



For Immediate Release 11 May 2023:

“IF I WAS IN THE ROOM, I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE – BUT I CAN'T GET IN THE ROOM”

As Alastair Campbell’s new book “But What Can I Do?” highlights the important of youth voice in levelling up society, top social mobility charity The Talent Tap reveals how to overcome the barriers to Gen Z being heard

- *People from privileged backgrounds are still 60% more likely to be in a professional job than working class people*
- *Eton has produced three times as many prime ministers as the Labour Party*
- *Fully inclusive organisations perform 36% better*
- *Social Mobility experts issue simple 4 point plan for organisations to be fully inclusive*

PUBLISHED today, Alistair Campbell’s new book “*But What Can I Do?*” highlights the importance of role models, confidence and speaking up for young people. To help unlock this vital wave of change, leading social mobility charity The Talent Tap has issued a rallying call for organisations to empower underprivileged young people to transform society.

Official figures show that despite making up the majority of UK society, working class voices are still largely locked out of the debate about the nation’s future.

Government statistics reveal you are still 60 per cent more likely to be in a professional job if you were from a privileged background, with 72 per cent of senior civil servants the product of private schools. Even more shockingly, the exclusive Eton College has produced three times as many prime ministers as Campbell’s Labour Party in its entire history.

However, diverse and inclusive firms perform an average of 36 per cent better, according to analysts McKinsey – meaning building a society to reflect all views is vital for the nation’s economic and social progress.

To help, social mobility experts The Talent Tap have developed a simple four-point ‘**Social Mobility Checklist**’ which any business, charity or organisation can follow to ensure they are including all voices and driving positive change.





The Talent Tap CEO Naomi Ambrose said: “Instead of asking ‘*But what can I do?*’, our Social Mobility Checklist is the ‘*Here’s what you can do*’ guide for organisations, whatever their size. Our checklist is a simple way to ensure your organisation has recognised then removed the barriers facing young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and brought their voices to the table.”

The Talent Tap Social Mobility Checklist

1) **Geography:** Youngsters in ‘social mobility coldspots’ such as rural and coastal areas are twice as likely to ditch their career dreams compared to city and suburban teens. You can’t be what you can’t see, so where you live effects both your insight into opportunities and your physical ability to access them.

THE SOLUTION: Ensure your organisation’s outreach extends beyond cities to ensure you are covering the entire talent pool.

2) **Network and Connections:** Networking is a key confidence builder and often vital to landing a first job and climbing the career ladder. However under half of city youngsters and a third of rural and coastal teens have any form of professional network in place.

THE SOLUTION: Begin outreach while students are still at school with school visits, open days at your organisation plus activity on social media and LinkedIn. Show students what a network is and how to build one. Schools, colleges and companies can build and share their own alumni networks. Partner with relevant charities for deeper connections in your sector.

3) **Imposter Syndrome:** Only 17 per cent of working class young people would be very comfortable working in an organisation where there were no other employees of a similar background. From cultural reference points to soft skills such as which glass or knife and fork to use at a formal dinner, consider how working class students experiences may differ from the majority in your company.

THE SOLUTION: Be truly inclusive. You don’t know what you don’t know so ask your working class employees what needs to be done to improve on-boarding and the company culture. Never assume prior knowledge for your cultural practices and assess how those practices could look to someone from a different background.

4) **Key Communication Skills:** Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds cite self-confidence as the largest contributing factor to future success, while interview technique was the biggest skill required to get ahead. Communication skills are key to both of these.

THE SOLUTION: Practice makes perfect for public speaking and communication. Where possible, build in presentations and public speaking by young people as part of your work





experience and outreach plans. Too stretched to deliver? Partner with organisations which can offer public speaking for young people. The Talent Tap gives public speaking training to every student we support in conjunction with the Speakers Trust.

Naomi Ambrose CEO added: “Barriers are individual, intersectional and can only be fully understood by listening to lived experience and allowing that voice to be heard. To future proof our society we need to empower and support a true youth voice and ensure that young people from every background have a seat at the table.”

Her views were backed by working class student Shannon Jones (21, from Wiltshire) who said “ I believe I have loads to contribute. If I was in the room, I could make a difference, but my background means I can't get in the room”.

Among the businesses already following the checklist is Synlab UK, Europe's leading provider of laboratory diagnostic services. CEO Mark Dollar explained: “The challenge we face is a significant one and not well understood across industry and society as a whole.

“This checklist helps to educate and raise awareness of the issues for leaders in industry. We need to appreciate the barriers and understand the benefits of addressing the problem within our respective businesses.”

ENDS

Naomi, Shannon and Mark are all available for interview.

For further information, contact Naomi Ambrose naomi@thetalenttap.com

ABOUT THE TALENT TAP:

The Talent Tap is the UK’s leading charity targeting social mobility coldspots. Each year the charity provides long term mentorship, residential work experience and career and skills based support for hundreds of disadvantaged young people.

