



100
YEARS
OF LEADING HR
INTO THE FUTURE

Survey report
May 2013

A large, abstract graphic element consisting of overlapping green shapes with rounded corners. Inside these shapes is a blurred photograph of several people in a professional setting, possibly a meeting or conference. The overall color palette is dominated by various shades of green.

**IMPROVING SOCIAL
MOBILITY; INSIDE THE HR
PROFESSION AND BEYOND**

CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Introduction	3
Executive summary	4
How far does social background affect entry into HR?	4
How far does social background affect progress within HR?	5
What factors support or hinder progress within the HR profession?	5
Does HR have a role to play in promoting social mobility?	6
Conclusions	7
Section 1: Social mobility within the HR profession	8
Family background	9
Educational background	12
Choosing HR as a career	17
The impact of family background and education on career progression	21
Getting ahead in HR	23
Future plans	26
Section 2: HR's role in advancing social mobility	27
HR's role in advancing social mobility	28
Increase awareness of the profession and possible career paths	28
Provide a variety of routes into careers	29
Ensure recruitment, selection and progression opportunities are fair and accessible to people from all backgrounds	29
Develop qualifications, skills and knowledge on the job	30
Mentoring, coaching, support and advice	30
Highlight the benefits of a truly diverse workforce and confront discriminatory practices and views	30
Monitor diversity of workforce	31
Flexible working practices	31
Conclusions	32
Appendix 1: Sample profile	34
Demographic characteristics	34
Employment status	34

FOREWORD

Social mobility is recognised as an issue of national importance that blocks the development of labour market talent. Evidence shows that despite the implementation of public policy provisions to improve it, things are getting worse – not better – across all professions.

Elitism is rife.

Changing this trend is vital to the future success of UK plc. Our competitiveness depends on developing the skills base needed for sustaining global competitiveness.

This report focuses on social mobility in the HR profession, how it can be improved and how HR professionals can influence the progress of social mobility more generally.

We believe HR professionals have a pivotal role to play in improving social mobility through better approaches to talent management and ways of accessing underused skills in the labour market.

Our research – which attracted a high response rate from CIPD members invited to take part – gives important insights into the ways in which social mobility in the HR profession can be improved and what HR professionals think they can and should do to help tackle the wider problems and address the challenges. The commitment of our members to this agenda will help us to shape the future.

Katerina Rudiger

CIPD Skills and Policy Adviser

Dianah Worman OBE

CIPD Public Policy Adviser, Diversity

INTRODUCTION

In 2009, the Government-commissioned Panel on Fair Access to the Professions revealed that the UK professions were increasingly closed off to individuals from non-privileged backgrounds, to the detriment of the professions and society at large. As a consequence it is argued that professions need to cast their net wider when recruiting and rethink current practices if they want to attract talented – and currently overlooked – individuals.¹

The business case to do so is clear: there is a growing need for skilled professionals; there are significant benefits in having a diverse workforce that mirrors the customer base, has access to different skills and aids the understanding of different markets; corporate social responsibility improves employers' reputations and brands, helping them to attract employees and clients.

In August 2012, the CIPD invited UK-based HR professionals to take part in an online survey to help build a picture of social mobility in the HR profession. It set out to examine three key questions:

- 1 How far does social background affect entry into and progress within HR?**
- 2 What factors support or hinder that progress?**
- 3 Does HR have a role to play in promoting social mobility?**

A total of 789 people from the public, private and voluntary sectors responded. Their demographic and employment characteristics are described in Appendix 1.

This report sets out the findings of the survey. It reports on the family and educational background of people in the profession and the impact these have on their career progression. It also explores influences on their choice of career, views on factors that help or hinder progress within HR and career expectations and ambitions. In addition, it considers the views of HR professionals regarding whether they have a role to play in promoting social mobility within their organisations and, if so, how. The executive summary summarises the key findings in respect of the three key questions the survey set out to address.

¹ Spada, March 2012, Social Mobility Toolkit for Professions, sponsored by GMC, LSB, BDA and CII (www.spada.co.uk)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOW FAR DOES SOCIAL BACKGROUND AFFECT ENTRY INTO HR?

Most think about HR when already working, motivated by job satisfaction

Most people (70%) first thought about HR as a career when they were already working. Their reasons for being attracted to the profession were varied. For a third, HR issues simply fell under their job description while working as an administrator, while a fifth chose HR through their own research and just under a fifth because it offered good earning potential or they saw it as a stepping stone into other business areas.

Nearly three-fifths report that their main motivation for work is to have a satisfying job. For nearly one-fifth, a job with good work-life balance is the main motivator (rising to a quarter of those with dependent children) and smaller proportions (one in ten) are motivated mainly by income or helping others. Only a minority report their main motivation is a desire to get to the top.

One-fifth report they chose HR because it offered a different way of acquiring a professional qualification (regardless of educational attainment or age at which they entered HR). The majority report that flexible study opportunities and employer support in terms of funding and time off are important for acquiring these.

Few are influenced in their choice of career by family members

Only a minority of respondents had been influenced to think about a career in HR by a family member or friend. Respondents are more likely to have been influenced by colleagues, although nearly two-thirds report no one in particular had influenced their decision.

Very few consider a career in HR at school/college

Only a very small minority (4%) first consider a career in HR at school or college. Qualitative comments suggest that many HR professionals believe that information about careers in HR is largely absent at this level. Many feel that addressing this deficit at school/college level would improve social mobility in the profession.

Nearly a fifth first thought about an HR career at university, suggesting that more information or guidance on the profession is available to those who continue their education to this level. Nevertheless, qualitative comments again imply mobility would be improved with better links here.

Respondents come from a range of economic backgrounds

The level of household income during childhood is evenly distributed around the average, with half reporting they come

from households with average income, 23% from households with below-average incomes and 22% from households with above-average incomes. This suggests a good level of diversity in the HR profession in terms of economic backgrounds.

Education (and consequently family background) may be a barrier to entry

Three-quarters (75%) of respondents have a degree or postgraduate-level qualification, three times the proportion in the UK workforce as a whole.² They are also more likely to have attended independent schools (14% of those who attended UK schools compared with 7% UK average).

If the sample is representative of the HR profession as a whole, this raises questions as to whether a degree-level qualification is often a requirement for entry to the HR profession. Three-fifths of respondents think it is fairly or very important to have an academic qualification to get into HR. This has considerable implications for social mobility because educational opportunities and achievements are related to family background.

Our findings show strong intergenerational relationships in university attendance as well as links between household income as a child, type of school and university attended, levels of qualifications attained and type of university attended (see section on 'Educational background'). Respondents who spent some of their childhood in a sole/step-parent household are also more likely to be at a financial disadvantage and less likely to achieve higher qualifications. These relationships are significant but fairly weak, probably due to the increased availability of higher education (75% of respondents have degrees, 28% have at least one parent who attended university, 7% have at least one grandparent who attended university). The increase in tuition fees may, however, strengthen the relationships between family background and educational achievements.

Most found out about their current job through open methods

In some professions it is argued that a 'who you know rather than what you know' recruitment culture is a significant barrier to social mobility. One in six respondents found out about their current job through a personal contact in the organisation and just 5% from a personal contact in the HR profession. The question did not, however, differentiate between those who simply 'found out' about the job through a personal contact and those who 'got the job' because of a personal contact (as opposed to merit). There is no evidence from qualitative comments that a 'who you know rather than what you know' recruitment culture prevails in HR. Most found out about their current jobs from open methods including job adverts, websites, employment agencies, Internet searches and speculative applications.

² Labour Force Survey, 2011

The HR profession is predominantly female

Four-fifths of respondents are female, suggesting that the profession is heavily female dominated as half of the UK workforce are men.³ While this gender bias may be unrelated to social mobility, it raises concerns that the profession may be portrayed as a female profession or may not be doing enough to attract men to its roles.

HOW FAR DOES SOCIAL BACKGROUND AFFECT PROGRESS WITHIN HR?

Social background may have a small impact on progress within HR, but experience is key

There are weak links between father's role level and respondents' role level for those aged 31–50 and between household income as a child and current income of respondents for those aged 31–40. The relationships are not observed for younger people, who are more likely to be in the early stages of their careers, or for older people, which suggests that other factors ultimately play a role in their progress. In fact, years of experience is the main determinant of role level, and role level of current salary, which implies that people of all backgrounds are able to progress within the profession.

Those in more senior positions are more highly educated

While experience is more important for progression than educational qualifications, those in more senior positions are more likely to have master's-level qualifications and less likely to have no qualifications than those in more junior roles. The level of qualifications attained is only related to current income for younger people aged 20–30, suggesting that better qualified young people may enter the profession on higher salaries than those with fewer qualifications, but that experience and other factors become more important as careers progress. Moreover, it does not appear that people with higher degree-level qualifications progress more readily. For each role level, people with master's-level qualifications had a similar number of years' experience as those with no degree/professional-level qualifications.

Attending a prestigious university may increase potential salary expectations

While current salary is the strongest predictor of potential salary, those who have attended the more prestigious 'Russell group' universities have higher potential salary expectations than those who have attended less prestigious, post-1992 universities. People from higher socio-economic groups are more highly represented at Russell group universities, so peer norms about salary expectations may be higher.

Parents' education is weakly linked to long-term career aspirations

People with university-educated parents have higher long-term career aspirations, although the relationship is weak. Other family and educational factors do not have a significant impact on long-term career aspirations.

WHAT FACTORS SUPPORT OR HINDER PROGRESS WITHIN THE HR PROFESSION?

Continuing to learn is most important

Ninety-nine per cent of respondents believe continuing to learn about ways of improving good people management and development is important for making progress in HR, with 84% reporting it is very important and a further 15% that it is fairly important.

Nearly half of respondents report they devote some of their personal time to keep up with developments in the profession more than once a month. A further two-fifths do so about once a month and just one in ten (11%) do so less than once a month. The more senior respondents are, the more frequently they devote some of their personal time to keep up with developments. Having childcare/carer responsibilities does not appear to interfere with this.

Professional qualifications are more important for progress than academic ones

While a similar proportion of respondents report professional and academic qualifications are important to get into HR, they are nearly twice as likely to report professional qualifications are very important for making progress. Eighty-eight per cent of respondents believe professional qualifications are important for making progress, with over half reporting they are very important. Two-thirds (68%) also report that academic qualifications are important for making progress, although just a quarter feel they are very important.

Having a personal contact is particularly important for those in lower ranks and boosts confidence

Two-thirds of respondents report it is important to have a personal contact to make progress in HR, with a quarter reporting it is very important and a further two-fifths fairly important.

People in lower role levels are more likely to report it is important to have a personal contact to make progress in HR. Nevertheless, 30% of senior executives and a quarter of managers found out about their current role through personal contacts (mostly in the organisation but also within the profession), suggesting that having contacts may aid career progression through information or opportunities. Those with a personal contact are more confident they will reach their career goals and have higher expectations regarding the potential salary they will achieve.

Only a fifth have someone to help them get ahead

Just over a fifth of respondents report they have someone to help them get ahead in the HR profession. Younger people are more likely to report they have someone to help them get ahead. Most commonly the person is a helpful manager and/or helpful colleagues. Overall, just 6% of the total sample has a mentor and one in ten belong to an HR network.

³ ONS, 2012, Labour Force Survey

Most have confidence that they will achieve their career goals despite anticipated difficulties

The majority of respondents think it would be at least 'fairly hard' to reach their career goals, although most feel at least 'fairly confident' that they will achieve them. Confidence and achievability of career goals are positively related to role level, having a contact to ease progress and how regularly respondents devote their personal time to keep up to speed with developments in the profession. It is not related to educational or family background.

People are more likely to leave the profession if they feel unable to achieve their personal career goals

One in ten of the total sample report that they are planning to move out of HR or only stay in HR for the time being because they are frustrated with their career prospects. A further 6% report they feel they have reached their full potential and plan to change the direction of their career.

Unsurprisingly, those who are not confident that they will reach their personal career goals are more likely to give frustration with career prospects as a reason for leaving than those who are confident in attaining their goals (67% of those who are unconfident or very unconfident compared with 6% who are very confident or confident). Those without a contact to get ahead are five times more likely to give this as a reason than those with a contact.

Part-time workers in particular may struggle to achieve their personal career goals

Part-time respondents are more likely than those working full-time to report they would be leaving the profession in the near future (15% compared with 3% of full-time workers). They are slightly more likely to report they are frustrated with their career prospects. It is possible that part-time workers are less able to take advantage of development opportunities, or find the time they need outside work for continual learning.

Part-timers aspire less to top management positions and more to self-employed status. This group are more likely than full-time workers to have a good work-life balance as their main motivation, live with dependent children, have main responsibility for providing/organising childcare and have regular responsibility for an elderly relative.

DOES HR HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN PROMOTING SOCIAL MOBILITY?

A resounding 'yes'

The vast majority of respondents (92%), regardless of sector or role level, think HR professionals should have a role to play in advancing social mobility by ensuring that people have the chance to get ahead irrespective of their personal background.

Respondents were asked to describe in their own words how HR professionals could help people from less privileged backgrounds progress successful careers. The many detailed and considered comments indicate that many (regardless of role, age, gender or sector) have ethical and values-based views on this issue that go beyond compliance. Respondents' suggestions for promoting social mobility are summarised below.

Increase awareness of the profession and possible career paths through:

- links with schools, colleges, universities, youth groups and career events
- eliminating jargon
- open, transparent and clear communications to promote HR throughout the organisation.

Provide a variety of routes into careers

- less focus on formal qualifications and more on skill requirements and potential
- provide opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, scholarships and work experience – links with schools can help promote awareness of these opportunities and ensure they are widely accessible; financial support is important to enable the less privileged to take up the schemes.

Ensure recruitment, selection and progression opportunities are fair and accessible to people from all backgrounds

- Advertise appointments widely, including targeting less well-represented groups, linking with job centres and open and transparent communications regarding advancement opportunities. Eliminating jargon is important to aid accessibility.
- Ensure that equal opportunities' training extends further than current equalities legislation to take into account demography, education and social class.
- Ensure that qualifying criteria are relevant and allow for flexibility (that is, relevant experience in place of formal qualifications).

Develop qualifications, skills and knowledge on the job

- Provide a range of training programmes for people throughout the organisation, focusing on talent and potential at all levels rather than biasing training budgets towards graduates or those in more senior positions.
- Ensure development opportunities are well communicated and openly accessible.

- Offer guidance on how to access development opportunities.
- Train line managers in performance and development reviews and the implementation of personal development plans.
- Support people to gain formal qualifications on the job through mentoring, advice, organisational funding and flexible study/working arrangements.

Mentoring, coaching, support and advice to:

- increase awareness of opportunities and how to access them
- guide and direct professional development
- build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Highlight the benefits of a truly diverse workforce and confront discriminatory practices and views

- Increase awareness of the benefits and value of a diverse workforce.
- Champion diversity and fair policies and confront and challenge 'elitist' practices and views.
- Engage business leaders in promoting diversity and eliminating biases.

Monitor the diversity of workforce:

- to help identify biases that need to be addressed.

Promote real flexible working practices:

- to enable and promote widespread participation in the workforce.

CONCLUSIONS

Our findings confirm those of other research. Advantage begets advantage and because people tend to partner those from similar-status families, these advantages may be compounded. Our findings show that people from more educated, wealthier and higher employment status families are at an educational advantage in that they are more likely to attend independent schools, more prestigious universities and achieve higher levels of qualifications and classes of degree. Respondents from sole/step-parent households are more likely to live in poorer households as a child and are less likely to achieve higher qualifications than their counterparts who spent all their childhood with both parents.

While socio-economic background clearly plays a part, it must be remembered, however, that in many cases the relationships are small, highlighting the interplay of many variables on individuals' life chances.

Our research also suggests that the influence of socio-economic factors on HR careers may be more limited than in some other professions, such as medicine and law.⁴ Our findings suggest that HR professionals come from a wide spectrum of economic backgrounds, not just the more affluent. Most enter

HR when they are already working, motivated by a desire for a satisfying job and, for some, the desire for a professional qualification, rather than who they know. Their career choices and progression are influenced more by colleagues than family members, more by experience and continual learning than family background.

Nevertheless, our sample are very highly educated compared with the UK working population as a whole and many feel that formal qualifications are important for entry and progression in HR. Education may therefore be a barrier to the profession, one that the rising costs of a university education may exacerbate.

Respondents' comments highlight several ways in which this might be addressed, including enhancing awareness of the profession and possible career paths through links with educational institutes and avoiding jargon, and creating and promoting alternative, paid on-the-job training and development opportunities, including internships, work experience and apprenticeships. Their suggestions mirror and address some of the key findings and recommendations presented in the CIPD's Submission to the Education Select Committee, *Careers Guidance for Young People*, which highlights the importance of early careers advice for young people and the current lack of quality provision.

The research also highlights the benefits of having a contact to progress within the profession, particularly for those in more junior roles. Qualitative comments also suggest that mentoring and coaching can play a useful role in boosting confidence and guiding development for the less privileged.

The HR community represented in this research clearly feel they have a role to play in helping promote social mobility from an ethical as well as compliance perspective. Their challenge is to mobilise support from business leaders and others in their organisation to increase their social diversity and realise the benefits.

These findings chime with the principle behind the CIPD's Learning to Work initiative, which is an action-focused programme designed to encourage more employers to invest in young people. It has two key objectives:

- to help prepare young people for the workplace by increasing the proportion of HR professionals/employers that engage with them while they are at school and college to improve their employability
- to make the labour market itself more youth-friendly by encouraging more HR professionals/employers to offer a wider range of access routes into organisations and adapting recruitment methods.

Go to page x for further details

⁴ Lindsey Macmillan, CMPO, Social Mobility and the Professions, <http://www.bris.ac.uk/cmppo/publications/other/socialmobility.pdf>

Section 1:

SOCIAL MOBILITY WITHIN THE HR PROFESSION

FAMILY BACKGROUND

This section examines the family background of respondents. It explores whether they spent any of their childhood in sole or step-parent households, the educational and employment background of their parents and grandparents and their household income as a child.

SOLE/STEP-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

Children in single-parent families have a much higher risk of living in poverty than children in couple families.⁵ One-fifth (21%) of respondents spent some of their childhood in a sole or step-parent household. Nearly three-quarters of these lived in a mother-only household (72%). A minority lived in a father-only household (21%), while two-fifths (40%) lived in a step-parent household. There is considerable variation in how many years (up to age 18) these respondents had spent in a sole or step-parent household (see Table 1).

EDUCATIONAL HERITAGE

A quarter (28%) of respondents have parents who attended university, but only a minority report their grandparents attended university (Table 2). One in ten report that both parents attended university. A further 12% report just their father attended and 6% that just their mother attended. The data suggests that likes attract. Nearly half (47%) of those with a university-educated father have university-educated mothers compared with 8% of those whose fathers did not attend university.ⁱ

There is a strong relationship between intergenerational university attendance. Where one or both paternal grandparents attended university, the father also attended for 83% of respondents. Only 16% of those with no university-educated paternal grandparents have a father who attended university.ⁱⁱ Sixty-three per cent of those with university-educated maternal grandparents have university-educated mothers. Twelve per cent of those with no university-educated maternal grandparents have university-educated mothers.ⁱⁱⁱ

University attendance has increased dramatically across the generations. Seventy-five per cent of respondents have a university or postgraduate degree. Nevertheless, as discussed below in 'Qualification level', the influence of educational heritage remains significant. Respondents whose own parents attended university are also more likely to have attended and to have achieved a postgraduate degree.

WORKING PARENTS

The vast majority of respondents (97%) have fathers who mostly worked full-time during their childhood. Nearly a third (31%) have mothers who mostly worked full-time, while a similar proportion (30%) have mothers who mostly didn't work and nearly two-fifths (38%) have mothers who mostly worked part-time. Mothers in sole or step-parent households were more likely to work (42% mostly full-time, 39% mostly part-time compared with 29% and 38% respectively of those in dual-parent households).

Table 1: How many years did you spend in the following types of household (% of respondents)

	1–2 years	3–5 years	6–10 years	11–18 years
Mother-only household	15	31	31	22
Father-only household	17	40	26	18
Step-parent household	12	34	25	29

Base: Mother-only: 118; Father-only: 35; Step-parent: 65

Table 2: Did your parents or grandparents go to university? (%)

	Yes	No	Don't know
Father	22	77	1
Mother	17	83	0
Paternal grandfather	5	88	8
Maternal grandfather	5	88	7
Paternal grandmother	2	92	6
Maternal grandmother	4	90	6

Base: 787

⁵Households Below Average Income, An analysis of the income distribution 1994/95 – 2009/10, Table 4.14ts. Department for Work and Pensions, 2011

In dual-parent households, mothers who attended university were most likely to work full-time and least likely not to work at all (Table 3). Where the father but not mother attended university, the mother was most likely to mainly not work.

EMPLOYMENT ROLES OF PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS

The employment roles of respondents' parents and grandparents are shown in Table 4. The employment roles of respondents' parents are, on average, higher than those of their grandparents, reflecting changing skill and labour market demands. Changes in women's roles in the workplace are also reflected, with just 8% of mothers ranked as unemployed compared with a quarter of grandmothers, although mothers tended to be employed at lower levels than fathers. Respondents are also less likely to know their grandmothers' work role than their grandfathers'.

Relationships between the role levels of grandparents and parents confirm other research findings that people tend to partner people of a similar status to themselves and echo the findings above regarding the university education of parents.^{iv} The higher the role level of the father, the higher that of the mother and the same goes for the maternal and paternal grandparents. There is also a moderately strong relationship between the role level of the paternal and maternal grandfather and paternal and maternal grandmothers, confirming that people marry from similar status families. Relationships are, however, stronger between the father and his parents and the mother and her parents than between in-laws.

Gender also plays a role. There is a stronger relationship between the father and paternal grandfather than between the father and paternal grandmother.^v The role level of mothers is less strongly related to both their fathers and mothers, reflecting traditional differences in male and female roles in the workplace and family.

Table 3: Working mothers by university attendance (% of respondents who lived with both parents)

Attended university	Did your mother work during your childhood?		
	Mostly full-time	Mostly part-time	Mostly didn't work
Neither parents attended	25	43	33
Just father attended	29	28	43
Just mother attended	52	35	13
Both parents attended	42	30	28

Base: 607

Table 4: Highest role level of parents and grandparents* (%)

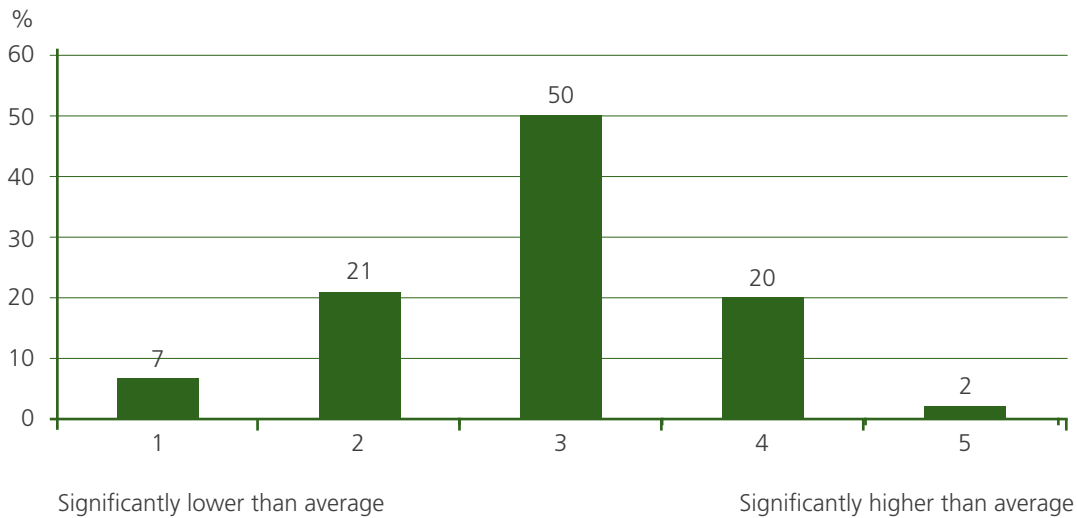
	Father (base=774)	Mother (base=741)	Paternal grandfather (base=591)	Maternal grandfather (base=602)	Paternal grandmother (base=496)	Maternal grandmother (base=517)
High managerial, administrative or professional	30	7	13	13	2	2
Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	24	18	9	9	3	3
Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional	10	38	10	10	9	12
Skilled manual workers	25	6	32	30	9	8
Semi and unskilled manual workers	10	14	16	17	12	13
Casual or lowest grade workers	1	10	3	3	11	13
Unemployed	1	8	1	3	26	25
Don't know	1	1	17	15	28	25

*Where more than one type of role was applicable the most senior role level is shown

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DURING CHILDHOOD

The level of household income during childhood is evenly distributed around the average (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Household income during childhood (% of respondents)



Base: 783

The strongest predictor of household income during childhood is the employment role level of the father. The employment role level of the mother is also related as is the type of household (sole/step/dual parents) and whether the father is university-educated.^{vi}

Those with university-educated fathers are more likely to have lived in an above-average income household. Half of those whose fathers (or both parents) attended university lived in above-average income households compared with 27% of those whose mothers only attended and 13% of those who had no parent attend university.^{vii}

Respondents from sole/step-parent households are more likely to have lived in lower-than-average income households compared with those who lived with both parents. Two-fifths of those from sole/step-parent households had lower-than-average household incomes as a child compared with a quarter of those from households with both parents.^{viii}

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

This section examines the educational background of respondents. It explores the types of school and universities they attended, the qualifications they achieved and the influence of their family background on their education and achievements.

Overall, three-fifths of the sample went to pre-school/nursery; however, pre-school attendance is strongly related to age.^{ix} Respondents under 40 are far more likely to have attended pre-school than those of previous generations (Table 5).

The employment role level of mothers, fathers and whether the respondent had lived in a sole/step-parent household are also positively but weakly related to pre-school attendance.^x This reflects the role of pre-school/nursery attendance in providing childcare. Household income or parents' attendance at university have no significant impact once the employment level of the parents and type of family unit are considered (regardless of age).

Most respondents (79%) attended a mainstream state school. Thirteen per cent attended an independent or fee-paying school and 8% attended a school outside the UK. The type of school attended does not vary significantly by age or the sector respondents work in.

The main predictors of the type of school attended are household income during childhood and the father's employment role level. Respondents who attended independent fee-paying schools are more likely to come from households

with higher-than-average incomes than those who attended mainstream or overseas schools.^{xi} Thirty per cent of respondents from higher-than-average income households went to independent schools compared with 9% of those from average-income households and 6% of those from lower-than-average income households. In addition, those with fathers in senior positions are more likely to have attended an independent/fee-paying school.^{xii} Once these factors are taken into account, the role level of the mother, pre-school attendance and type of family unit have no significant impact.

QUALIFICATION LEVEL

Nearly a third of respondents have an NVQ-level qualification. Thirteen per cent have achieved level 4–5 NVQ/SVQ, 16% have achieved higher national diploma/Level 3 NVQ/SVQ and 8% national certificate/diploma/Level 2 NVQ/SVQ.

Three-quarters (75%) of respondents have a degree or postgraduate-level qualification and two-fifths have a professional-level qualification. Most have more than one qualification. Just one in ten (11%) have only a degree-level qualification and a similar proportion (12%) have only a professional-level qualification. Seven per cent have a degree and a professional-level qualification, 8% have a postgraduate diploma and a professional qualification and 10% have a master's degree and a professional qualification.

Only 5% of respondents have no NVQ, degree or professional qualifications.

Table 5: Did you go to pre-school/nursery? (% of respondents)

	All	Age				
		20–30	31–40	41–50	51–60	61+
Yes	60	86	81	52	29	25
No	40	14	19	48	72	75

Base: 777

Table 6: Which of these qualifications do you have? (% of respondents)

Degree	57
Postgraduate diploma	39
Master's degree	26
Doctorate	1
MBA	4
Professional level	39
None of the above	15

Base: 788

Respondents are more likely to have a degree or postgraduate diploma or degree qualification if their parents attended university (Table 7).^{xiii} Only 7% of those who have two parents who attended university did not achieve a degree or postgraduate qualification compared with nearly a third of those who had no parent attend and a fifth of those who had one parent attend. Having parents who attended university does not, however, make a significant difference to whether or not respondents have a professional-level qualification.

Respondents who had lived in a sole-parent or step-parent household are significantly less likely to have a degree or postgraduate qualification, less likely to have a master's,

MBA or doctorate-level qualification and less likely to have a professional qualification than those who hadn't (Table 8).^{xiv} The more years they had spent in one of these households, the less likely they are to have these qualifications (Table 9).^{xv} Living in a single or step-parent household does not, however, have a significant impact on the class of degree achieved.

Having a working mother has no impact on respondents' attainment of university degrees or the class of degree attained (both for those in dual and sole/step-parent households).

The type of school attended is also related to qualification achievement. Respondents who attended a school outside the

Table 7: Qualifications attained, by parents' university attendance (% of respondents)

	University degree				Professional-level qualification
	No degree	Degree	Postgraduate diploma	Master's, MBA, doctorate	
No parent attended university	31	18	26	25	41
One parent attended university	20	14	27	39	37
Both parents attended university	7	23	27	43	28

Base: 786

Table 8: Degree and professional qualifications, by type of household (% of respondents)

Was any of your childhood (up to age 18) spent in a sole or step-parent household?	Highest degree-level qualification				Professional-level qualification
	No degree/professional-level qualification	Degree	Postgraduate diploma	Master's, MBA, doctorate	
Yes	33	21	26	20	31
No	25	17	27	31	41

Base: 787

Table 9: Degree and professional qualifications, by number of years in sole/step-parent household (% of respondents)

No. of years in sole/step-parent household	Highest degree-level qualification				Professional-level qualification
	No degree/professional-level qualification	Degree	Postgraduate diploma	Master's, MBA, doctorate	
0 years	25	17	27	31	41
1–2 years	17	25	33	25	33
3–5 years	26	21	32	21	29
6–10 years	32	14	25	29	38
11–18 years	41	25	20	12	25

Base: 785

UK are more highly qualified than those from independent or state schools (Table 10). Over half have a master's degree, MBA or doctorate compared with a third of those from independent schools and a quarter of those from state schools. Twice as many respondents from mainstream state schools do not have a degree or professional-level qualification compared with those from independent or fee-paying schools.

The employment role levels of the parents and household income does not have an impact on the attainment of a degree once the university education of the parents, type of school attended and type of household lived in (sole/step/dual) is taken into account. Household income is also not related to the achievement of a professional qualification or the grade of degree awarded.

Respondents who attended schools outside the UK are more likely to have achieved a first-class degree and less likely to have achieved a lower-second degree compared with those from independent or state schools (Table 11). Whether respondents attended mainstream state schools or independent schools makes little difference to the class of degree achieved. Family education and income background also makes no significant difference to the class of degree awarded.

Table 10: Degree and professional qualifications, by type of school attended (% of respondents)

	Highest degree-level qualification				Professional-level qualification
	No degree/professional-level qualification	Degree	Postgraduate diploma	Master's, MBA, doctorate	
Mainstream state school	17	17	27	25	14
Independent or fee-paying school	8	18	31	37	6
School outside the UK	5	21	15	53	6

Base: 786

Table 11: Highest class of degree awarded (% of respondents)

	Type of school		
	Mainstream state school	Independent or fee-paying school	School outside the UK
First	8	5	26
Upper second	42	49	46
Lower second	24	26	9
Third	2	5	0
Other	30	21	33

Base: 443

UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE

Half of respondents attended post-1992 universities. A quarter attended 'elite' Russell group universities and a further fifth other 'older' (pre-1992) universities. A small minority achieved degrees from overseas universities, FE colleges or the Open University (Table 12).

The rankings and perceived quality of universities varies over time, by subject area and criteria considered. Traditionally, however, the larger, well-funded Russell group universities have been regarded with more prestige than other 'older' universities, which in turn are considered to have more 'prestige' than post-1992 universities (including ex-polytechnics). These three groupings are therefore used as a crude measure to explore whether family and educational background has an impact on the type of university attended and whether the type of university attended has an impact on career expectations and progression.

People who attended independent schools are more likely to go to Russell group universities (54% compared with 20% of

those who attended mainstream schools).^{xvii} Whether or not respondents' parents attended university and their household income during their childhood also had an impact.^{xviii} More than two-fifths (42%) of those who had both parents attend university attended Russell group universities compared with about a third who had one parent attend (mother only: 31%, father only: 35%) and a fifth (19%) of those who did not have any parent attend university.^{xx} The higher the household income of respondents during their childhood, the more likely they are to have attended a more prestigious university.^{xx}

A COMPARISON OF THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS TO THE SOCIAL MOBILITY SURVEY AND THAT OF ALL CIPD MEMBERS

The respondents to the *Social Mobility* survey are broadly similar in terms of educational level to CIPD members in so far as comparisons are possible.*

The proportion of graduates in the UK working population has risen rapidly in recent years. Latest ONS figures for the last quarter of 2011 suggest 40% of employed people aged 21–64 are graduates. This compares with three-quarters of our sample (over four-fifths of CIPD members) aged 20+.

Assuming CIPD members are representative of HR professionals as a whole, this indicates that HR professionals are considerably more highly qualified than the UK working population. It therefore appears likely that education is a barrier to entry to the profession. This has considerable implications for social mobility because education is related to family background. Improving access to education for disadvantaged groups and providing a variety of routes into careers as discussed in the report will be important to enhance accessibility of HR careers.

Table 12: Category of university attended (% of respondents)

G5 'super elite' (Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, LSE, UCL)	5
Other Russell group university	19
Other 'older' university	19
Post-1992 universities	50
FE colleges offering degree courses	1
Overseas university	4
Open University only	2

Base: 550

Table 13: Education level comparison

Education level	CIPD membership		Social mobility respondents	
	Number	%	%	Number
No formal qualifications*	394	1	11*	84
Secondary education*	3,718	6		
Level 2 Vocational qualifications	1,229	2	4	31
Level 3 Vocational qualifications	3,798	6	8	63
Level 4 Vocational qualifications	4,123	6	4	34
Degree	14,305	22	18	140
Postgraduate qualification	21,643	33	26	208
Master's degree	14,284	22	24	192
Doctorate	566	1	1	6
MBA	1,716	3	4	30
Postgraduate degree/diploma	0	0		788
Total (excluding unknown)	65,776	100		
Unknown	59,641	48		
Total	125,417			

* The survey did not ask whether respondents had no formal qualifications or secondary education only.

The 11% of the survey respondents put in this category include 5.3% who had none of the other qualifications listed here and 5.3% who had a professional-level qualification only. The CIPD membership doesn't have a category for professional-level qualification only. It is possible that the additional proportions in the postgraduate qualification category include people who have a professional-level qualification only.

In the *Social Mobility* survey several respondents ticked more than one qualification. In Table 13, the 'highest' level qualification is included because the CIPD membership data appears to be calculated in that way (that is, just one qualification type per member).

Table 14: Age comparison (%)

	UK working population	Social Mobility respondents	CIPD members
Aged 16–24	12	3	2
Aged 25–34	23	29	25
Aged 35–49	36	40	45
Aged 50–64	25	28	24
Age 65+	3	1	4

Source: *Labour Force Survey* 2011

Proportion of graduates in UK working population aged 21–64 last quarter of 2011: 40% (Source ONS)

CHOOSING HR AS A CAREER

This section examines what reasons and influences guided people to choose HR as a career, including access to gaining a professional qualification. It examines their main work motivation and how they found out about their current job.

The majority (70%) first thought about HR as a career when they were already working, while nearly a fifth first thought about it at university. Only a minority first thought about it at school/college (4%) or when they were job-hunting (8%).^{xxi}

Those who worked in a different field prior to HR come from a variety of roles and industries. Nearly a fifth worked in administrative or secretarial roles while many others worked in managerial roles. Others have customer services, operations, finance, marketing, media, IT, engineering, recruitment, social work, nursing, retail, insurance, catering and hospitality, civil service, education, or armed forces backgrounds, to name just a selection.

Only a minority of respondents had been influenced to think about a career in HR by a parent or grandparent, family or personal friend or teacher (Table 15). Colleagues and particularly senior colleagues are most commonly reported to be influential or very influential in guiding respondents' choices. A minority of respondents report that other people

had been influential including spouses/partners, other family members (aunts, cousins, sister), university tutors/mentors, HR team, their employer/CEO/MD, trade union and mentor. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents report no one in particular influenced their decision.

Gender plays a role in influencing decisions. Men are more likely to report they were influenced by a male family or personal friend than a female one and females are more likely to report they were influenced by a female friend than a male one.^{xxii} Women are more likely to report they were influenced by female than male colleagues (men by male and female colleagues alike) while men are more likely to report that they were influenced by male senior colleagues (women by male and female senior colleagues alike).^{xxiii}

The main other reason that contributed to respondents' choice of career is having HR issues fall under their job description while working as an administrator/personal assistant (Table 16). A fifth report it was through their own research on the Internet and 17% that it offered good earning potential or they saw it as a stepping stone into other business areas. Just 12% did work experience/worked as an intern in an HR department and less than one in ten chose HR through careers advice at university.

Table 15: Who made you think about a career in HR? (% of respondents)

	Very influential	Influential	Marginally influential	Not at all influential
Parent/grandparent	3	6	6	85
Family friend	1	3	4	92
Personal friend	3	6	6	85
Teacher	1	4	4	91
Colleague	7	14	7	72
Senior colleague	14	13	6	67

Base: 774

Table 16: What other reasons/influences contributed to your choice of HR as a career? (% of respondents)

I was working as an administrator/personal assistant and some HR issues fell under my job description	33
My own research on the Internet	22
It offered good earning potential	17
I saw it as a stepping stone into other business areas	17
I did work experience/worked as an intern in an HR department	12
Careers advice at university	9
It was easy to get into	7
Headhunted	6
Careers advice at school	2
Other	33

Base: 735

Most people who gave 'other' responses report they chose HR because they were interested in it, liked working with people, their skills were suited to the work and they thought they would enjoy it. A few people gained interest in the profession as a consequence of seeing poor practices (including poorly managed redundancies, bullying, dismissals) and felt they could do a better job ('I wanted to lead with a proactive rather than a reactive approach'). Others also report that they chose HR because they wanted to make a contribution.

A smaller proportion of respondents moved into HR because they were fed up with their existing job, wanted a career change, or saw it as a development or promotion opportunity. For some it arose out of other roles or they were approached within their company to take on the role.

People in administrative/assistant roles are more likely to report HR issues fell under their job description than directors, most of whom

give 'other' reasons for contributing influences to their choice of HR as a career (Table 17). People in less senior roles are also more likely to attribute research on the Internet, good earning potential and a view that HR is a stepping stone into other business areas as contributing influences than those in more senior roles.

ACHIEVING A PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

One-fifth (21%) report they chose HR because it offered a different way of acquiring a professional qualification, regardless of gender, educational attainment, sector, role level or age at which they entered HR.

Flexible study opportunities, employer support in terms of funding and time off are clearly important for acquiring professional qualifications (Table 18). Just one in seven report that flexible working opportunities and employer support in

Table 17: What other reasons/influences contributed to your choice of HR as a career? (% of respondents by role level)

	Director	Senior executive/ group role	Manager	Senior officer	Officer	Administrator/ assistant	Independent consultant
	n=26	n=44	n=235	n=89	n=125	n=71	n=82
I was working as an administrator/personal assistant and some HR issues fell under my job description	12	34	38	31	34	48	7
My own research on the Internet	12	9	22	19	34	42	6
It offered good earning potential	8	9	16	18	22	34	9
I saw it as a stepping stone into other business areas	8	16	15	19	13	25	18
I did work experience/ worked as an intern in an HR department	12	16	11	15	11	11	15
Careers advice at university	4	7	9	8	6	11	13
Headhunted	8	9	9	1	3	3	10
It was easy to get into	4	7	5	10	8	7	6
Careers advice at school	4	0	1	2	4	3	0
Other	54	39	30	31	31	15	48

Table 18: How important have the following been to you in acquiring a professional qualification? (% of respondents with a professional qualification)

	Not at all important 0	1	2	3	4	Extremely important 5
Flexible study opportunities	14	2	4	12	20	47
Employer support in terms of funding	14	3	3	14	15	50
Employer support in terms of time off	19	3	5	15	16	42

Base: 291

terms of funding are not at all important, while half report these are extremely important to them. Less than a fifth report that employer support in terms of time off is not at all important while more than two-fifths report it is extremely important.

Having children at home or elder care responsibilities has no impact on the importance of flexible study opportunities, perhaps because these responsibilities did not always exist when the qualification was being acquired or because flexible study is valued by many regardless of whether they have care responsibilities.

MAIN WORK MOTIVATION

The most common main motivation for work is to have a satisfying job, reported by nearly three-fifths of respondents (57%). For one-fifth (18%) a job with good work–life balance is the main motivator. Smaller proportions are motivated mainly by helping others or income and just 3% by ambition to get to the top.

Neither family nor educational background, gender or role level have a significant impact on respondents’ main motivations regarding work. Motivations do, however, differ according to age. Older respondents are more likely to report they want a satisfying job while those under 30 are most likely to report they want a good income (Table 19).

Respondents with dependent children are more likely to report their main motivation is a good work–life balance (25% compared with 14% of those without children) and less likely to report income is their main motivator (7% compared with 12% of those without children).^{xiv} This is particularly the case for those who have responsibility for organising/providing childcare (28% of those who have main responsibility report work–life balance is main motivator compared with 23% of those who share it and 18% who report they do not have main responsibility).

Having a regular caring responsibility for an adult does not, however, have a significant impact on motivations (although the sample size here is small).

FINDING OUT ABOUT CURRENT JOB

The most common way respondents found out about their current job was from job advertisements/employer websites, employment agencies and personal contacts in the organisation. There are, however, significant differences across role levels. A large proportion (41%) of our small sample of directors is self-employed or works in a family business. People in senior executive/group roles and managers are more likely than those in lower-level roles to report they found out about their current job from a personal contact who worked in the profession. Those in senior executive/group roles are also more likely than others to report they had been headhunted. People in more junior roles (senior officers, officers and administrators) are more likely to have found out about their current job through job advertisements/employer websites, employment agencies and through already working for the company.

Table 19: What is your main personal motivation regarding work? (% of respondents)

	Age					
	All	20–30	31–40	41–50	51–60	61+
I want to have a satisfying job	57	48	53	61	64	73
I want to have a good income	10	22	7	8	7	0
I want a job where I can help others	12	11	13	9	13	13
I want a job where I can have a good work–life balance	18	15	22	21	13	13
I want a job where I can get to the top	3	5	4	1	3	3

Base: 778

Table 20: How did you find out about your current job? (% of respondents)

	All	Director	Senior executive/ group role	Manager	Senior officer	Officer	Administrator/ assistant	Independent consultant
	n=726	n=22	n=44	n=242	n=96	n=125	n=74	n=70
From a job advertisement/ employer website	29	14	25	28	36	42	26	1
Through an employment agency	21	9	23	28	19	18	27	7
From a personal contact who worked in the organisation	17	18	25	20	10	15	15	10
Internal move/ promotion	8	5		7	13	14	12	1
Self-employed/ started own business/family business	6	41		1		1		46
From a personal contact who works in the HR profession	5		5	6	7	2	3	6
From an Internet search	4		2	3	8	4	8	
Through a speculative application	3	5		2	2	1	3	3
Headhunted	2	5	14	2				1
From an HR network	1	5	5				1	7
Through a careers event	1			1	2	2		
Other	4		2	2	2	2	5	17

THE IMPACT OF FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION ON CAREER PROGRESSION

Do people from more privileged family backgrounds rise faster through the HR ranks? Here we examine the relationships between family background, educational experiences and achievements and role level, current and potential income and long-term career aspirations.

To explore the extent of social mobility in the HR profession we examined the impact of family background (parents' employment roles, parents' university attendance, household income as a child, sole/step or dual-parent household), educational experiences and achievements and years of experience on proxy measures for progress (role level, current and potential salary and long-term career aspirations). Because role level and current income are strongly influenced by age or stage in career, the relationships were examined for different age groups.

Fathers' role level has a small but significant relationship with respondents' role level for people aged 31–50.^{xxv} It is not related for younger respondents, whose careers are likely to just be getting started, or for older respondents, perhaps because the impact of their own skills and experience

becomes more important as they progress. Indeed, regression analyses show the strongest predictor of role level is years of experience in HR.^{xxvi} Family background, including household income as a child and the education levels of parents, does not have a significant impact once this is taken into account.

A smaller relationship exists between role level and the attainment of degree-level qualifications.^{xxvii} A third of directors and senior executives have master's, MBAs or doctorates compared with a quarter of managers and senior officers and 13% of administrators/assistants (Table 21). In-house consultants/advisers and independent consultants are most likely to have master's, MBAs or doctorates. They are also most likely to have professional qualifications, along with directors.

It does not appear, however, that people with higher degree-level qualifications necessarily progress more readily. For each role level, people with master's-level qualifications have a similar number of years' experience as those with no degree/professional-level qualifications.

Table 21: Degree and professional qualifications by role level (% of respondents)

	No degree/ professional- level qualification	Highest degree-level qualification				
		Degree	Postgraduate diploma	Master's, MBA, doctorate*	Professional- level	Professional- level only (no degree)
Director	7	19	26	33	60.0	15
Senior executive/group role	13	9	30	36	41.5	13
Manager	13	15	33	25	45.0	14
Senior officer	15	18	32	23	40.2	13
Officer	20	23	20	22	37.6	14
Administrator/assistant	36	29	11	13	39.6	11
In-house consultant/adviser	12	12	18	59	13.3	0
Independent consultant	2	15	31	45	61.5	6
Lecturer	0	0	13	75	68.8	13

Base: 751

* These three categories are combined because only a small proportion have MBAs or doctorates.

Role level is the most significant predictor of current income, regardless of age. However, for 20–30-year-olds, level of qualifications attained also plays a role,^{xxxiii} while for 31–40-year-olds household income during childhood is significantly related.^{xxxix} In contrast, role and gender are the significant predictors of income for 41–50-year-olds, with women earning less.^{xxx} Role level is the only significant predictor of current income for those aged 50+.

Current salary is the strongest predictor of potential salary, although, once this is accounted for, there is also a negative relationship with years of HR experience, probably because people who have progressed to higher salaries with fewer years of experience expect to continue to progress at a faster rate than those who have taken many years to achieve the same salary level. The prestige of the university attended and having a contact to help progress additionally increases the potential salary that respondents expect to achieve. Other family and educational factors do not have a significant impact once these are taken into account.^{xxxi}

Respondents' long-term career aspirations are positively related to their current role level, with people at higher levels expecting to progress further than those in lower ranks.^{xxxii} The strength of the relationship increases with age.^{xxxiii} Those with a parent who attended university also tend to have higher career aspirations, although the relationship is weak.^{xxxiv} Other family and educational factors do not have an additional significant impact (see also section on 'Future plans').

GETTING AHEAD IN HR

What factors aid progress in HR? This section examines whether respondents have anyone to help them get ahead in their careers and the perceived importance of contacts, qualifications and continuing to learn for career progression. It explores whether background has an impact on how difficult the attainment of career goals are perceived to be and their confidence in achieving them.

Just over a fifth (22%) of respondents report they have someone to help them get ahead in the HR profession. Gender, role level, household background/parents' income, type of school attended or degree grade awarded have no impact on whether respondents have someone to help them get ahead. Age does, however, have an impact, with younger people more likely to report they have someone (28% of those 20–30; 21% of those 41–50; 16% of those 51–60; 8% of those aged 61-plus).^{xxxv}

Of those who have someone to help them get ahead, three-fifths report they have a helpful manager and over half helpful colleagues (Table 22). Two-fifths belong to an HR network while over a quarter have a mentor. Those in more senior roles are most likely to report they have a mentor, although this is less common in the public sector (public sector: 9% have mentors to help them get ahead; voluntary sector: 29%; private services: 35%; manufacturing and production: 28%).

Table 22: Who do you have to help you get ahead in the HR profession? (% of respondents who have someone)

	All	Senior executive/ group role	Manager	Senior officer	Officer	Administrator/ assistant
	n=173	n=7	n=55	n=21	n=37	n=17
I have a helpful manager	62	29	65	76	73	71
I have helpful colleagues	55	71	53	57	57	76
I belong to an HR network	43	57	51	62	35	18
I have a mentor(s)	27	43	33	48	19	6
I have a relative/friend who helps me	20	14	18	19	22	24
I have an advocate/sponsor	5	14	0	14	3	0
Other	7	0	7	10	8	0

* No separate column for directors due to small sample size (n=5)

A quarter of respondents think it is very important to have a personal contact to make progress in HR and a further two-fifths think it is *fairly* important (Figure 2). People who have someone to help them get ahead are twice as likely as those who don't to report it is *very* important (45% compared with 20%).^{xxxvi} They are just as likely to report it is *fairly* important.

People in lower role levels are also more likely to report it is important to have a personal contact to make progress in HR. Two-fifths (41%) of administrators/assistants think it is very important compared with 30% of officers, 22% of senior officers and managers and 17% of senior executives/group roles.^{xxxvii} Educational and family background has no significant impact.

A fifth of respondents think it is very important to have an academic qualification to get into the HR profession and a further two-fifths think it is *fairly* important. Slightly more think it is very important to have a professional qualification to get into the business and nearly twice as many think it is very important to have a professional qualification as an academic one to progress (Figure 2).

People's views on the importance of qualifications to get into and progress in HR are related, such that those who view academic qualifications as important to get in and progress are more likely to view professional qualifications as important to get in and, to a lesser extent, progress.^{xxxviii}

People with postgraduate degrees are more likely to report that academic qualifications are very important to get into and progress in HR.^{xxxix} They are also more likely to report that professional qualifications are very important to get into the HR profession. People with professional qualifications are more likely to report that they are important, not to get into, but to progress within HR (60% report very important compared with 49% of those who do not have professional qualifications).^{xl}

Gender, sector, age, role level and family background has no impact on how important they think qualifications are to get into and progress in HR.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING TO LEARN

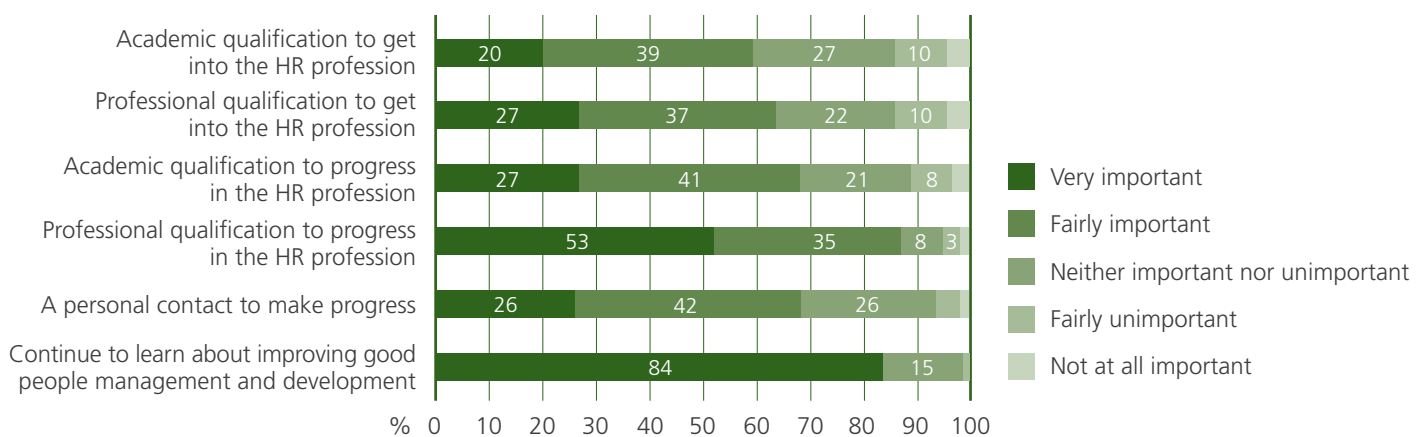
More important than qualifications or having a contact, however, is continuing to learn about ways of improving good people management and development. The vast majority of respondents (84%) report this is very important and a further 15% that it is *fairly* important. Less than 1% report it is *neither important nor unimportant* and no one that it is *fairly* or *not at all* important. People whose main motivation to work is to help others or get to the top are particularly likely to report continuing to learn is very important (92% and 91% respectively).

Nearly half (49%) of respondents report they devote some of their personal time to keep up with developments in the profession more than once a month. A further two-fifths do so about once a month and just one in ten (11%) do so less than once a month. Those who deem continual learning *very* important are most likely to do so more frequently in their personal time.^{xli}

There is a small relationship with role level and frequency with which people devote their own personal time to keeping up to speed with developments in the profession.^{xlii} Three-fifths (60%) of those in senior executive/group roles do so more than once a month compared with 46% of senior officers and 35% of administrators/assistants.

Men are also slightly more likely to devote their personal time more frequently than women, regardless of role level (59% of men do so more than once a month compared with 47% of women).^{xliii} This does not appear to be due to gender differences in childcare/carer responsibilities. Indeed, those with dependent children are more likely to report that they spend their personal time keeping up to speed than those without (45% of those without dependent children or adults to care for devote personal time more than once a month compared with 56% of those with dependent children and 65% of those with both dependent children and adult carer responsibilities).^{xliii} Whether or not respondents have the main responsibility for childcare or not does not make a significant difference.

Figure 2: How important is it to have the following to make progress in/get into HR? (% of respondents)



Base: 786

CAREER GOALS

The majority of respondents think it would be at least 'fairly hard' to reach their career goals (Table 23). Those with a contact to help them get ahead are less likely to report it would be hard (14% feel it would be hard or very hard compared with 27% of those who don't).^{xv} Males are more likely to report it would be hard or very hard (33% of males compared with 22% of females)^{xvi} as are those in lower role levels who are either at earlier stages in their career or have not yet succeeded in progressing upwards.^{xvii}

Despite a common belief that it would be at least *fairly* hard to reach career goals, most feel at least *fairly* confident that they would achieve them. As with ease of reaching goals, confidence to achieve personal career goals is related to having a contact to help them progress, role level and also how regularly respondents devote their personal time to keep up to speed with developments in the profession (as well as how easy people expect it to be to reach their goals, as would be expected).^{xviii} Confidence is not, however, related to gender. Neither ease of achieving goals nor confidence to achieve them are related to educational or family background.

Just under a third of respondents (31%) report that they would definitely still opt for the HR profession if they could start their career again. The same proportion report they probably would. A quarter are not sure, while 11% think they probably would not and 2% definitely wouldn't. People who are less confident they would reach their personal career goals are less likely to report they would still opt for the HR profession if they could start their career again.^{xix} Men are also less likely to report they would definitely or probably still opt for HR than women (22% compared with 34%) and more likely to report they probably or definitely wouldn't (21% compared with 11%).¹

Table 23: Reaching career goals – how easy and how confident are you? (% of respondents)

	Very easy	Easy	Fairly easy	Fairly hard	Hard	Very hard
How easy to reach career goals	1	4	18	52	19	5

	Very confident	Confident	Fairly confident	Fairly unconfident	Unconfident	Very unconfident
How confident to reach career goals	9	28	46	11	4	2

Base: 785

FUTURE PLANS

Here we look at how satisfied respondents are with their HR careers by examining whether they plan to stay in HR and, if not, their reasons. We also consider their long-term career aspirations and whether these are influenced by their background.

Half of respondents (49%) plan to stay in HR permanently and a further 45% plan to stay for the time being. Only 6% report they are planning to do something else in the near future. As would be expected, there is a moderate relationship between how likely people would be to opt for HR if they could start their career again and whether they are planning to stay in HR.ⁱⁱ Part-time respondents are also more likely to report they would be doing something else in the near future (15% compared with 3% of full-time workers).ⁱⁱⁱ

People gave various reasons as to why they are planning to move out of HR or only stay in HR for the time being (Table 24). A quarter are frustrated with their career prospects in HR and 14% feel they have reached their full potential and plan to change the direction of their career. Thirteen per cent have no fixed plans to move but are keeping their options open, 'not sure what the future holds'. Only 7% report that the HR profession does not match their expectations, while a further 2% are unhappy or frustrated with their role or level of influence.

Unsurprisingly, those who are not confident that they would reach their personal career goals are more likely to give frustration with career prospects as a reason for leaving than those who are more confident in attaining their goals (67% of those who are unconfident or very unconfident compared with 6% who are very confident or confident). Part-time workers (31%) and those without a contact to help them get ahead (29%) are also more likely to give this as a reason than full-time workers (22%) and those with a contact (6%).

People from independent schools are more likely to report they have reached their full potential in HR and plan to change the direction of their career (24%) and less likely to report they are frustrated with their career prospects in HR (14%) than those from mainstream schools (13% potentially leaving due to reaching their full potential and 25% potentially leaving because frustrated with career prospects).

Table 25 shows the long-term career aspirations of respondents. There is a positive relationship between current and aspirational role level such that those in more senior roles have higher long-term career aspirations.ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Gender, family background and education level have no significant impact on long-term career aspirations.

Part-time workers aspire less to top management positions and more to self-employed status (Table 25). Part-time workers are more likely than full-timers to have a good work-life balance as their main motivation (27% compared with 16%), live with dependent children (57% compared with 29%), have main responsibility for providing/organising childcare (72% compared with 45%) and have regular responsibility for an elderly relative (16% compared with 9%).^{liv}

Table 24: Why are you planning to do something else or only stay in HR for the time being? (% of respondents)

I am frustrated with my career prospects in HR	24
I think I have reached my full potential in the HR field and plan to change the direction of my career	14
No fixed plans/keeping options open	13
To pursue other interests and goals	12
The HR profession does not match my expectations	7
Retirement	6
New challenges/change/experiences	6
HR was just a stepping stone; I never intended to stay in HR	5
Work-life balance/family circumstances	3
Redundancy/redeployment	3
Career development/broaden experience	2
Unhappy with role	2
Other	4

Base: 333

Table 25: What are your long-term career aspirations? (% of respondents)

	All	Full-time	Part-time
Top management/board level	18	20	7
Senior management	32	35	16
Middle management	13	12	14
Junior management	3	3	2
A non-management position	1	1	2
A specialist adviser or internal consultant role with no management responsibility	14	13	18
Self-employed status/start my own business	15	10	32
Other	5	4	9

Base: 736

Section 2:

HR'S ROLE IN ADVANCING SOCIAL MOBILITY

HR'S ROLE IN ADVANCING SOCIAL MOBILITY

Does HR have a role to play in promoting social mobility? Here we look at respondents' views on this question and their personal thoughts on what HR could do to help people from less privileged backgrounds progress a successful career.

The vast majority of respondents (92%), regardless of sector or role level, think HR professionals should have a role to play in advancing social mobility by ensuring that people have the chance to get ahead irrespective of their personal background. Women are slightly more likely than men to agree with this (93% compared with 86% of men).^{lv} People who have been educated in independent schools are slightly less likely to agree (84% compared with 93% from mainstream schools and 95% from overseas schools).^{lvi} Otherwise family background and educational achievement do not have a significant impact.

The comments of the minority who feel HR professionals don't have a role to play suggest that they see this as positive discrimination or social engineering. Several made comments that the best person should be selected 'regardless of background'. Others suggested that this is the responsibility of government or everyone in society rather than a role for HR:

'I wouldn't support positive discrimination but wholeheartedly support equal opportunities. I believe the role HR needs to play is not to ensure social mobility in itself or for itself but to make sure recruitment and development opportunities are widely available to all.'

'Businesses as a whole should provide frameworks that ensure they have the right people with the necessary skills regardless of background. Their role should therefore be to influence government on policy to ensure this happens – it is not business or the HR profession that can make this happen alone.'

'The role of HR is to help support and develop their organisations, not to deliver wider public policy and engage in social engineering! If by undertaking this role HR can help people from less privileged backgrounds progress successful careers, then this is an add-on benefit to their core purpose in serving the organisation.'

The majority of respondents, however, had a range of suggestions as to how they could help people from less privileged backgrounds progress a successful career. The many detailed and considered comments indicate that many have ethical and values-based views on this issue that go beyond compliance. Their views, summarised below, are not significantly differentiated by role, age, gender or sector.

INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE PROFESSION AND POSSIBLE CAREER PATHS

Link with/visit schools, colleges, universities, youth groups, career events

Nearly one-fifth (18%) of respondents feel that social mobility could be enhanced by targeting, informing and 'inspiring' young people through schools, colleges, youth groups and universities. These are commonly seen to be useful avenues to promote HR and increase awareness of the profession and potential career paths as well. In addition, some think that links with these groups could offer further opportunities to young people through CV and interview training, mentoring, work experience and internships. Some feel that underprivileged/inner-city schools in particular should be targeted.

'Provide clear advice about the role of HR in business and what a career in HR is all about. Many young people at school and university do not understand what HR does or the skills required.'

'More career advice at secondary school age – I did not have a family member or network in HR, but found out about the professional qualification route from Brighton University. I was not from a privileged background, so I could study and work at the same time, to gain my MCIPD qualification. This really was the step forward in my career.'

'Promote the benefits of working hard to achieve. Work with schools and colleges to advise that everyone can succeed if they are determined to gain valuable work experience and start from the bottom and work their way up.'

Other CIPD work has highlighted the importance of early careers advice for young people and the current lack of quality provision, particularly in disadvantaged schools. Young people tend to listen more to employers than to teachers or parents, so employer interventions, such as careers talks, work tasters and information, advice and guidance, can be very powerful.⁶

ELIMINATE JARGON

Jargon is seen to be a barrier to accessibility, creating a sense of an elitist or academic profession

'Stop using so much jargon and make our profession accessible to all. [More] concentration on how interesting the job is, less emphasis on "bottom line". Emphasise that the job's about people, not "human capital" (yuk!).'

⁶CIPD Submission to the Education Select Committee, Careers guidance for young people, 2012.

'Endeavour to demystify to less privileged young people what it is that HRD people do and how important the role of the HR professional is to business. Too many youngsters simply do not understand what HRD means and are not attracted to explore it further.'

Better awareness of HR and career paths throughout the community and organisation

Creating a better awareness of HR and its potential career paths more widely is also seen to be important by several respondents. Removing jargon is seen to go some way towards doing this but people also suggested more open communications and role-modelling for the profession.

'Make them aware of the opportunities available, what the profession can offer and what they will need to do to get into the profession.'

'Be ambassadors for the profession.'

Visible role models

Some also talk about the importance of visible role models, people who had achieved successful careers from less privileged backgrounds or through alternative routes.

'Provide a role model from a similar background who has been successful in achieving their goals.'

PROVIDE A VARIETY OF ROUTES INTO CAREERS

Work experience opportunities, internships, apprenticeships and scholarships

Just under a fifth of respondents (19%) feel that work experience opportunities, internships, apprenticeships and scholarships would be beneficial in helping the less privileged access careers. Several respondents feel that these opportunities should be paid or financially supported to be of most benefit for people from less privileged backgrounds. Many also emphasise the importance of links with schools, youth centres and job centres to promote awareness of these opportunities and ensure they are widely accessible.

'Offer paid/financially supported opportunities to gain work experience over unpaid internships.'

'Stop insisting on applicants having a degree!'

Several respondents (4%) suggest that selection criteria for roles should focus on skill requirements rather than formal qualifications because these could create 'unfair barriers'. They propose that selection should be based on soft skills, attitude or potential rather than backgrounds, education, existing skills or networks, because 'harder skills' and knowledge could be developed 'on the job'.

'As a business owner I have learned that background and education is not the driving force in recruitment. I believe in giving opportunity where a candidate or employee shows eagerness, drive and common sense.'

ENSURE RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES ARE FAIR AND ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS

A fifth (20%) stress the importance of fair and accessible recruitment and selection processes.

Advertise appointments and opportunities widely (externally and internally)

To help facilitate access for people from all backgrounds, several respondents highlight the need to advertise appointments widely, using a range of methods (rather than relying on the Internet) and avoiding jargon. Some suggest specific targeting of less well-represented groups, including linking with job centres. Open, transparent and clear communications regarding internal positions and career paths is also seen to be beneficial.

'Liaise with local authorities in regards to getting people back into the workplace who may have been out of work.'

'Change the language used in job descriptions to enable those from less privileged backgrounds to be able to apply, by making them aware of the support available both within their organisation and externally.'

'Keep opportunities of advancement in [the] public arena.'

Train those involved in selection processes

The importance of being non-discriminatory regarding different backgrounds and appointing on merit alone was highlighted. Several people pointed to the importance of ensuring that all involved in selection processes are appropriately trained to be aware of and avoid potential biases or stereotypes.

'Keep the recruitment process fair and transparent and assess everyone on ability and potential rather than backgrounds.'

'Ensure that equal opportunities training extends further than the Equality Act strands to take into account demography.'

'Guide recruiting managers on potential bias/blind-spots in candidate selection, particularly around formal education, and possible class bias, for example language use.'

An open-minded approach to selection criteria

The importance of having clear, skill-focused selection criteria was stressed, but several people also emphasised the need to be open-minded and flexible regarding skills, experience and potential.

'Provide their organisation with clear guidelines for recruitment decisions based on the person specification, not the personal opinions of managers.'

'Reduce job selection criteria which create unfair barriers, for example recognise equivalent experience to degree qualifications.'

'Be open to the widest range of experiences people can bring to a role.'

DEVELOP QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ON THE JOB

Nearly a third (31%) emphasise the importance of training and developing people on the job because people from less privileged backgrounds do not have the same access to educational opportunities prior to entering the workforce.

Develop talent at all levels

The need to provide a range of training programmes for people at all levels was highlighted. Some feel that training budgets are biased towards those in more senior grades or in graduate programmes and that this should be addressed, with a focus on talent and potential rather than existing qualifications.

'Get rid of fast-track promotion schemes for graduates.'

'Work to overcome stereotyping by managers (of secretarial employees, for example) to ensure that career development opportunities actually exist.'

'Ensure fair and open training opportunities; look for potential, not just existing skills.'

Clear communications and guidance regarding development opportunities and career paths

Ensuring development opportunities are well communicated and openly accessible, offering guidance on how to access development opportunities and establishing clear career paths were also recommended.

'Make people aware of training opportunities and of any funding.'

'Make training and development accessible in all parts of the country and at all levels. To have a structured path to take and to place as much emphasis on experimental learning as formal qualifications.'

Train line managers in performance and development management

Several respondents point to the importance of having supportive line managers to aid development and career progression. Line managers need to be trained in performance and development reviews and the implementation of personal development plans.

'Ensure that they receive good support from line managers – for example one-to-ones, coaching, performance management – and good training.'

'Ensure that the review process is handled fairly and constructive feedback is given to assist employees with progressing at a rate suitable for them. Ensure that managers are engaging with employees, understanding their needs and skill sets and succession-planning them appropriately.'

'Line managers need to ensure that they know how their direct reports are contributing to the business and coach them to get even better. This comes down to really effective performance management – not just form-filling – but a succession of timely conversations about what's going well and what isn't.'

Support people to gain formal qualifications on the job

Thirteen per cent feel that supporting people to gain formal qualifications on the job through mentoring, advice, organisational funding and flexible study/working arrangements is important for promoting social mobility. In addition, many think the combination of study with real work experience is of more value than study alone.

'More part-time study opportunities.'

'Help provide access to (hopefully funded) learning opportunities through a process of management, encouraging mentorship within the organisation and guidance on how to access these opportunities.'

MENTORING, COACHING, SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Over a quarter (29%) highlight the value of having a mentor or career coach to 'guide them through their professional development', 'figure out their potential,' 'build self-confidence and self-esteem' and others espouse the benefits of providing support, advice and guidance, including around career paths and opportunities, CVs and interview techniques.

'Support and help them access information that may help them make informed choices.'

'Provide support, advice or guidance for those less privileged to progress into a successful career. This is because those less privileged are less likely to be able to find the information in order to get ahead. Having an HR professional to help find these resources will be useful.'

HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS OF A TRULY DIVERSE WORKFORCE AND CONFRONT DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES AND VIEWS

Some respondents feel HR professionals could help promote social mobility through increasing awareness and engaging business leaders in the benefits and value of a diverse workforce.

'Building and maintaining awareness of the issues and the potential benefits that helping build social mobility may bring (that is, ability to recruit from a wider talent pool, bringing different perspectives to the business, better understanding of customers).'

'Make the case for why investment, time and possibly money, is worthwhile in business terms.'

Some feel they should champion diversity and fair policies, 'be a role model' and confront and challenge 'elitist' practices and views.

'Challenge ethical or values shortfalls, challenge complacency about social equality – especially at board level.'

'Zero tolerance of discrimination.'

'Be the voice of challenge and reason where barriers exist.'

MONITOR DIVERSITY OF WORKFORCE

A few respondents suggest monitoring the social profile of employees to identify and monitor potential areas of bias.

'Conduct statistical analysis to inform organisations of their staff's educational/social background profile.'

FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES

Promoting flexible working is also seen as advantageous by some to enable and promote widespread participation in the workforce.

'Embrace flexible and agile working opportunities.'

CONCLUSIONS

The research findings are extremely rich and signal many practical ways of improving social mobility. But the most striking messages that come across are highlighted for action below. They are aimed at professional bodies generally, individual professionals, public policy-makers and the CIPD itself as the leading UK professional body in HR.

Improving social mobility within the HR profession

Regarding social mobility in the HR profession, it is important to stress that as a group the population of CIPD members are more highly qualified than the general population, with a high majority having a degree. However, our research suggests that the influence of socio-economic factors on HR careers may be more limited than in some other professions, such as medicine and law. Our findings suggest that HR professionals come from a wide spectrum of economic backgrounds, not just the more affluent. This is a pleasing finding because it suggests that the extensive range of flexible options available to people to become professionally qualified in HR opens up opportunities to attract wider pools of HR talent and improve social mobility within the profession.

Nevertheless, in the light of comments from survey respondents that having a professional qualification is far more important in terms of making career progress – coupled with continuous learning – it begs the question of the value of entrants to a profession having a degree as a ticket to get in. The CIPD offers other ways of gaining professional status in the HR profession. This appears to pay off in improving social mobility and could be a useful strategy for other professions to consider.

Interesting is the survey finding that the main motivation for HR professionals is having a satisfying job rather than to get to the top in their chosen careers. Not everyone wants to get to the top of their chosen career ladder. This is not necessarily because they lack confidence that they could. Confidence levels about reaching career goals are far from weak. However, it is more likely to be people who work part-time who feel they might leave the profession because they are less satisfied with their careers.

This is worrying against the background of growing personal appetites and business needs for flexible working. It calls for careful thought about interventions to remove the barriers to career progress associated with stereotyping about part-timers, the majority of whom are currently women.

Issues related to work–life balance – which our research found to be of common interest for diverse reasons – must be taken into account in the creation of flexible responses to career progression and social mobility to see this improve rather than decline further.

It is imperative that the kind of personal preferences about career paths mentioned above should be taken into account in the design and evaluation of interventions to remove barriers

to social mobility. People are diverse with diverse needs and agendas which characterise the labour market for skills.

The role of HR in improving social mobility

The overwhelming positive response from survey respondents about the role of HR practitioners in connection with addressing poor social mobility generally shows them to be willing game-changers. This is a major finding that the CIPD can use to effect change, not only for the common good of society generally but also to add value to business performance in organisations. This can be done, for example, by raising awareness amongst CIPD members about good talent management and the design of talent management good practice guidance and practical tools.

The acceptance by HR professionals of the role they can play to help improve social mobility and reduce unfair disadvantage illustrates how the personal values they hold connect with the importance of embracing diversity and inclusion as a fundamental professional responsibility rather than a fringe issue. This finding corroborates the findings from a survey carried out in 2012 by the CIPD with the Bernard Hodes Group. This showed that people working in HR feel that diversity and inclusion is fundamental to their work and will become even more important in the future. The evidenced personal values of our survey respondents chime with the role HR professionals have to ensure that diverse talent is recruited, retained, rewarded and nurtured and flexible ways of working developed as a response to increasing workplace and marketplace diversity.

Tackling social mobility is an important issue businesses cannot afford to ignore. It relates to their ability to acquire talent as well as opening up paths for people to improve their earnings potential and enrich their lives. It is about working to create more inclusive, cohesive and prosperous societies.

Tackling social mobility is the essence of managing diversity and inclusion in society and organisations. It provides a coherent approach for integrating the diversity and inclusion agenda.

These findings chime with the principle behind the CIPD's *Learning to Work* initiative, which is an action-focused programme designed to encourage more employers to invest in young people. It has two key objectives:

- to help prepare young people for the workplace by increasing the proportion of HR professionals/employers that engage with them while they are at school and college to improve their employability
- to make the labour market itself more youth-friendly by encouraging more HR professionals/employers to offer a wider range of access routes into organisations and adapting recruitment methods.

Preparing young people for work

In terms of helping to prepare young people for the workplace, the CIPD is working with the Education and Employers Taskforce and the National Apprenticeship Service on an initiative which will see HR practitioners encouraged to volunteer to go into schools to help young people become more work ready. Using an easy-to-use online portal, the *Inspiring the future* initiative allows HR professionals to be matched with local schools and colleges to help young people with their CVs, conduct mock interviews and give them a greater understanding of how they can prepare for work.

If you would like to find out more/register to take part, please go to: www.inspiringthefuture.org

Making the labour market more youth-friendly

In order to help address the second objective of the Learning to Work programme and make the labour market more youth-friendly, the CIPD has recently produced new research, *Employers are from Mars, Young People are from Venus: Addressing the young people/jobs mismatch*. This highlights the importance of employers adapting their recruitment processes if they want to help more young people from different backgrounds into jobs.

The report, based on interviews with more than 30 employers, focus group discussions with employers, as well as interviews and focus groups with young people, makes a number of recommendations for more inclusive recruitment practice:

- *Make the business case for recruiting young people to line managers and colleagues.* Highlight the benefits, such as the need to build talent pipelines, the skills and motivation of young people, the importance of workplace diversity and the cost-effectiveness of developing your own staff.
- *Adapt your expectations of young people* so that you are realistic about how work-ready they will be when they first arrive. Young people don't always know how to behave in the recruitment process, but managers should be encouraged to look beyond first impressions, such as the way people are dressed, and give young people a chance.
- *Think about the roles and access routes for young people into your organisation.* As well as obvious options such as graduate schemes, think about whether other routes such as apprenticeship schemes or school-leaver programmes could work for your business.

- *Take action to attract from a wider pool of young people.* Where and how you advertise opportunities is important. Young people can be sceptical of 'corporate' communications and are more likely to respond to humorous and innovative content. You can also broaden your outreach by promoting opportunities by a range of methods, such as social media and advertising via Jobcentre Plus, as well as traditional methods such as local newspapers and websites.

- *Ensure your recruitment processes are youth-friendly and transparent.* There are a number of basic things you can do to ensure you get the best calibre of young people applying for opportunities:

- 1 Provide the closing date and contact details for the advertised position.
- 2 Be open about the recruitment process, what the stages are and the expectations during those stages.
- 3 Develop simple, easy-to-use application forms.
- 4 Be clear about the selection criteria and review it for each new job – is experience or a degree really essential?

- *Conduct interviews that get the best out of young people.* Competency-based interviews are generally not suitable for young people as they don't have previous work experience to draw on, whereas strength-based exercises allow you to see candidates' potential to learn and attitude.
- *Provide feedback where possible.* It might not be possible to provide individualised feedback at every stage, but simple things such as an automated email to acknowledge an application and a list of common reasons why an applicant may not have been shortlisted can be really useful.

Adapting recruitment practices to make them more inclusive can have a significant impact on improving social mobility and making sure people of different genders, ethnic and social backgrounds can get their foot on the employment ladder. However, as this report highlights, progressive recruitment practice has to be linked to integrated approaches to talent management and career development to ensure opportunities to progress within organisations are equally inclusive.

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE PROFILE

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The respondents are predominantly white, British females without disabilities. One-fifth (21%) are male. A wide range of ages are represented. The male sample is, on average, older than the female sample. Nearly half (46%) of male respondents are over 50 compared with one-fifth (20%) of female respondents (Table 26).

Gender

Female: 79%; male: 21%.

Nationality

British: 91%; Irish: 2%; Other European: 3%; Australasian: 1%; American: <1%; South American: <1%; African: <1%; Asian: <1%.

Ethnicity

White: 94%; Mixed: 1%; Asian or Asian British: 2%; Black or black British: 2%; Chinese or other ethnic group: 1%.

Disabilities

No disability: 97%; with a disability: 3%. Just one respondent (0.1%) reported they have access needs.

Age

Table 26: Age of respondents by gender (% of respondents)

	20–30	31–40	41–50	61–60	60+
All	19	26	29	20	5
Male	12	15	27	33	14
Female	21	29	29	17	3

Base: 778

Table 27: Job role/level (% of respondents)

Job role/level	%
Director: top executive with overall responsibility for own function with board membership or equivalent, including MD, CEO, chairman and DG	4
Senior executive/group role: top executive with overall responsibility but without board membership or equivalent	6
Manager: individual with responsibility for an activity within the overall function – may be a senior HR specialist or in a broader HR role. Makes a significant contribution to policy formulation	33
Senior officer: individual in senior position with strong professional role – may have supervisory responsibilities for departmental work and/or manage a small team	13
Officer: an experienced officer with first level of professional responsibility	17
Administrator/assistant: a less experienced officer	10
In-house consultant/adviser: individual working within an organisation on a programme/project, possibly cross-functionally	2
Independent consultant: individual providing consultancy services to organisations on a freelance/contractual basis	12
Lecturer	2
Other	1

Base: 761

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

The vast majority (96%) of respondents are currently working. Four-fifths (81%) are working full-time, while one-fifth (19%) work part-time. Half (50%) work in private sector services and a further 14% in private sector manufacturing. Just over a fifth (22%) work in the public sector while 13% work in the voluntary or not-for-profit sector.

A third of respondents are managers, with responsibility for an activity within the overall function (see Table 27). Thirteen per cent are senior officers and 17% are officers with first level of professional responsibility. Ten per cent are less experienced administrators/assistants. A minority work at director (top executive) level (4%) or in a senior executive/group role (6%). Twelve per cent work as independent consultants (mostly in the private services sector).

Most of those who aren't working (4%) are looking for a job (2%) or are retired (1%).

SALARY

Most respondents' current full-time equivalent salary is between £20,000 and £69,000 (Table 28). Salary is strongly related to role level^{vii} and current salary is strongly related to potential salary (although less so for the 21–30 age group, whose careers are still in their early stages).^{viii}

	Current salary	Potential salary
up to £14,000	3	0
£15,000–£19,999	6	1
£20,000–£29,999	27	7
£30,000–£44,999	34	21
£45,000–£69,999	19	34
£70,000–£99,999	7	20
£100,000–£129,999	2	8
£130,000–£149,999	1	3
£150,000+	1	5

Base: 750 (current salary); 621 (potential salary)

HR EXPERIENCE

Most respondents are very experienced in HR. Three-fifths (62%) of respondents had started in HR in their twenties and nearly a quarter in their thirties (23%). Smaller proportions had started before they were 20 (3%) or after they were 40 (11%). The number of years' experience they had is strongly related to their role level.^{lix}

Less than 1 year	4
1–3 years	15
4–9 years	27
10–19 years	33
20+ years	22

Base: 786

- ⁱ Chi Square with continuity correction=148.0, df=1, p<0.001, n=777
- ⁱⁱ Chi Square with continuity correction=111.1, df=1, p<0.001, n=732 (Don't knows were excluded from this analysis due to small number of respondents in this category).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Chi Square with continuity correction=94.2, df=1, p<0.001, n=714 (Don't knows were excluded from this analysis due to small number of respondents in this category).
- ^{iv} Role levels of father and mother: Rho=0.39, p<0.001, n=735; role levels of paternal grandfather and paternal grandmother: Rho=0.22, p<0.001, n=460; role level of maternal grandfather and maternal grandmother: Rho=0.19, p<0.001, n=477. Role levels of maternal and paternal grandfathers: Rho=0.41, p<0.001, n=527; Role levels of maternal and paternal grandmothers: Rho=0.44, p<0.001, n=436; the relationship is likely to be weaker for grandparents as more women of this generation didn't work.
- ^v Role levels of father and paternal grandfather: Rho=0.45, p<0.001, n=587; Role levels of father and paternal grandmother: Rho=0.10, p<0.05, n=493; Role levels of mother and maternal grandfather: Rho=0.30, p<0.001, n=576; Role levels of mother and maternal grandmother: Rho=0.25, p<0.001, n=509;
- ^{vi} Father's employment role: Rho=-0.58, p<0.001, n=770; mother's employment role: Rho=-0.36, p<0.001, n=738; sole/step-parent household: Rho=0.13, p<0.001, n=783; university-educated father: : Rho=-0.37, p<0.001, n=777
- ^{vii} Chi Square =121.4, df=6, p<0.001, n=782
- ^{viii} Chi Square =14.6, df=2, p<0.01, n=783
- ^{ix} Rho=0.46, p<0.001, n=777
- ^x Pre-school attendance and employment role level of mothers: Rho=0.22, p<0.001, n=740; pre-school attendance and role level of fathers: Rho=0.14, p<0.001, n=773; pre-school attendance and whether the respondent had lived in a sole/step-parent household: Rho=0.12, p<0.01, n=787
- ^{xi} Chi Square =63.0, df=4, p<0.001, n=782
- ^{xii} Type of school attended (mainstream or independent) and the father's employment role level: Rho=-0.26, p<0.001, n=715. Overseas schools were excluded from the analysis due to small n.
- ^{xiii} Chi Square =34.9, df=6, p<0.001, n=786
- ^{xiv} Degree and living in sole/step-parent household: Chi Square=9.6, df=3, p<0.05, n=787; Professional level and living in sole/step-parent household: Chi Square=5.4 with continuity correction, df=1, p<0.05, n=787
- ^{xv} Those who lived in a sole or step-parent household are less likely to have had both parents attend university (6% compared with 12% of those who did not live in a single or step-parent household) and more likely to have just a mother attending university (10% compared with 5%). Nevertheless, the significance of the relationships between sole/step-parent and university/professional qualifications and that of parents attending university and university/professional qualifications were independent of each other.
- ^{xvi} Rho=0.123, p<0.001, n=787
- ^{xvii} Chi Square =46.2, df=2, p<0.001, n=494
- ^{xviii} While type of school attended, household income and parents' university attendance are all interrelated, regression analysis shows they all had an independent impact on the type of university attended.
- ^{xix} Chi Square =22.2, df=6, p<0.01, n=527
- ^{xx} Rho=-0.20, p<0.001, n=526

⁵⁷ There are no significant age or gender differences in the respondents working in each sector.

- xxi No significant gender, role level or sector differences
- xxii Family friends: Chi Square with continuity correction=16.2, df=1, p<0.001, n=48; Personal friends: Chi Square with continuity correction=9.5, df=1, p<0.01, n=92
- xxiii Colleagues: Chi Square with continuity correction=13.3, df=1, p<0.001, n=158; Senior colleagues: Chi Square with continuity correction=14.9, df=1, p<0.001, n=198
- xxiv Chi Square =13.5, df=4, p<0.01, n=778
- xxv Ages 31–40: Rho=0.23, p<0.01, n=182; Ages 41–50: Rho=0.16, p<0.05, n=177
- xxvi Rho=-0.56, p<0.001, n=625
- xxvii Highest qualification achieved and role level (consultants, lecturers, and ‘others’ excluded as not ranked in level order): Rho=-0.24, p<0.001, n=542
- xxviii Standardised regression coefficient: role=-0.54; level of qualifications achieved=0.21, r=0.62, r²=0.37, n=92
- xxix Standardised regression coefficient: role=-0.66; household income=-0.57, r=0.62, r²=0.44, n=106
- xxx Standardised regression coefficient: role=-0.36; gender=-0.25, r=0.44, r²=0.20, n=60
- xxxi Standardised regression coefficient: current salary=0.74; experience in HR =-0.17; prestige of university attended=-0.13, having a contact to help progress=-0.10, r=0.70, r²=0.49, n=276
- xxxii Rho=0.41, p<0.001, n=440
- xxxiii 20–30: Rho=0.31, p<0.01, n=115; 31–40: Rho=0.49, p<0.001, n=131; 41–50: Rho=0.57, p<0.001, n=119; 51–60: Rho=0.63, p<0.001, n=67
- xxxiv Mother who attended university: Rho=0.13, p<0.01, n=474; Father who attended university: Rho=0.11, p<0.05, n=474
- xxxv Chi Square =15.4, df=2, p<0.01, n=788
- xxxvi Chi Square =53.6, df=3, p<0.001, n=786
- xxxvii Rho=-0.12, p<0.01, n=614
- xxxviii Academic qualification to get in and professional qualification to get in: Rho=0.55, p<0.001, n=770; Academic qualification to get in and progress: Rho=0.53, p<0.001, n=773; Professional qualification to get in and progress: Rho=0.37, p<0.001, n=766
- xxxix 27% of those with a master’s, MBA or doctorate report academic qualifications are very important to get into HR compared with 19% of those with degrees and 14% with no graduate-level qualifications (Chi Square =26.8, df=9, p<0.01, n=778). 39% of those with a master’s, MBA or doctorate report academic qualifications are very important to progress within HR compared with 25% of those with degrees and 20% with no graduate-level qualifications (Chi Square =31.3, df=9, p<0.001, n=774). 33% of those with a master’s, MBA or doctorate report professional qualifications are very important to get into HR compared with 28% of those with degrees and 19% with no graduate-level qualifications (Chi Square =18.6, df=9, p<0.05, n=771).
- xl Chi Square =8.7, df=3, p<0.05, n=772
- xli Rho=-0.23, p<0.001, n=784
- xlii Rho=-0.13, p<0.01, n=624
- xliii Chi Square =7.2, df=2, p<0.05, n=786
- xliv Chi Square =12.4, df=4, p<0.05, n=780
- xlv Chi Square =13.6, df=3, p<0.01, n=785
- xlvi Chi Square =14.3, df=3, p<0.01, n=785
- xlvii Rho=0.17, p<0.001, n=624
- xlviii Confidence to achieve personal career goals and having a contact: 46% of those who had a contact to help them progress are confident or very confident compared with 33% of those who don’t have a contact (Chi Square =22.8, df=3, p<0.001, n=784); Confidence to achieve personal career goals and role level (Rho=0.24, p<0.001, n=624); Confidence to achieve personal career goals and how regularly respondents devote their personal time to keep up to speed with developments in the profession: 45% of those who devote personal time to keep up to speed with developments are very confident or confident that they would achieve their personal career goals compared with 18% of those who devote personal time less than once a month (Chi Square =53.1, df=6, p<0.001, n=783).
- xlx Rho=0.19, p<0.001, n=783
- l Chi Square =14.3, df=3, p<0.01, n=786
- li Rho=0.41, p<0.001, n=786
- lii Chi Square =36.0, df=2, p<0.001, n=746
- liii Current role level and career aspirations: Rho=0.41, p<0.001, n=439 (significant when controlling for age). Those aspiring to be specialist advisers and self-employed were excluded from this analysis.
- liv Have a good work–life balance as their main motivation: Chi Square=20.2, df=4, p<0.001, n=741
Live with dependent children: Chi Square with continuity correction=38.6, df=1, p<0.001, n=741; Have main responsibility for providing/organising childcare: Chi Square=25.8, df=2, p<0.001, n=254; Have regular responsibility for an elderly relative: Chi Square with continuity correction=4.7, df=1, p<0.05, n=736
- lv Chi Square with continuity correction=7.9, df=1, p<0.01, n=786
- lvi Chi Square =9.8, df=2, p<0.01, n=785
- lvii Rho=0.59, p<0.001, n=621
- lviii Rho=0.70, p<0.001, n=619; For 21–30 age group: Rho=0.55, p<0.001, n=131
- lviii Rho=0.56, p<0.01, n=625



Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
151 The Broadway London SW19 1JQ UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 8612 6200 Fax: +44 (0)20 8612 6201
Email: cipd@cipd.co.uk Website: cipd.co.uk

Incorporated by Royal Charter Registered charity no.1079797