Bridging the Skills Gap
Experiential Learning and Employer-Centred Training for Addressing Skills Gaps in Canada’s Labour Market

ADaPT Case Study

Mohamed Elmi, PhD
Senior Research Associate and Research Manager
Ted Roger’s School of Management, Diversity Institute,
Ryerson University

mohamed.elmi@ryerson.ca
Agenda

- Introduction
- The Skills Gap in Canada
- The Diversity Institute
- Skills Mismatch and Labour Market Underrepresentation
- Work-Integrated Learning
- The ADaPT Program
- Conclusions
Introduction
What is the Skills Gap?

• Underpinning the notion of the “skills gap” are employers' claims they cannot find qualified talent at a time when rates of unemployment and underemployment among particular groups, including recent post-secondary graduates, skilled immigrants and persons with disabilities, are high.

• While there are many factors, including regional imbalances, unconscious bias and overt discrimination still have a significant impact on the labour market outcomes of marginalized groups
The Skills Gap in Canada

- The skills gap in Canada - and the focus on technology
- Approaches like Work-Integrated Learning
- Immigration policy as a promising solution proposed by the Government on Canada (2010)
- Need for training to address soft skills as well as digital skills
- Also a role for employers to play in improving diversity and inclusion in hiring
The Diversity Institute
Our Focus

Founded in 1999, the Diversity Institute conducts multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder research to address the:

• Needs of diverse Canadians
• Changing nature of skills/competencies
• Policies, processes and tools that advance economic inclusion and success

DI engages in action-oriented research and takes an evidence-based approach to develop collaborative, innovative solutions to societal challenges

Research partners include academic institutions, public, private, non-profit and government
Skills Mismatch and Labour Market Underrepresentation
Research Paradigm & Tools for Assessing the Skills Gap

• Diversity Institute’s Diversity Assessment Tool (DAT)
• Intersectionality
• Business Case for Diversity
• Inclusion
• A [Critical] Ecological Model
Underemployment – Canadian-born vs immigrants – Bachelor

• STEM vs BHASE, men vs women (TRIEC)
• Are employers not tapping into an existing labour pool?
Underemployment – Canadian-born vs immigrants – Above Bachelor

• STEM vs BHASE, men vs women (TRIEC)
• Are employers not tapping into an existing labour pool?
Work-Integrated Learning
Developing the Pipeline

• Outreach and community engagement
• Reaching Youth
• Partnerships
• Corporate Social Responsibility
• Government Relations and Advocacy
Work-Integrated Learning

• Work-integrated learning (WIL) “describes educational activities that intentionally integrate learning within an academic institution with practical application in a workplace setting, relevant to a student’s program of study or career goals” (Peters et al., 2014).

• Canadian government launched Student Work Placement Program (SWPP), which would allow employers to offer work opportunities to post-secondary students in STEM and business programs.
# University Graduate Earnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>2005 Grad</th>
<th>2012 Grad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>$58,939</td>
<td>$65,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Commerce</td>
<td>$52,383</td>
<td>$53,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>$50,814</td>
<td>$56,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Professions</td>
<td>$51,410</td>
<td>$50,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy &amp; Rehabilitation</td>
<td>$50,313</td>
<td>$48,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$47,992</td>
<td>$43,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>$43,996</td>
<td>$42,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>$41,550</td>
<td>$38,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine &amp; Applied Arts</td>
<td>$36,911</td>
<td>$34,695</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growth in Salary | Reduction in Salary
University Graduate Earnings

- Median earnings for 25-34 year olds who are full time paid employees, women and men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>$58,342</td>
<td>$52,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>$78,041</td>
<td>$75,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math and Comp. Sci</td>
<td>$71,056</td>
<td>$64,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Admin</td>
<td>$63,057</td>
<td>$55,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Humanities</td>
<td>$47,795</td>
<td>$44,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Behavioural Sciences</td>
<td>$56,213</td>
<td>$48,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>$73,890</td>
<td>$72,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and teaching</td>
<td>$57,695</td>
<td>$53,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades, services, natural resources, conservation</td>
<td>$58,504</td>
<td>$51,517</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Jobs without people and people without jobs.”

- Don Drummond
  Order of Ontario, Canadian Economist
Youth Underemployment Rate

However, hidden is the statistic of youth underemployment, which is at 27.7% This means one in four are either unemployed, working part-time or less than they wish to, or have just given up looking for work
The ADaPT Case Study
An action research and skills development program to bridge the employment gap for recent graduates.
Skills Development

Essential Skills
- Oral Communication
- Digital Technology
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Reading
- Writing

Critical Thinking
- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Job Task Planning
- Finding Information
- Significant Use of Memory

Thinking Skills

Interpersonal Skills
- Ability to Learn/Teach Others
- Working in Teams
- Negotiation Skills
- Leadership Skills
Skills Development

Technical Skills
- MS Office (Excel, Word, Powerpoint)
- Website Design & Development
- Digital Communications
- Statistical Analysis
- Graphic Design
- Databases

Job Search Skills
- Networking
- Interviewing
- Self-Awareness
- Career Planning
- Resume Writing
- Cover Letter Writing

Other Skills
- Creativity
- Entrepreneurship
- Financial Literacy
- Project Management
- Ability to Learn on the Job
- Professionalism & Etiquette

Self-Awareness, Career Planning, Resume Writing, Cover Letter Writing, Job Search Skills, Technical Skills, Other Skills
Workshops

- Microsoft Excel
- Finance
- Adobe Creative Suite
- Presentation and Networking skills
- Applied Research
- Writing for an Audience
- Personal Branding & Communication
- Business & Marketing
- Google Analytics
- Search Engine Optimization
- Coding
- Big Data Analytics
ADaPT Process

1. Outreach/Marketing
2. Screening
3. Testing
4. Training
5. Placement
6. Ongoing Tracking

12 Cohorts to Date
27+ post-secondary disciplines represented.
81.5% of participants belonged to a group facing employment barriers.

- Women: 41.4%
- Racialized Person: 32.8%
- LGBTQ2S+: 4.1%
- Person with a Disability: 2.4%
- Indigenous Peoples: 0.8%
- None of the Above*: 18.5%

*Self-reporting, includes non-disclosure
ADaPT Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Increased By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Search</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical (Excel, Website/Graphic Design)</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Literacy</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of Business Environment</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Career Pathways

600+ participants placed

88% satisfaction rate
Current Research Objectives

- Updated data on **skills gap**
- **Regional** comparisons
- Efficacy of **varying delivery methods**
- **Test** different levels of access to coaching
- Efficacy of microcredentials

Opportunity to offer **nationwide training**, impacting a larger number of participants facing **employment barriers**:

- Women
- Indigenous Persons
- People with Disabilities
- Racialized People
- LGBTQ2+
Thank you!

Get in touch:
ryerson.ca/diversity
diversityinstitute@ryerson.ca
@RyersonDI
416-979-5000 x6740