

Breakthrough Moments – exploring what personal achievement means to young adults and how this is impacting their future career decisions: a survey on behalf of *Get Into Teaching*

Introduction

Kindred Agency commissioned research company Censuswide to carry out a survey on behalf of the *Get Into Teaching* campaign exploring the views of university students and recent graduates. The purpose of the survey was to gain further insights on what achievement means to this group, the most motivating factors when it comes to their future career path, and what breakthrough moments might mean in a future job role, as well as the extent to which they feel that their teachers from their time at school helped to equip them to achieve breakthrough moments in their life so far.

Findings from the survey were used to inform campaign development and marketing, in particular public relations activity to position teaching as an opportunity for those looking for a fulfilling and rewarding career option. Press releases based on the main survey findings were proactively shared with target national and regional media for publication. These releases included information about how those considering a career in teaching can find out more.

Methodology

The research was conducted by Censuswide in accordance with the [MRS Code of Conduct \(2019\)](#) between 25th June 2021 – 5th July 2021. The aim was to gain a representative sample of 2,000 current university students (any year) and recent graduates (who graduated within the last two years) in England. The final response was from exactly 2,000 adults. Respondents were asked a set of single answer and multi-answer questions. All responses were gathered using an online survey and individuals were recruited via a random and anonymous sample selection, from an online “double opt-in” panel (where all eligible respondents are required to answer the demographic screening questions again to take part in the survey) of the general public in England.

The Censuswide panel was originally recruited via sampling specialists and since has grown organically. Panellists can opt to answer all surveys but will be filtered out if a survey is not relevant to them. Panellists are also invited to participate in surveys via a newsletter. Censuswide employs members of the [Market Research Society](#) and its research activity abides by the [ESOMAR](#) principles.

The way these surveys were built meant that respondents were asked a number of preliminary screening questions to gather their demographic data, which could be used to analyse the data. This demographic data included age group, gender, work status, city and region.

Questions were based on a range of topics and themes exploring:

- What achievement mean to them, and the most motivating factors, when thinking about a future career
- The importance of personal growth opportunities as well as career progression
- What breakthrough moments mean to them when considering a future career path or job role
- Whether the pandemic has highlighted anything in terms of what personal achievement means and their outlook on potential achievements in life
- To what extent they have experienced fewer breakthrough moments in their life, studies or work throughout the pandemic
- How frequently respondents take the time to reflect on their achievements and how they choose to do this
- To what extent they agree that their teachers from their time at school have helped to equip them to achieve breakthrough moments in their live so far

In the survey, we are working with a 3.09% margin of error (and a 95% confidence interval), which means that if the research were to be repeated, we would expect the percentages to differ no more than 3% either way from the current results data.

Summary findings

Respondents were asked what achievement means to them, when thinking about their future career. From a range of statements, respondents answered as follows: 34% said having a sense of pride in the job I do; 33% said earning a high salary; 33% said knowing that my work has meaning and purpose; 30% said my work making an impact in the world; 29% said making my friends/family proud; 29% said making a difference to others every day; 28% said excelling beyond my expectations; 26% said progressing to a senior position; 23% said a number of small rewarding wins on a regular basis; and 21% said one big thing that I'll be remembered for. Just 1% said that achievement means nothing to them when thinking about my future career and under 1% stated “other”.

From a range of statements, respondents were asked to select up to three factors they found most motivating when thinking about their future job role/career path: 29% said being able to grow as a person through the work I do; 28% said being aware of the positive impact that my job/career will have; 27% said being recognised for my hard work; 26% said seeing clear opportunities for progression and professional development; 26% said helping others to achieve something they didn't think they could; 25% said daily moments of satisfaction in my work; 25% said the opportunity to be creative and bring my personality into my work; 23% said the opportunity to achieve something I didn't think I could; and 21% said carrying out challenging work on a regular basis. Just 1% said there are no factors they considered to be the most motivating and under 1% stated “none of the above”.

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: “*Having the opportunity to grow as a person in my future career is as important as career progression*”: 38% said strongly agree, 48% said somewhat agree, 11% said neither agree nor disagree, 3% said somewhat disagree, and under 1% said strongly disagree.

As part of the survey, respondents were asked which of the following statements best describes what a "breakthrough moment/s" might mean to them in their future job role/career: 39% said achieving personal targets I've set for myself; 36% said having a positive impact on people's lives; 34% said being confident in the job I do; 32% said reaching the seniority level I've been aiming for; 30% said overcoming adversity to achieve something; 29% said facing my fears about something; 28% said embracing challenges in order to learn; and 1% said "none of the above".

Respondents were asked, when thinking about moments of personal achievement, what is it that they find most rewarding if anything: 36% said the satisfaction of feeling something was worthwhile; 35% said knowing I have grown as a person as a result; 34% said the feeling that I have achieved something I couldn't previously do; 33% said gaining new knowledge; 31% said the way it makes me feel about myself; 30% said helping others get to where they want to be; and 27% said the praise I get from others. Just 1% said that there is nothing they found most rewarding and under 1% stated "other".

Asked what the pandemic has highlighted for them in terms of what personal achievements mean, respondents answered as follows: 31% said it has made me realise that a collection of smaller 'wins' can be more meaningful than a big success; 31% said it has made me want to have more personal achievements in my life and work; 30% said it has made me realise that I want the next few years to be filled with opportunities for personal achievements; 29% said it has made me realise that personal achievements are really important to me and my self-worth; 29% said it has made me understand the importance of celebrating my personal achievements; 28% said it has made me value my personal achievements more than ever; 27% said it has made me understand the importance of celebrating the personal achievements of others; and 26% said it has made me re-evaluate which achievements are important to me. Just 2% said the pandemic hasn't highlighted anything for me in terms of what personal achievements mean, and less than 1% stated "other".

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "Throughout the pandemic, I have experienced fewer breakthrough moments - points where I've felt I was progressing in life, my studies or work": 31% said strongly agree, 45% said somewhat agree, 16% said neither agree nor disagree, 6% said somewhat disagree, and 2% said strongly disagree.

Respondents were asked how, if at all, the pandemic changed their outlook on potential achievements in life: 36% said I'm more grateful for the opportunities I have in life; 35% said I've learnt that feeling a sense of achievement on a regular basis makes me happy and keeps me motivated; 34% said I've learnt to celebrate smaller achievements more regularly; 34% said I'm more focused on what is important for me to achieve; 32% said I've realised supporting others to do well gives me a sense of achievement; and 31% said I've redefined what I view as 'achieving in life'. Just 3% said the pandemic has not changed my outlook, and less than 1% stated "other".

When asked how often they take the time to reflect on their achievements, professional or personal, respondents answered as follows: 9% said every day; 18% said 4-6 days a week; 29% said 2-3 days a week; 19% said once a week; 12% said once every 2 to 3 weeks; and 7% said once a month. Fewer than 1% said less than once a month, 2% said never and 4% said I don't know.

Respondents who take the time to reflect on their achievements, personal or professional, were asked how they reflect on their professional or personal achievements currently: 42% said I personally reflect on them on a regular basis; 41% said I talk about them with my friends and family; 32% said I write them down in a journal or diary; 31% said I talk about them to a lecturer, manager or mentor; 30% said I talk about them on my social media channels; and under 1% stated "other".

Respondents were also asked, when looking back on the breakthrough moments in their life so far, to what extent do they agree that their teacher/s from their time at school helped to equip them to achieve these: 26% said strongly agree, 48% said somewhat agree, 18% said neither agree nor disagree, 6% said somewhat disagree and 2% said strongly disagree.

The city-based statistical variations report:

City-based data	Birmingham	Bradford	Brighton	Bristol	Hull	Leeds	Leicester	Liverpool	Manchester	Newcastle	Nottingham	Norwich	Oxford	Plymouth	Sheffield	Southampton
<i>Number of respondents per city in the overall sample</i>	232	125	50	72	51	93	56	61	220	78	190	50	50	52	63	58
Respondents who agree* having the opportunity to grow as a person in their future career is as important as career progression	75%	94%	90%	79%	92%	78%	77%	74%	93%	82%	86%	94%	80%	90%	81%	86%
Respondents who agree** that throughout the pandemic they have experienced fewer breakthrough moments – points where they felt they were progressing in life, their studies or work	66%	90%	80%	68%	86%	72%	77%	69%	82%	60%	83%	76%	80%	87%	75%	84%
Respondents who agree*** that their teacher/s from their time at school helped to equip them to achieve breakthrough moments in their life so far	58%	86%	82%	72%	84%	67%	73%	67%	80%	60%	83%	82%	72%	90%	68%	76%

Respondents who say achievement in a future career means having a sense of pride in the job they do	34%	38%	36%	33%	37%	37%	39%	23%	34%	36%	24%	36%	26%	31%	38%	31%
Respondents who say achievement in a future career is knowing that my work has meaning and purpose	32%	33%	34%	35%	25%	34%	43%	44%	32%	37%	22%	30%	16%	42%	29%	40%
Respondents who say a breakthrough moment in their future job/career might mean having a positive impact on people's lives	40%	38%	32%	36%	45%	33%	34%	33%	42%	29%	26%	38%	24%	54%	41%	33%
Respondents who say, in terms of personal achievements, the pandemic has highlighted that a collection of smaller 'wins' can be more meaningful than a big success	30%	30%	48%	36%	29%	35%	25%	28%	30%	23%	22%	32%	28%	23%	35%	40%
Respondents who feel that daily moments of satisfaction in work is one of the most motivating factors when thinking about their future job role/career path	24%	30%	34%	35%	37%	19%	29%	26%	30%	24%	21%	14%	12%	21%	25%	26%
Respondents who reflect on their professional or personal achievements on a regular basis	42%	54%	29%	48%	33%	30%	27%	33%	47%	40%	30%	44%	30%	48%	44%	45%
Respondents who reflect on their professional or personal achievements with their family and friends	39%	46%	50%	41%	35%	43%	41%	47%	41%	34%	31%	38%	38%	48%	44%	53%
Respondents who reflect on their professional or personal achievements by writing them down in a journal or diary	32%	43%	33%	30%	47%	26%	25%	33%	36%	26%	29%	38%	21%	32%	23%	20%

The regional statistical variations report:

Regional-based data	East of England	Greater London	East Midlands	West Midlands	North East	North West	South East	South West	Yorkshire and the Humber
<i>Number of respondents per region in the overall sample</i>	259	317	223	233	134	261	189	148	236
Respondents who agree* having the opportunity to grow as a person in their future career is as important as career progression	88%	89%	77%	79%	77%	89%	88%	84%	92%

Respondents who agree** that throughout the pandemic they have experienced fewer breakthrough moments – points where they felt they were progressing in life, their studies or work	85%	71%	76%	64%	72%	80%	76%	80%	80%
Respondents who agree*** that their teacher/s from their time at school helped to equip them to achieve breakthrough moments in their life so far	86%	72%	71%	61%	63%	78%	72%	77%	78%
Respondents who say achievement in a future career means having a sense of pride in the job they do	27%	35%	32%	32%	33%	33%	42%	32%	42%
Respondents who say achievement in a future career is knowing that my work has meaning and purpose	26%	34%	32%	34%	30%	36%	36%	35%	34%
Respondents who say a breakthrough moment in their future job/career might mean having a positive impact on people's lives	26%	38%	39%	38%	25%	43%	37%	40%	39%
Respondents who say, in terms of personal achievements, the pandemic has highlighted that a collection of smaller 'wins' can be more meaningful than a big success	28%	34%	30%	31%	22%	29%	40%	30%	34%
Respondents who feel that daily moments of satisfaction in work is one of the most motivating factors when thinking about their future job role/career path	21%	22%	25%	24%	23%	29%	28%	28%	29%
Respondents who reflect on their professional or personal achievements on a regular basis	34%	44%	38%	43%	33%	43%	45%	44%	47%
Respondents who reflect on their professional or personal achievements with their family and friends	31%	43%	46%	35%	38%	42%	46%	49%	44%
Respondents who reflect on their professional or personal achievements by writing them down in a journal or diary	33%	32%	30%	30%	32%	36%	25%	27%	38%

*This finding combines respondents who said 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'

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