



# Capable Auckland

*career development can help make Auckland great*

## A proposed framework

### **Introduction**

Capable Auckland is a new city-wide network of career professionals, industry and business representatives, tertiary education institutions, schools and agencies interested in promoting effective career decision making. The network was established by Career Services in 2010 in response to Auckland governance reforms. Capable Auckland has begun to discuss how a more integrated approach to careers might contribute to the economic development of our city and region.

Our vision is that Auckland has the potential to be a really world class city in which to live and work and that integrated career development has an important role to play in achieving that vision.

### **Career Development**

Career development is about helping people to develop their own ability to manage their career. It encompasses the provision of high quality information and detailed support and advice. It's about supporting individuals and also the needs of a city, region or nation.

Career development encompasses individual decision making and action within our complex modern society. 'Career development is about fostering workforce participation and development of all people for the purposes of community, society and economy at local, national and global levels' (Vaughan & O'Neill, 5).

## Unique Auckland

The formation of our new Auckland Council has created a sense of optimism and energy within our city. A key driver for the reform of governance was to get the city better connected and coordinated. The Capable Auckland forum believes that an integrated career development approach can better equip our city to meet its existing and future challenges.

“..the Auckland Council has an unprecedented opportunity to help set the region’s economy on a path to greater wealth, resilience and sustainability. The Auckland Council must seize this chance to respond to the opportunities and threats facing the region, as it becomes more integrated with the global economy’

*Rod Oram  
Business and Economy; the Auckland Region 2010*

## The challenges we face

At this point Auckland is failing to fully reach its potential. We are optimistic that the new city can not only have a highly productive and sustainable economy, but will also be a place where people can lead fulfilled lives.

However, there are a number of social and educational issues that face our city that need to be addressed. These include:

- young people who do not have sufficient information about Auckland’s labour market needs and opportunities to make considered career decisions
- lower than optimum student achievement levels in Auckland schools, particularly for our Maori and Pacific students
- poor choices made by school leavers in terms of tertiary education and post compulsory schooling training
- younger people are more likely to be unemployed or not be participating fully in the workforce
- basic literacy and numeracy skills hold a significant number of people back from achieving their career potential
- complex vocational pathways are not well understood by students and their families
- poor support for migrant workers and international students to integrate into our economy and society, who then fail to achieve their potential through under employment
- how to embrace our growing international population, both the highly qualified that cannot find relevant work and those with limited language skills

- poor connections between business, industry and education leading to incomplete information flows
- school career education programmes which are often marginalised and remote from the teaching and learning programmes
- changing demographics, a growing population of older workers who will remain in the workforce longer.

Added to these concerns the recession has had a significant impact on the young people of Auckland. The unemployment rate for young people in Auckland aged 15-24 increased 6.4 percentage points to reach a high of 18.4% in 2009.<sup>1</sup>

'There are around 110,000 Aucklanders aged between 15 and 19 years.

Of these, in 2009 59% or 65,000 young people were still at school while a further 11,000 (or 10 percent) were enrolled in tertiary education. A further 2,000 were engaged in some form of training programmes funded by the Tertiary Education Commission. Around 25,000 Aucklanders aged 15-19 years were mainly working in 2009, of whom perhaps 5,000 were also studying. The remaining 8,000 **young Aucklanders were not employed or in study and could be defined as NEET** (Not in employment, education or training). About half of these NEETs were receiving an unemployment benefit or an independent youth benefit while a further 1,000 received the DPB and perhaps 2,000 were receiving the invalids or sickness benefit. The remaining 1,000 or so young people, most likely aged 16 or 17 years, were supported by their families.

*Alan Johnson  
Business and Economy; the Auckland Region 2010 p14*

We believe that a special Auckland focussed approach to these concerns may well be productive. Tackling the concerns centred on the youth of Auckland is clearly a priority.

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<sup>1</sup> *Business and Economy; the Auckland Region 2010 p10 Auckland Regional Council*

“Seizing the opportunity to mobilise our youth in a meaningful way in the workforce can only lead to long term economic and social gains”

Michael Barnett

*Business and Economy; the Auckland Region 2010, p 1*

Auckland is a diverse and varied society. While it has been assumed that a joined up approach will yield significant benefits, specific focus in particular communities is likely to remain our priority.

We believe that career development should be included as an important strategy within the Auckland Council’s first spatial plan. A career development strategy could integrate and drive the response to these challenges.

The Auckland Plan – also referred to as the spatial plan – will guide the future growth and development of the new Auckland city region over 30-40 years and help achieve the Mayor’s vision of Auckland as the world’s most liveable city.

Auckland is expected to grow from 1.4 million today to 2.2 million people by 2051.

The Auckland Plan will have a major influence on how and where people live and work in Auckland in the future, aimed at improving the economic and social well being of people and enhancing their quality of life.

[http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/BuildingPropertyConsents/DistrictRegionalPlans/Pages/spatial\\_plan.aspx](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/BuildingPropertyConsents/DistrictRegionalPlans/Pages/spatial_plan.aspx)

## Future trends

The need to develop our pool of talent and skills is a critical issue for a successful Auckland as it is for most developed societies. James Canton in his book *‘The Extreme Future’* identifies that high quality will be in short supply and will be sourced internationally. ‘Talent, skilled human capital, innovative high tech-savvy people independent of any nation will be the lifeblood of the future organisation’. (Canton, 92)

Auckland is a city that needs to grasp this global reality if it is to secure the best talent to help drive the growth and development of the city. We need not only to equip our young people with the ability to navigate through a complex and rapidly changing society, but also support them to develop their own potential. The

focus must be on developing young people's career competency, so that they can travel through these complexities and achieve their full potential. Innovative and creative approaches will be central to this project.

“In every industry, from health care to manufacturing to transportation to financial services to media, innovation will be the key driver of competitive advantage”

*The Extreme Future: The Top Trends That Will Reshape  
the World for the Next 5, 10, and 20 Years  
James Canton p94*

If we are to achieve our aspiration for Auckland we need to have specific regard to developing the right skills for the coming decades. Canton (2010) believes that the 'era of abundant skilled workers is over' and that the issue of 'the scarcity of employees at time of increased globalisation and competition will be a watershed issue' (Canton 92).

Career competency, and high quality careers information and practices could play a significant part in preparing our Auckland community to meet this challenge. By working in a much more aligned and focussed fashion we can play our part to achieve this vision.

**A city that actively provides for its citizens' career development needs is likely to be an attractive place for young people to develop their careers.**

**Capable Auckland** presents an opportunity to coordinate one important sector in response to these challenges.

‘The mobility of workers, desperate for a more economically sustainable life, will be the key enabler of economies-and the death of some as well. Nations that restrict immigration will falter, perhaps even die. Those that embrace immigrants and retrain and retool them will fare far better in talent-enabled global information economy in the near future’

*The Extreme Future: The Top Trends That Will Reshape  
the World for the Next 5, 10, and 20 Years  
James Canton P 110*

It is time for the Auckland community to develop an action plan that provides leadership in the area of career development.

**Capable Auckland** is a proposed way forward, through a network of interested and involved people who can contribute to this outcome. We are calling for a unique city wide strategy to take our region forward.

### **The career development landscape of Auckland**

Considerable capacity already exists within the Auckland region to promote career development.

- Career practitioners, approximately 50 career practitioners operate in Auckland as private consultants
- Career Services, a Crown agency has a hub office in Eden Terrace and satellite offices in Manukau and Henderson, providing a range of services both face to face and through electronic means
- The universities and polytechnics each have career centres to support student career decision making
- The Auckland Chamber of Commerce runs a number of initiatives (e.g Return to Work programmes, New Kiwis website) and encourages employers to employ groups such as migrants, unemployed. youth and sole parents
- Most secondary schools have career advisers and other staff that work directly in this field
- State schools are required to provide career education programmes for all students from Year 7 onwards
- The University of Auckland teacher professional development arm Team Solutions supports career education in schools
- AUT is a key national provider of career development qualifications
- NGOs such as Workbridge provide essential services to people in careers
- Industry training Organisations (ITOs) provide important trades related careers information and support
- Major careers and work expos (such as the Coke Careers Expo) operate within the city attracting thousands of people.

Alignment and coordination of these resources towards agreed common goals will help progress our agenda significantly.

There is broad support within these professional communities for the **Capable Auckland** project. We believe that the project will not replace what each of these groups do, but improve the alignment both within the group and with the broader Auckland regional strategies.

But it is not just the career sector that has a role here. Employers, industries and unions have very important roles to play.

‘At the policy level, career development is about fostering workforce participation and development of all people for the purposes of community, society and economy at local, national and global levels. In other career development and career education is increasingly understood as a public good as well as a private one. And the school-based careers advisor becomes significant not just for their role in helping individual students understanding interest and translate these into their tertiary programmes and employment situations, but also for their role in national employability strategy and workforce development.’

*Vaughan and O'Neill p5*

### **What would Capable Auckland do?**

An active, co-ordinated programme supporting careers in Auckland would make a significant contribution to the productivity of our economy and improve our society. It's not about taking over what existing groups and agencies do, but working together in a more coordinated and sophisticated way to achieve the outcomes we all strive for.

In order to create a career capable Auckland we propose five key areas of work:

1. Coordinating and developing alignment within the sector
2. Developing opportunities for our young people
3. Supporting career education programmes in Auckland's schools
4. Integrating the best ideas in careers work into our city's planning
5. Leading best practice to help all Aucklanders to reach their potential.

We believe that these projects can make a significant difference to our city, and will help achieve its potential and make it a great place to work and live, by supporting people to make the best career decisions.

## **Coordination and alignment**

At present provision of good career information and the development of career competencies lacks cohesion and alignment. A wide range of actors are involved and this adds to the complexity for people to manage. We propose that a coordinated approach could assist in developing our city. This will involve developing a coherent vision for work in this area, mapping what exists and actively sharing these important resources. In particular:

1. Establish a careers vision blueprint for Auckland that articulates the career development goals and provides sector wide focus and alignment.
2. Establish a careers resource base that maps and identifies career development resources available to Aucklanders.
3. Establish stronger links between career development organisations and youth mentor groups.
4. An online Capable Auckland forum for sharing projects, research and ideas.
5. A regular e-newsletter for career practitioners that synthesises the latest economic and labour market information available within industry, central and local government.

## **Youth opportunities**

Our young people face a challenging and complex environment in which to establish and manage their careers. A number of our young people find this too difficult and drop out of the job market. That's simply something we have to do better at. By working to support students to develop their competencies we can strengthen their contribution to our economy and society. It will help us retain the higher order skills we need as the leading city of the Pacific.

6. A "Work in Auckland" career experience day to promote better knowledge about career and work opportunities and to connect learning at school with 'how the world works'.
7. A virtual career expo focused on Auckland's needs, the best insights to what trends are going to shape the Auckland workforce, with chat forums and specific links to existing websites.
8. Develop through social media networks high quality information about emerging trends and opportunities in Auckland.

9. Promote the development of an Auckland internship programme focussed on key growth industries.

### **Support for career education programmes in Auckland's Schools**

Our schools are the best place to equip our young people with the key competencies to navigate their way through their careers, making effective choices and up-skilling themselves in productive ways.

10. Development of a set of benchmarks/expectations for career education programmes in all Auckland schools.
11. Professional development for school leaders on the Auckland economy and it's skill requirements.
12. Support schools to ensure that no student leaves school in Auckland without an active career plan.
13. Expand specific career programmes for Maori, Pacific and migrant students focussed on skill shortages and career competency building.

### **Providing the best thinking and information**

In order to be effective we need to have access to the best thinking in this area, and focus that thinking on our city, and its unique characteristics and attributes.

14. Bring the best thinkers in career development and education together to establish a blueprint of what is being done in Auckland, and identify what potential projects might add value to our work.
15. Align economic and educational planning within the city to ensure that the city has the very best talent to enable the emerging economy to fully develop.
16. Establish an annual forum for education leaders, tertiary institutes and business/industry to share ideas and needs.
17. Identify and share best practice for Career Development work.

## **Support needed from the Auckland Council**

Without doubt, Auckland plays a leading role in New Zealand's economy and infrastructure. Through its spatial plan, the Council intends to set a strategic direction for the growth and development of Auckland and its communities for the next 20-30 years. Recognising Auckland's role in New Zealand and how Auckland may develop in the future are key inclusions of the spatial plan.

Analysing the trends and future needs of the Auckland economy and developing a structured and thoughtful approach to the career development of its workforce will contribute over time to the economic development of our city and region.

The new Auckland Council can support this initiative through:

- Including career development as a strategy within Auckland Council's first spatial plan
- Connecting business and industry to career practitioners and schools
- Providing high quality information on economy, labour market information to our young people and their career influencers
- Include career development concepts in the social planning for Auckland
- Show leadership as an employer by providing its own employees with good access to career development
- Encourage initiatives that support Aucklanders to reach their potential.