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INTRODUCTION
The second Milkround School Leaver Career Confidence Survey 2015 explores and measures the confidence current School Leavers have of their job prospects taking an alternate route to the traditional university degree. The aim was to identify the industries and career options students are considering and if they felt school or college has prepared them for entering the world of work.

We hope that this report will be helpful for employers, teachers and providers in how to approach and inform school leavers in regards to their future career opportunities.

METHODOLOGY
Our 2015 fieldwork was carried out from 15th May until 19th June 2015. Users were asked to complete the survey via email, social media, and a post on our Milkround advice site.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

54% of School Leavers say that their biggest concern for the future of their career is grade expectations.

79% of respondents said that the future option they hear most about in school is university, not apprenticeships, traineeships, etc.

40% of respondents said they were unsure of whether they could start a job tomorrow.

The popularity of apprenticeships has had a positive increase year on year, with 35% of respondents saying that it will be their next career step.

Current School Leavers value experience, industry and salary the most when looking for roles – the size of the company and potential job title were least important.

66% of School Leavers use career websites, proving that online jobs boards play a significant part in young people’s recruitment journey.
RESPONDENTS

Our second School Leavers Career Confidence survey attracted 2,529 respondents, most of which are currently in school and looking to learn more about their career prospects, as well as some who have entered the workforce as apprentices.
CAREER CONFIDENCE

Confidence is an important factor in job seeking - we ask our respondents if they feel prepared to enter the world of work and competent enough to begin their career.

KEY STATS

- Only 4% of respondent claim to be super confident about their abilities to succeed in a job presently.

- **Year on year:** 1% less are super confident, 10% more are unsure, and 13% less feel confident.

- **Graduate comparison:** 58.4% of graduates claimed to be confident they would find a job after graduating, compared to 40% of School Leavers who are unsure if they could succeed in a job.

- **Year on year:** 3% more feel like they are “not confident at all”, implying that there is a need for education and discussion on how to prepare students for working life.

COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

**CONFIDENT**

“I’ve had experience of working a part time job, it has given me the confidence I need”

“I have all the desirable qualities”

“I’ve been on lots of work experience and courses”

“Have previous knowledge from school assignments”

“Because I am active outside of school and do not only rely on academic skill”

“English literate, satisfactory O level results for the field, good leadership qualities”

**LESS CONFIDENT**

“School does not prepare you for work and the career you wish to have. It only prepares you for exams to take in your final year”

“Because I don’t feel I know enough to start work and how it works”

“I feel as though I haven’t got a lot of experience”

“Because I wouldn’t be sure if I would meet their standards”

“I feel I may have a few skills but that I am unprepared for that sort of environment”
KEY STATS

• 5% fewer School Leavers have begun thinking about their career options versus last year. This could be due to survey timings, respondents’ current status, etc.

COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

“It’s hard to find jobs in the industry I want.”

“Medical fitness.”

“Discrimination.”

“Interviews are scary.”

“I don’t have enough experience.”

“I am scared of getting a job.”

“Knowing what’s available.”

“I’m concerned that I will change my mind.”

KEY STATS

• Graduate comparison: Graduates cited too much competition as their main concern while school leavers are worried about grade expectations.

• 36% claim that they don’t know where to look for jobs.
CAREER DECISIONS

This section looks at the decision process of first-time employment – what School Leavers look for in a job, what their perceived next step is, and whether they have been informed of all their options.

KEY STATS

- 12% of School Leavers claim that they are very aware of all of the career options available to them, an increase of 3% year on year.

- However there are 8% more respondents that feel simply neutral or not very aware, showing a decrease in awareness year on year.

KEY STATS

- Respondents were asked to rank the most important aspect of a job (1 is most and 7 is least important).

- Graduate comparison: Results show that School Leavers put most weight on experience, industry and salary, while graduates cited industry, job description and location as their motivators.

- Least important was the size of the company and their job title.

- School Leavers want to learn, be in the right environment, and earn enough to be comfortable.
CAREER DECISIONS (CONT.)

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CAREER OPTIONS ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO TAKE AS YOUR NEXT STEP?

- Key Stats
  - 35% of respondents say that an apprenticeship is in their future, which is a positive development from 2014.
  - Training/courses prove to be the most popular option with 29% saying that’s the next step for them, which would counteract the earlier comments on a fear of a lack of experience.

WHAT OPTION DO YOU HEAR ABOUT MOST IN SCHOOL/COLLEGE

- Key Stats
  - The majority (79%) said university, showing a lack of balance in the information supplied to students.
  - Graduate comparison: The vast majority of respondents to the graduate survey claimed to have had a good understanding of all their options before deciding on university.
  - Ideally there would be a larger focus on information on school/college leaver schemes, training/courses, and all apprenticeships to match the next steps students plan to take.
FUTURE INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT

We looked at the different industry sectors School Leavers are hoping to enter in the future, as well as what has influenced their decision and how sectors’ popularity have changed year on year.

KEY STATS

• Graduate comparison: The main influence in deciding which industry the School Leavers want to work in is the subjects they have studied, while graduates cite their interests.

• 11% of respondents are unsure of what their future industry will be, which is a 7% decrease year on year.

• The Medical and pharmaceutical sector came out on top with an 8% increase year on year, followed by Education and Science and research.

• The least-popular sectors include Recruitment, Logistics and Insurance, all scoring less than 2% with little movement year on year.

WHAT INDUSTRIES ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?

WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL/HAS HELPED YOU DECIDE WHICH INDUSTRY YOU WANT TO WORK IN?
THE JOB SEARCH

The inescapable part of getting employed is of course the job search. We asked our respondents how they approach job seeking, what resources they use, and how they discovered Milkround.

KEY STATS

• When asked how they would prefer to hear about the latest jobs, **64% of respondents said “on a website”**.

• This was followed by **social media (35%)** and **apps (31%)**.

• These results show that even though School Leavers want the freedom to browse and pick out suitable jobs themselves, they also want to be shown relevant jobs in their different daily channels.

• In addition to this, 26% found Milkround via a search engine, proving the importance of SEO-optimisation, and 18% via social media.

• **45% of respondents said they discovered Milkround School Leavers via a link on a different site**, proving the importance of different site partnerships and making sure the brand is always seen.

HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO HEAR ABOUT THE LATEST JOBS?

- **On a website**: 64%
- **Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)**: 35%
- **Mobile phone app**: 31%
- **Career talks**: 28%
- **Text messaging**: 25%
- **Meeting them at recruitment fairs**: 24%
- **Online discussion board**: 15%
WHAT SOURCES DO YOU USE TO LOOK FOR YOUR CAREER OPTIONS?

- 76% of respondents claim that their job search consists of searching the web for jobs.
- 66% admits to using career websites, showing that the overwhelming majority of job seekers in this demographic makes use of the internet to become employed.
- Also important to note that a whole 13% in this age group utilises newspapers.

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE MILKROUND SCHOOL LEAVERS SERVICE?

- 45% of respondents found Milkround School Leavers through a partner site, while 26% used a search engine.
- Digital/social media channels seem to have a larger reach than traditional face-to-face approaches.
CLOSING STATEMENT

Our 2015 results show that while there seems to be a sense of insecurity present in our School Leaver population, there is also a great atmosphere of self-sufficiency and independence in the way they choose to search for employment. In 2016 we will look even closer at these matters and leads to a continued knowledge of School Leavers’ feelings on the work market.

Our School Leavers database is growing larger and larger at an impressive pace, and we are very happy to note that over 2,500 people that are part of this demographic were eager to take part in our 2015 School Leaver Career Confidence Survey. With the number of respondents having increased this year the findings are more interesting and useful than ever.

THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

**School Leavers want to do things for themselves** – our report shows that this demographic prefers to browse their own way to jobs over any other job seeking strategy. Providing a clear and user-friendly online presence is more important than ever.

Many respondents claimed that they do not even know where to begin their job search. Again, there is a huge lack of awareness in how to start a career and what resources exist to aid the journey.

**Social media** continues to be a driving force in spreading awareness of jobs to School Leavers.

Almost half said that they discovered Milkround School Leavers via a partner, proving the great importance of continuing the practice of partnerships and cooperation in brand awareness and customer acquisition.

There is a distinct lack of information supplied to School Leavers in their life stage before entering the workforce. The vast majority claimed that they are being told of university as a primary option – more weight should needs to be put on education on apprenticeships, traineeships, etc. This also stretches to parents and their involvement.
To find out more about working with Milkround School leavers please contact;

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