

**Job Title:** Business Partnerships Manager

**Overview of ThinkForward:**

ThinkForward is a breakthrough coaching programme that ensures young people who are disengaged from or underperforming at school receive support to transition into sustained employment. Young people are identified for the programme aged 13 based on risk factors known to increase their chances of future unemployment. They are offered one-to-one support from a progression coach who builds a trusted and long-term relationship over five years, helping them to overcome challenges in and out of school and linking them to ready for work activities provided by a community of businesses. By the end of the programme young people develop the aspirations, skills and mindsets needed to thrive and sustain employment.

**Purpose of the Role:**

The Partnerships Manager will:

- Coordinate employability activities to equip ThinkForward young people for further education and sustained employment
- Develop and maintain strong external Education and Employment partnerships to support delivery of these progression activities
- Shape ThinkForward's careers advice through expertise and insight around the local educational and employment landscape
- Use data to plan, analyse and evaluate employability and progression activities

**Key Responsibilities:**

Coordination of activities - to ensure young people on the programme gain the knowledge, skills, qualifications and experience needed to become ready for work

- To source and coordinate a termly/annual programme of Educational and Ready for Work activities based on the needs of ThinkForward young people
- To prepare businesses and their employees for engaging with the young people
- To manage the Ambassador and Alumni programme, including designing and delivering the monthly meetings and preparing Ambassadors (peer leaders from among the ThinkForward young people) to work at company events.

Partnerships management- to ensure ThinkForward remains a collaborative organisation

- To identify, build and maintain strong partnerships with businesses, job brokers, and with training providers and colleges who can provide activities, support and employment opportunities for young people and to work with them to realise those opportunities;
- To equip delivery staff in helping their young people access these opportunities
- To continually improve the experience of both young people and employer partners, through quality assurance and constructive feedback
- To liaise with the fundraising team on fundraising opportunities including corporate partnerships, volunteer/individual giving, national partnerships and delivery contracts.

Job brokerage and Careers Information, Advice and Guidance - to understand the local educational and employment landscape to ensure ThinkForward provides relevant guidance and opportunities to its participants.

- To ensure coaches have live local information on jobs and courses so they can deliver quality IAG in coaching/group sessions
- To meet 1:1 with young people to prepare them for specific applications and interviews.

#### Impact and Data

- To use data on young people's career goals, predicted destination, skills and interests to plan a programme of activities
- To meet any reporting and paperwork requirements for contracts/ donor agreements associated with these activities
- To use data such as behaviour, attendance and attainment to assess the impact of activities

#### **Person Specification:**

ThinkForward operates a staff competency framework to inform our recruitment and performance management of staff. The following behaviours define the expectations for this position.

#### Professional Expertise

- Experience of working with and empathy for young people with learning difficulties, including excellent grasp of safeguarding procedures.
- Experience of developing networks and managing multiple stakeholders.
- Experience in engaging with or selling to corporate partners and businesses.
- CEIAG qualified (desirable).
- Demonstrates good understanding of the local and national labour market.
- Demonstrates good understanding of educational pathways in the UK.
- Project management experience.
- Confident with spreadsheets and databases.
- Demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice.

#### Communication

- Is approachable and adaptable; able to communicate professionally with stakeholders and audiences of all levels including young people.
- Excellent written and presentation skills.
- Takes active steps to communicate new developments in a timely manner.
- Makes use of the strengths of different channels/methods of communication to publicise and communicate activities and opportunities to wider team.
- Is open and transparent with colleagues and line manager.
- Is assertive and persuasive when required.
- Constructively manages barriers to effective communication
- Communicates relevant and appropriate information about young people with partners
- Ensures that communications within ThinkForward reflect our brand, values and business objectives

#### Planning and Organising

- Exceptionally well organised, methodical and able to deliver to deadlines

- Has a flexible but determined approach, puts measures in place to ensure reliability of volunteers and young people does not damage the experience of participants or reputation of the organisation
- Has strong attention to detail, with systems and processes in place to maintain high standards of delivery.
- Prioritises own workload in accordance with higher level goals and objectives
- Meets deadlines and advises others promptly of likely delays against plans

#### Teamwork

- Continually engages in joint activities and shared information/ideas with colleagues to achieve mutual objectives
- Seeks out the best opportunities to collaborate with external partners to the benefit of ThinkForward young people
- Gains the cooperation and buy-in of team members to challenging tasks
- Helps colleagues to enhance personal skills/knowledge
- Accepts decisions that are made for the good of the team after consultation and communication.

#### Impact and Quality Focused

- Actively monitors changes or developments in outcomes and quality, and continuously seeks to improve them including improvements to systems and resources
- Ensures that relevant data is input and produces accurate management information
- Continually identifies and communicates likelihood or otherwise of meeting targets
- Adapts to varying work situations and is flexible in their approach to resolving challenges.