

We split delegates into four groups and asked:

- How can we make business and education connections as easy as possible?
- How do we overcome Somerset's large geography?
- How do we raise the profile of Somerset's exciting opportunities?

The responses were remarkably consistent –and the recurring themes were:

1) Use technology, formats and channels that meet audience needs.

Short films made at a workplace are 'light touch' for the business and, can be delivered through social media without incurring travel costs or timetable pressures for the school. Information and engagement opportunities must be mobile friendly.

2) Use language that all understand

Avoid acronyms, explain the different pressures facing education and business in everyday language. Build confidence in dealing with health and safety and safeguarding – bust the myths.

3) Make the benefits clear – and simple

State clearly school and college statutory duties and how to meet these. Show the current and future benefits to business of engaging with education. For instance, engaging employers directly with subject leaders and curriculum design can deliver benefits for both partners.

4) Use existing networks to build momentum and reach

Town councils and town chambers of commerce can reach out to their local communities as ambassadors. These networks can spread the consistent and simple message and create new opportunities. For instance, smaller employers in one town might share placement opportunities.

The EBP team will now build these approaches into its work with partners. For further information contact support@somerset-ebp.co.uk

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