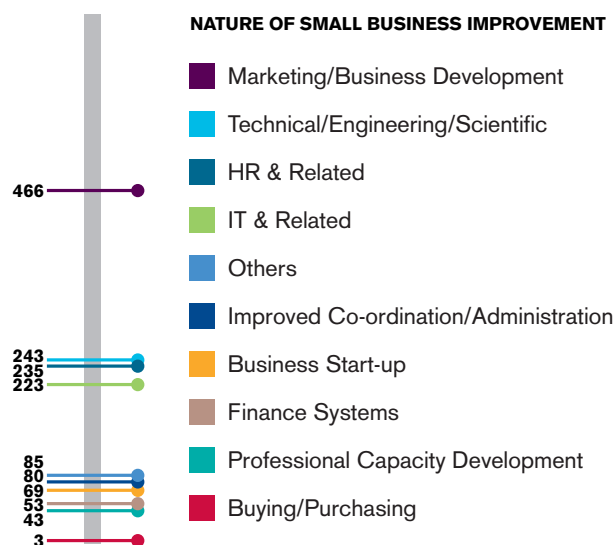


CLOSING THE LOOP – CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR FURTHER SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

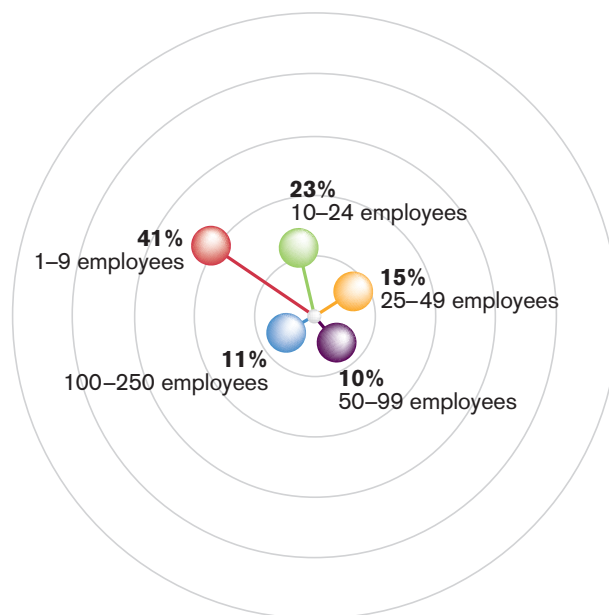
- Policy influencing at local, regional and national levels
- Attracted Inward Investment (£6 million +)
- Increased local retention of highly skilled people (35% – 65%)
- Indirect impact spin offs – 70% of owner managers 'freed up' to look more strategically at their business
- Cultural change in 1000+ Merseyside SMEs
- 2000 additional beneficiaries supported by themed programmes for women, under-employed and company employees
- Regional Capacity Building within 100 community based organisations through train-the-trainers events
- 5000+ students gaining Critical Business Skills in response to business needs

LINKING EMPLOYABILITY WITH BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS (Utilising the Pool of Talent)

Enabled 1500 companies to become more competitive

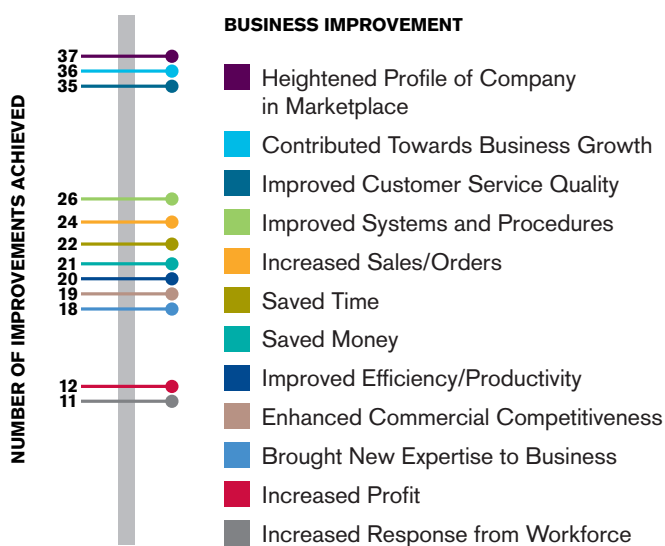


SIZE OF COMPANIES (1500) WITH ENHANCED COMPETITIVENESS

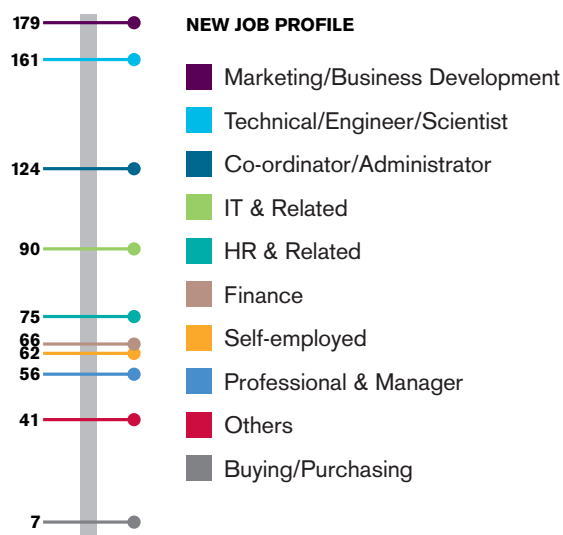


LINKING BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS WITH ECONOMIC GROWTH (Impact of the Pool of Talent)

Business performance impact evaluation on 142 of the companies serviced by the brokerage and demonstrating multiple impacts



PROFILE OF 861 NEW JOBS CREATED BY THE BROKERAGE



Implications – realising potential in the knowledge driven economy

The implications of our work to date are simple – we all have a responsibility to remove walls and build windmills.

PROBLEM

SOLUTION

1. INDIVIDUAL >



You have to take control of your career management now



Commit time and take action to develop The Art of Building Windmills

2. EMPLOYERS >



Our research shows employers can see career management as a potential threat, leading to employees becoming dissatisfied with their role and leaving for another employer. However, real competitive advantage will only be gained by growing individuals in line with business needs



New “employer friendly” career management based employee development tools and processes, coupled with capable and motivated managers, are required to link career management with business growth

3. INTERMEDIARIES >



Organisations that engage only in developing employability will not fully impact on competitiveness (and vice-versa)



An integrated workforce development brokerage service enhancing business growth through the recruitment, retention and utilisation of highly skilled talent is crucial. Such a sub-regional ‘HR workforce development brokerage’ for SMEs, which lack the expertise and support processes, would add significant value to regional economic development

4. POLICY MAKERS >



There is a vast pool of under-employed and under-utilised talent who are not realising their full potential in the workplace. You have to close the loop between employability and competitiveness



DfEE, DTI and Regional Development Agencies must create real synergy between funding streams. SBS, LSC, HEFCE and related mainstream funding must avoid ‘re-inventing the wheel’ and build on best practice brokerage services with a proven track record of linking employability, and lifelong learning with business and economic growth

The next steps

Millions of pounds worth of under-utilised talent are failing to realise their full potential and maximise their value added to UK plc. In parallel, millions of pounds of public and private funds are failing to make the connection between employability and competitiveness.

Key strategic and operational players from DfEE, DTI, HEFCE, RDAs, SBS, LSC, Guidance Council, ESRC Future of Work Programme, Employers and Employee Representatives, Learning Providers, Intermediaries and Expert Practitioners, in the field need to co-ordinate their effort to capture the full potential to be gained by linking career management, employability and business growth.

Core funding providers such as DfEE, DTI, HEFCE and European Union must take the lead in supporting the development of a national centre and sub-regional hubs that link career management, employability, lifelong learning and business growth.

Employers need to recognise the importance of the link between career management, employee development and "added value" contribution to business competitiveness. The development of employer friendly/non threatening career management based, employee development tools and processes, based on The Art of Building Windmills is a key to economic and business growth.

Learning resources available to support the process

- The Art of Building Windmills, Career Tactics for the 21st Century
- The Windmills Programme – resource pack for trainers
- Train the trainers' workshops
- The Windmills Programme – for women, unemployed/underemployed people and professional/workforce development
- Customised learning materials and training best practice



The Graduate into Employment Unit (GIEU)

The GIEU is at the forefront of small business growth and graduate employability in Europe. It has already helped over 3,000 unemployed and underemployed individuals into high impact employment, enabled 1,500 small businesses to become more competitive and created 1,100 new jobs. The Unit is committed to developing innovative processes and services which meet individual and business needs, and informing future policy based on a proven operational track record.

Rigorous evaluation of the Unit's successes has highlighted the importance of equipping individuals with dynamic career management skills and helping businesses and regions to grow through dedicated brokerage services.

Peter Hawkins Associates

Dr. Peter Hawkins, author of *The Art of Building Windmills* is a leading national expert in employability and career management:-

Co-founder and adviser to the GIEU, he holds a PhD in Industrial Management and has an extensive range of clients including the Association of Graduate Recruiters, DfEE, DTI and the European Commission, as well as numerous educational, commercial, voluntary and ministerial groups.

Peter's books include *Skills for Graduates in the 21st Century*, *Boosting Your Career Prospects*, *Mastering Change*, *Beyond Work Experience* and *Get Your Career Into Gear*.

Windmills project team

This report was written by Dr. Peter Hawkins, Helen Wakefield and Alan Appleyard with project support from Susan Shelbourne, Teri Marsh and Nick Gordon.

Project partners

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