

June 2017

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**Using academic research and intervention data to shape career support for WP students.**

Lessons learned from five years partnering with universities to improve WP employment outcomes.

# Overview

## A. About upReach

## B. Five key lessons:

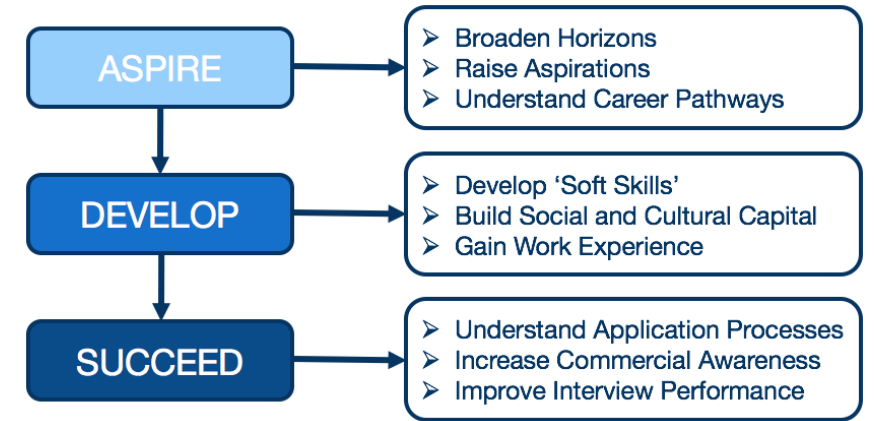
- 1) Getting value from data
- 2) The Fresh Start Effect
- 3) Changing the language of student communications
- 4) Role models and personalised support
- 5) Confidence is critical

## C. Achieving Better WP outcomes

# About upReach

A social mobility charity that delivers a programme of professional development support to undergraduates from less-advantaged backgrounds.

We work in **close partnership with universities and employers.**



- **671** Associates from **40** universities
- Personalised, intensive support from start of **first year** until graduation
- Extensive use of **technology** to facilitate and measure impact of programmes
- **£5,000** higher salary vs average graduate

# Five key lessons

- 1) Getting value from data
- 2) The Fresh Start Effect
- 3) Changing the language of student communications
- 4) Role models and personalised support
- 5) Confidence is critical

# 1) Getting value from data – Engagement Dashboard

- Tracks every activity a student completes, online or offline, generating "Engagement Points" and an "Engagement Status"
- Enables stronger relationships with those that do engage – and precise targeting of those who aren't engaging – with personalised messages.

Name	Professional Experience (15)	Face to Face Workshop (7)	Mentor (10)	Formal 1-To-1s (5)	Video Forums (5)	Reasoning Tests Attempted (5)	Initial GEF Assessment (5)	My upReach Sessions (2)	Application Reviews (5)	Action Steps Completed (2)	Mock Interviews (5)	Note added (2)	Engagement Points ?	Engagement Status ?
	4	1(0)	2	8(0)	1(0)	1	0	47	4	0	2	0	261	GREEN
	0	2(1)	1	4(0)	5(0)	15	1	69	0	0	0	5	297	GREEN
	0	3(1)	1	2(0)	5(0)	1	1	98	0	0	1	14	305	GREEN
	1	4(1)	2	1(0)	1(0)	8	1	90	1	1	1	8	326	GREEN
	1	2(1)	1	2(0)	11(0)	15	1	89	1	0	1	7	386	GREEN

# 1) Getting value from data – Email tracking

- upReach Weekly Update Email is sent to all Associates, with details of our skills workshops, video forums, exclusive insight days and work experience opportunities.
- We track **who reads it and when**, and **which links they click on**.
- Each Associate has a **Contact Rating** based on their email interaction.



First Name

Last Name

Email Marketing

Source

Contact Rating

Subscribed

List Import from Copy/Pasted File



Subscribed

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Subscribed

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Subscribed

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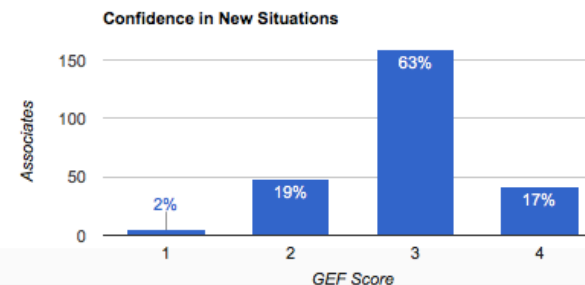
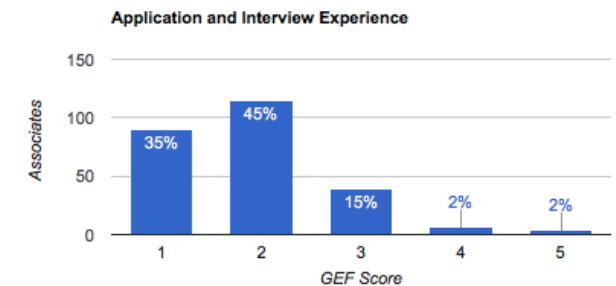
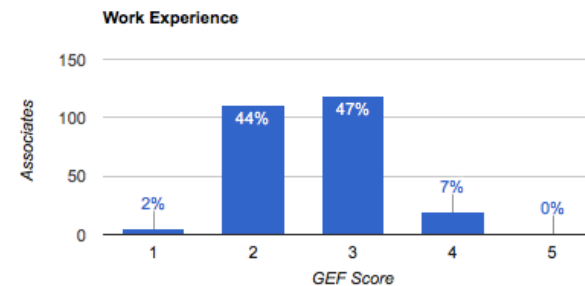
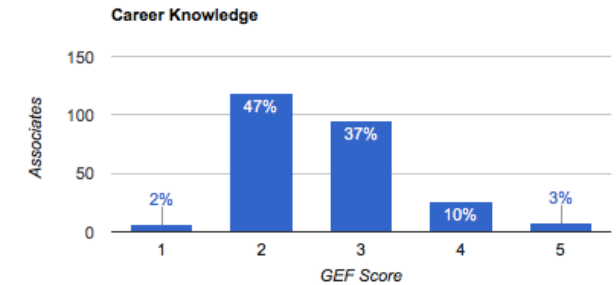
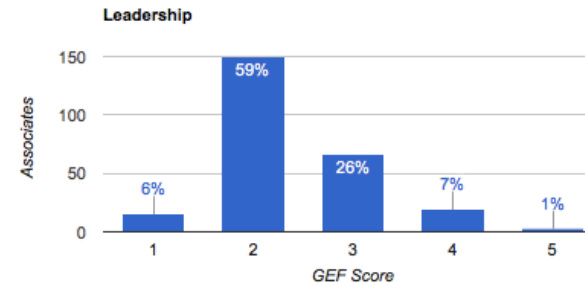


# 1) Getting value from data – The GEF

In 2015, upReach developed the **Graduate Employability Framework**, working with our partner employers including McKinsey.

- GEF - a set of competencies, experiences or skills that top employers consider essential.
- Detailed employability characteristics of all Associates.
- Tailored programme for each Associate based on the results.
- Track progress over time, and compare cohorts or universities.

GEF results (254)



## 2) The Fresh Start Effect

The timing of communications to students can greatly impact the likelihood of engagement.

- ***Dai, Milkman and Riis***\* found evidence for "The Fresh Start Effect" – whereby aspirational behaviours were more likely to occur at the start of a new week, month or year.

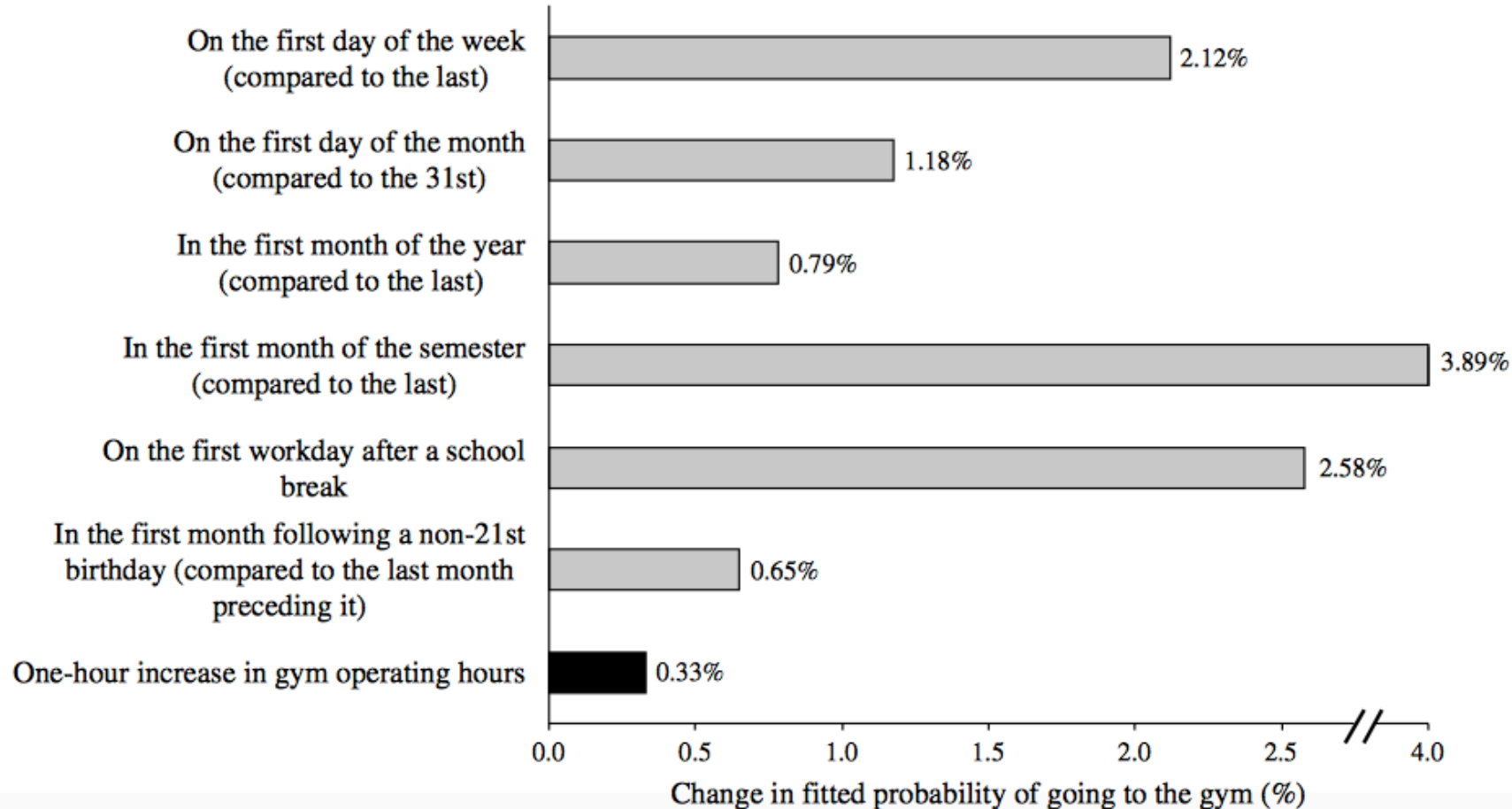
\* Hengchen Dai, Katherine L. Milkman, Jason Riis  
(2014) The Fresh Start Effect: Temporal Landmarks  
Motivate Aspirational Behavior. Management Science

Across three field studies, we find evidence of a fresh start effect whereby people exhibit a higher likelihood of engaging in aspirational behaviors following temporal landmarks such as the initiation of new calendar cycles (e.g., the start of a new week, month, year, or academic semester), holidays, and birthdays. We analyze a broad set of aspirational activities: web searches for the term "diet," gym attendance, and the creation of commitment contracts to support a wide range of different goals. The effects we document are large in magnitude, suggesting that the fresh start effect has meaningful implications for individual and societal welfare.



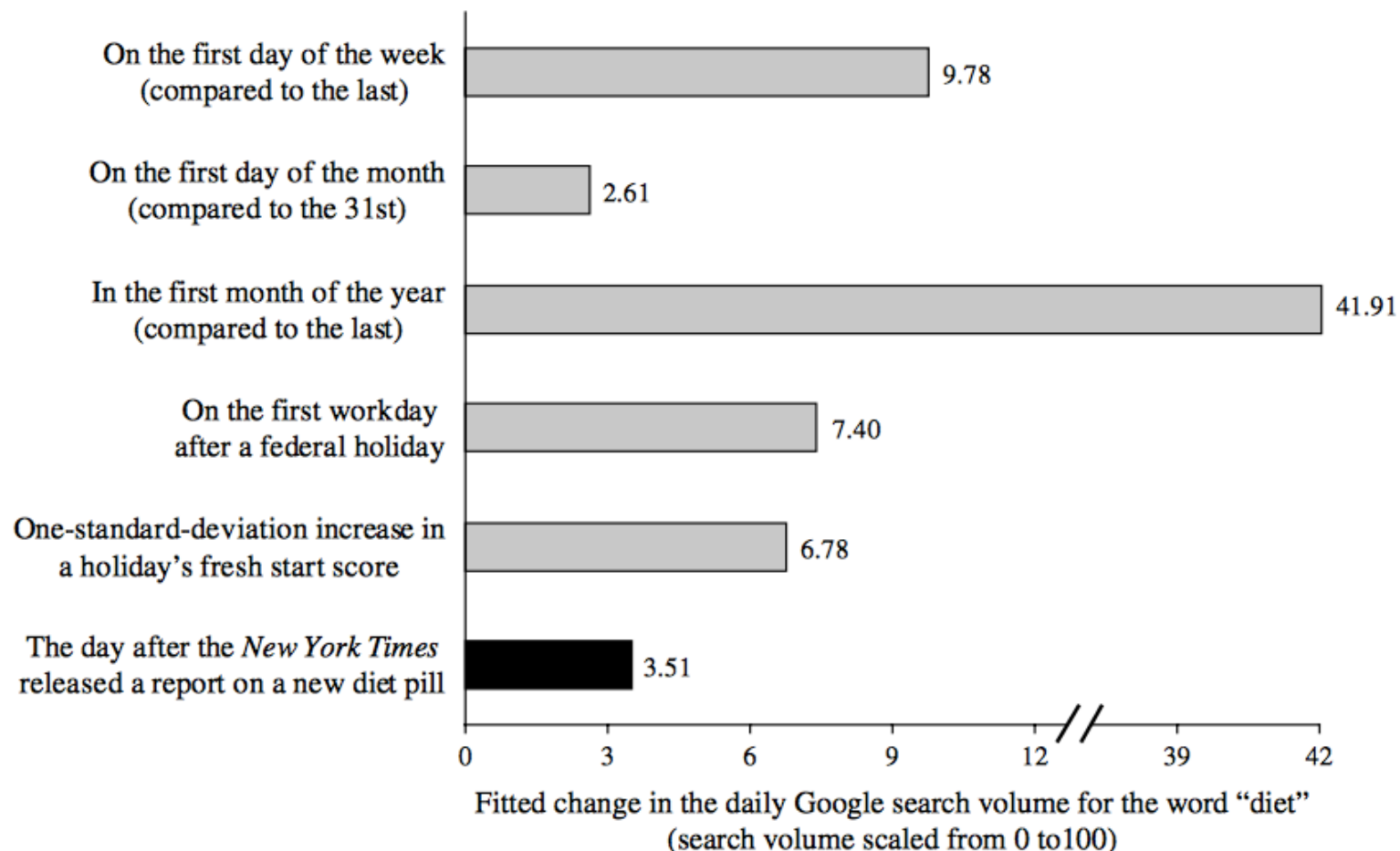
## 2) The Fresh Start Effect – going to the gym

Changes in the Fitted Probability of Going to the Gym as a Function of the Date and Its Proximity to a Variety of Temporal Landmarks



## 2) The Fresh Start Effect – internet searches for “Diet”

Changes in the Fitted Daily Search Volume for the Term “Diet” as a Function of the Date and Its Proximity to a Variety of Temporal Landmarks



## 2) The Fresh Start Effect - upReach

Examples:

- 1) upReach send a **Weekly Update** email to Associates with details of our skills workshops, video forums, exclusive insight days and work experience opportunities.
  - In late 2016, we compared e-mail open rates and clicks for emails sent at different times and days during the week.
  - We achieved e-mail **open rates of up to 70%** by sending on a **Sunday evening** – perhaps due to this then being received and acted up
- 2) upReach Programme Coordinators plan 1-to-1 meetings with students at the very beginning of each term.

# 3) Changing the language of student communication

**upReach partner with universities to support a cohort of their WP students:**

- We deliver a three year programme of professional development, helping them to secure work experience, internships and ultimately a graduate job.
- Universities invite WP students to become an Associate, sending an email in September.

**Many students leave it too late to focus on their career - We wanted to increase uptake.**

THE  
BEHAVIOURAL  
INSIGHTS TEAM

*“Information delivery pathways matter in improving students’ aspirations”*

Does the heart rule the head? Economic and emotional incentives for university attendance (2016)

**BIT’s *EAST* principles:**

"If you want to encourage a behaviour, make it **E**asy, **A**tttractive, **S**ocial and **T**imely"

# 3) Changing the language of student communication

In redesigning the email sent by WP departments, we aimed to use the EAST principles:

- e.g. Easy:** The email linked to a form asking only for name and email address (foot-in-the-door technique).
- Attractive:** Including the monetary value of upReach support to increase the attractiveness of our offer.
- Social:** Drawing on the success of others that applied quickly to encourage students to do the same.
- Timely:** Email was sent after students registered but before lectures began, and gave a clearly stated deadline.

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upReach conducted a RCT to test three new emails, to assess most effective language:

- Control (as used in previous years)
- Control + **Monetary value of free support**
- Control + **Call to action** (draw on success of others that applied quickly)
- Control + **Both of above**

# 3) Changing the language of student communication

- Using both the monetary value and the call to action increased the number of form completions by 67%.
- No statistically significant impact from adding only one element.
- No reduction in subsequent engagement.

**upReach have tested various changes in language and rolled out new default communications for all of our activities.**

Form 1 completions resulting from different emails





## 4) Role models and personalised support

upReach's uses a heavily personalised model of support, including a mentor and Programme Coordinator. We were interested in evidence for how to make the most of this support.

THE  
BEHAVIOURAL  
INSIGHTS TEAM ♦

### **Does the heart rule the head? Economic and emotional incentives for university attendance (2016)**

*“Emphasising the social and personal growth has a greater impact on aspiration than financial gains.”*

*“The use of an inspirational role model focusing on the emotional and social aspects of attending university has considerable power at driving student aspirations.”*

## 4) Role models and personalised support

*Can such role models also improve engagement in career-related activities while at university?*

- **Programme Coordinator** - upReach Associates each have a Programme Coordinator who supports them during their time at university – helping them broaden their career horizons, raise aspirations and understand career pathways. Together they plan which upReach activities they need to participate in to develop.
- **Mentor** - All Associates are also offered a Mentor from one of our Partner Employers – typically someone 2-5 years into their career who can act as a role model – and provide career specific advice.

**Question - Is an Associate with a Mentor (a) more likely to engage in upReach activities, and (b) more likely to be successful when applying for jobs?**

## 4) Role models and personalised support

### Is an upReach Associate with a Mentor more likely to be successful when applying for jobs?

- Data set – 4,531 applications between 2012 and 2017 from 897 Associates of which 426 had mentors (47%).

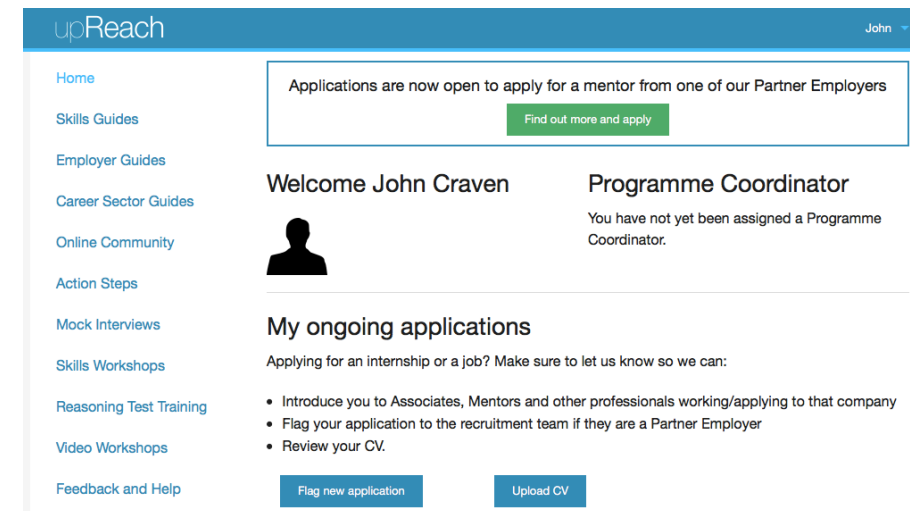
Success Rate	Average Applicant	upReach PC (no Mentor)	upReach PC + Mentor
All applications	1% - 15%	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
upReach Partners	1% - 9%	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>
Partner Employer A	3% - 5%	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>18.0%</b>

- **Considerations:**
  - All upReach Associates have a Programme Coordinator – otherwise, the impact of a mentor might be much higher.
  - Those requesting a mentor might be more engaged/pro-active – hence more likely to succeed.
  - A mentor likely has additional positive impact – need to look beyond success rate.
  - Higher aspirations – Associates may make Applications to more competitive programmes with lower success rates?

## 4) Role models and personalised support

### Is an Associate with a Mentor more likely to engage in career development?

- Use of online resources:
  - No mentor = **4 visits** to my.upReach
  - With mentor = **13.1 visits** to my.upReach
- Tests completed on Online Reasoning Test Platform:
  - No mentor = **1.8 tests completed**
  - With mentor = **4.4 tests completed**
- Is higher engagement a result of the mentor relationship, or is requesting a mentor a feature of higher engagement?



## 5) Confidence is critical

- Our partner employers emphasise **confidence** and **career knowledge** as critical factors that determine success in a competitive graduate labour market.
- **Louise Ashley** (July 2016), in research for the Social Mobility Commission, highlighted that:

*“Social confidence and communication skills can be honed through involvement and leadership in extra-curricular activities, something that can conflict with paid employment for non-privileged students.”*



Social Mobility  
Commission

### Socio-Economic Diversity in Life Sciences and Investment Banking

#### Life Sciences

Joanne Moore, ARC Network

Louise Higham, ARC Network

Anna Mountford-Zimdars, King's College London

#### Investment Banking

Dr Louise Ashley, Royal Holloway University of London

Dr Holly Birkett, University of Birmingham

Professor Jo Duberley, University of Birmingham

Dr Etlyn Kenny, University of Birmingham

**July 2016**

## 5) Confidence is critical

### How can Associates build confidence?

- Extra-curricular activities – involvement and leadership
- Insight Days at employers premises
- Preparation – deeper career knowledge, e.g. upReach Career Course
- Mock interviews – by people in the industry, who ask the right questions – and follow up.
- Mock Assessment Centres & Group Exercises
- Personalised Support – Mentors and Programme Coordinators



# Improving WP graduate outcomes in 2017-18

## 1) Review of all communications using behavioural science principles:

→ Associate Survey & Focus Group in June 2017. Further AB testing planned

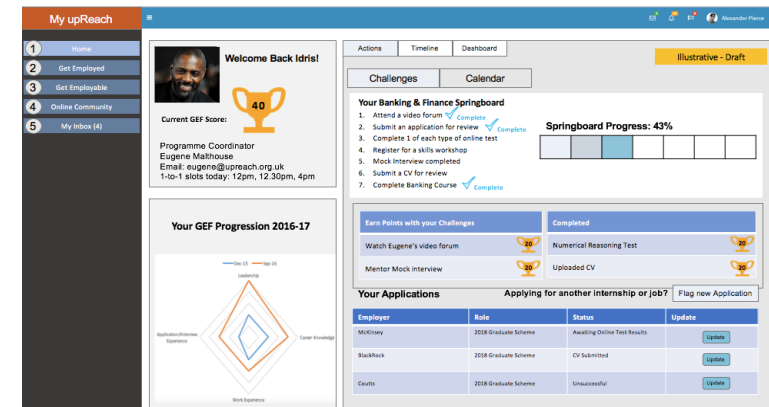
## 2) Enhancements to Graduate Employability Framework



## 3) Multi-channel support programme, focused on one-to-one help, with gamification of online resources

→ upReach points

→ Employability score



# Improving WP graduate outcomes in 2017-18

## 4) Career Springboard to drive engagement



## Press Releases

### upReach partners with Bank of America Merrill Lynch to help improve students' access to Financial Services

*Posted on May 9, 2017 by upReach*

The social mobility charity upReach has partnered with Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BofAML) in an effort to help improve access to the Financial Services sector for students from less-advantaged backgrounds. Through this new partnership with BofAML, funding will support upReach's new 'Banking and Finance Springboard', a programme designed to help 90 students from less-advantaged [Read More](#)