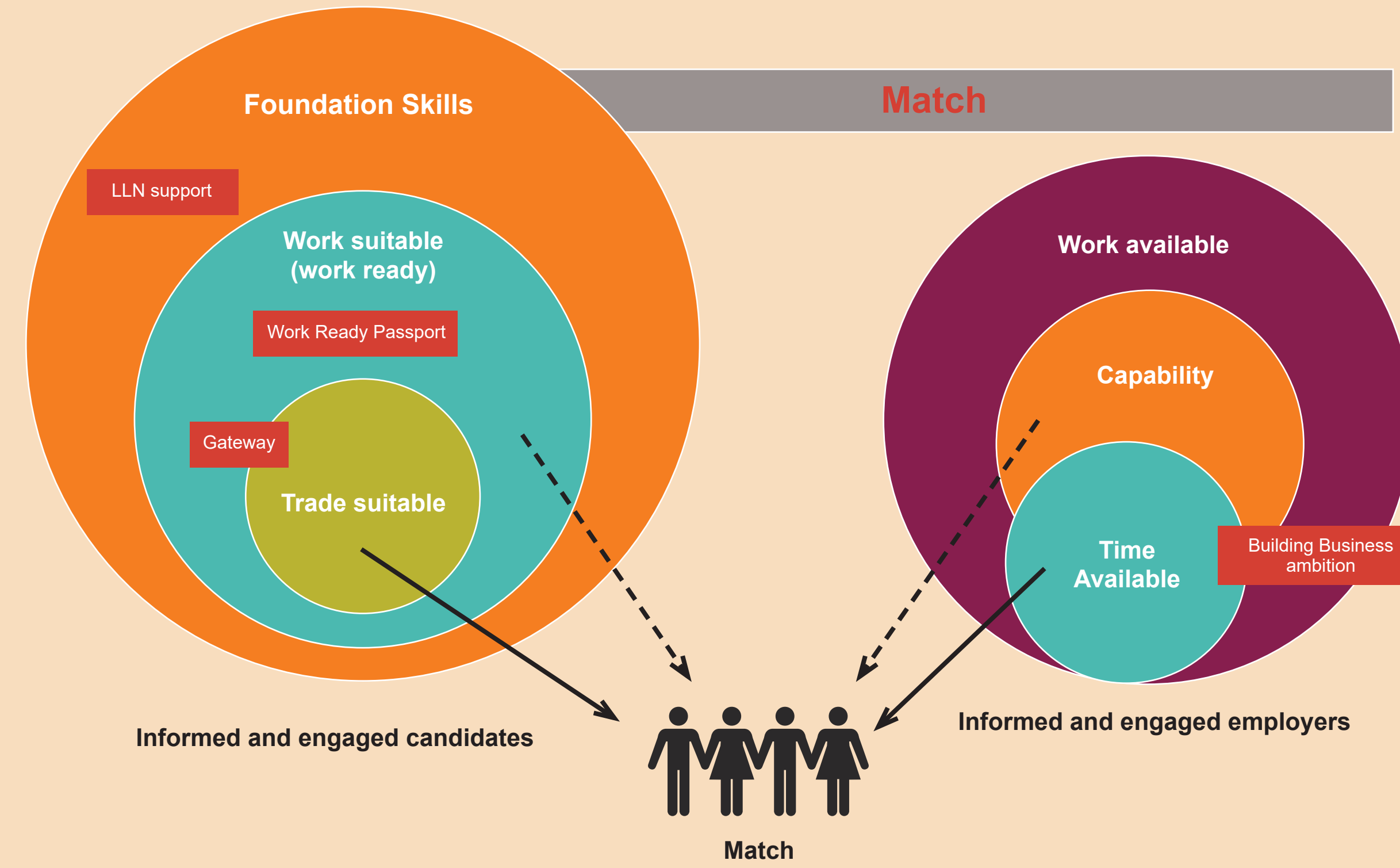


Set4Life

Better outcomes involve informed and engaged learners and employers. The navigator worked with 123 learners, schools, Tertiary Education Organisations and workplaces to develop appropriate soft and technical skills in learners. The intention was that they also informed and engaged employers but the scope was too broad and the role of work brokers was identified to understand the nature of the work available, build capability of employers (building business ambition) and working with navigators around matching appropriate candidates and employers for sustainable employment and ongoing learning.



For more information visit: ako.ac.nz/set-for-work

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Outcomes

World of work

Development of adequate foundation and employability skills through an informed, planned and supported pathway is valued by employers. The proposed Work Broker role focusses on the development of the employer as a safe and welcoming space for the learner and well as matching the learners available to the navigator with employers.

"These guys are obviously keener – they have it in their mindset – this is what they want to do for a job – versus the other ones I don't know I'll just give this a go." (employer)

World of Learning

"They are both really happy for it – they are more positive here at school – you can hear it they can see it." (Schools)

While more mature learners found career direction and entered into apprenticeships, some learners found the workplace experience too daunting for them but the programme developed focus and direction resulting in them re committing to another year at school in order to mature and gain life and learning skills to better cope when they entered the employment market.

A focus on pathways rather than courses.

"We had to advise the parents and talk to them – and they have been so supportive and happy that their daughters are happy and there is a pathway – they know the steps that are being taken by the school and set for life will assist the girls in getting their careers." (Schools)

"The way set for life did it was constant communication – and it was a guarantee that they could see that their daughters could get this – the network was there helping them." (Schools)

Navigation

The navigator was often able to identify the life barriers to learning, build learner confidence and facilitate solutions to enable learners to succeed in work experience or employment or to return to school with renewed focus and direction. The navigators careful pastoral support not only of the students, but also facilitating the employer's relationship with them, was a key element of success. The Navigator represents the world of learning and socioeconomic support while the Work Broker brings in empathy from the world of work educating employers and learners around expectations and values. Working together, the two roles help avoid non-productive false starts and help to smooth the path of change through the process

"Navigator helped me feel confident to apply for jobs in the electrical field that I didn't think I would get." (Set4life Learner)

It helped my confidence and resilience when I had to submit applications and go to the job interviews." (Set4life Learner)

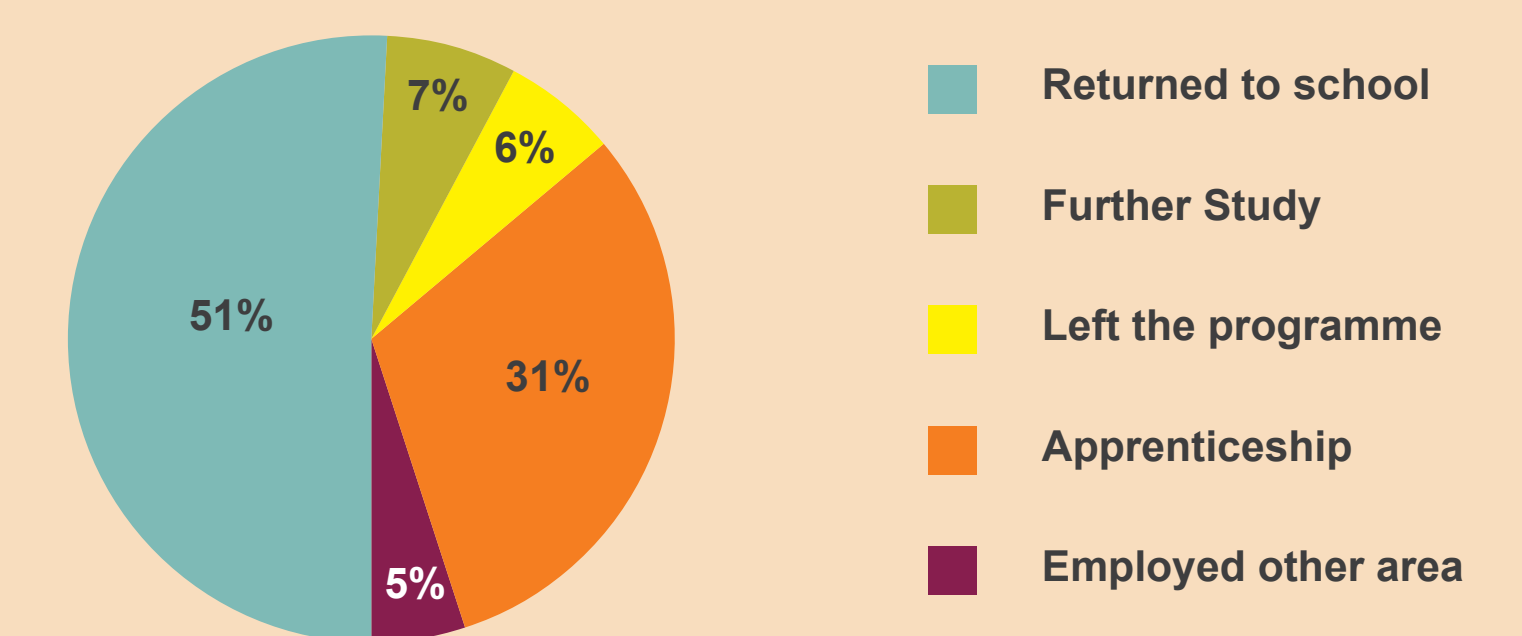
"I got my learners license and navigator helped me study for that and get ready to sit it. Set for life helped me decide to stay at school for year 13 and get the rest of my credits so I can get a good job and not a dumb job." (Set4life Learner)

"I am all good to go to work places where there are people who I don't know. Before I was shame as but now I feel sweet cause I know I can do a good job for them." (Set4Life Learner)

Information about outcomes is crucial if we are to develop appropriate pathways for all learners.

"We are really excited by some of the preliminary stuff we are seeing which is indicating that industry training (and particularly the trades sectors which Skills' represents) are some of the best ways to earn even when compared to university graduates – it looks like our Grads are earning more on average than a Bachelor of Science student for example. When you look at cumulative income it gets even better." (Set4life Governance member)

Outcomes at End of Project



Introduction

Set4life was a joint project led by The Skills Organisation and between the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), Ako Aotearoa, The Primary Industry Training Organisation (PrimaryITO), Te Matarau Education Trust, NorthTec, Whangarei Boys High School (WBHS) with local employers. The primary focus was on building sustainable employment and informed career progression around transition points. Key interventions included a "Navigator system" to productively navigate secondary tertiary transitions and provide induction support for both employers and students with integrated pastoral care and academic support. Set4life was run at the same time as a parallel project in Auckland.

Why we did it:

- Rapid Change is the new normal
- World of work has changed/is changing
- World of learning is out of sync
- Workplace literacy and numeracy needs not met
- Change to demand driven not supply
- Productivity is more likely from a whole of system approach

Challenges

Employer Challenge

The disconnected, supply driven provider learning solutions have often not sufficiently heard the employer voice and this has led to a skills mismatch between skills supplied and those required in the workplace and by learners to achieve sustainable employment and a successful career (Kerr, J & Toriello, M, 2012) Added to this, most employers in Northland are small to medium enterprises (SME'S) who are often lacking leadership and business plans and knowledge of the value of investing in work experience opportunities.

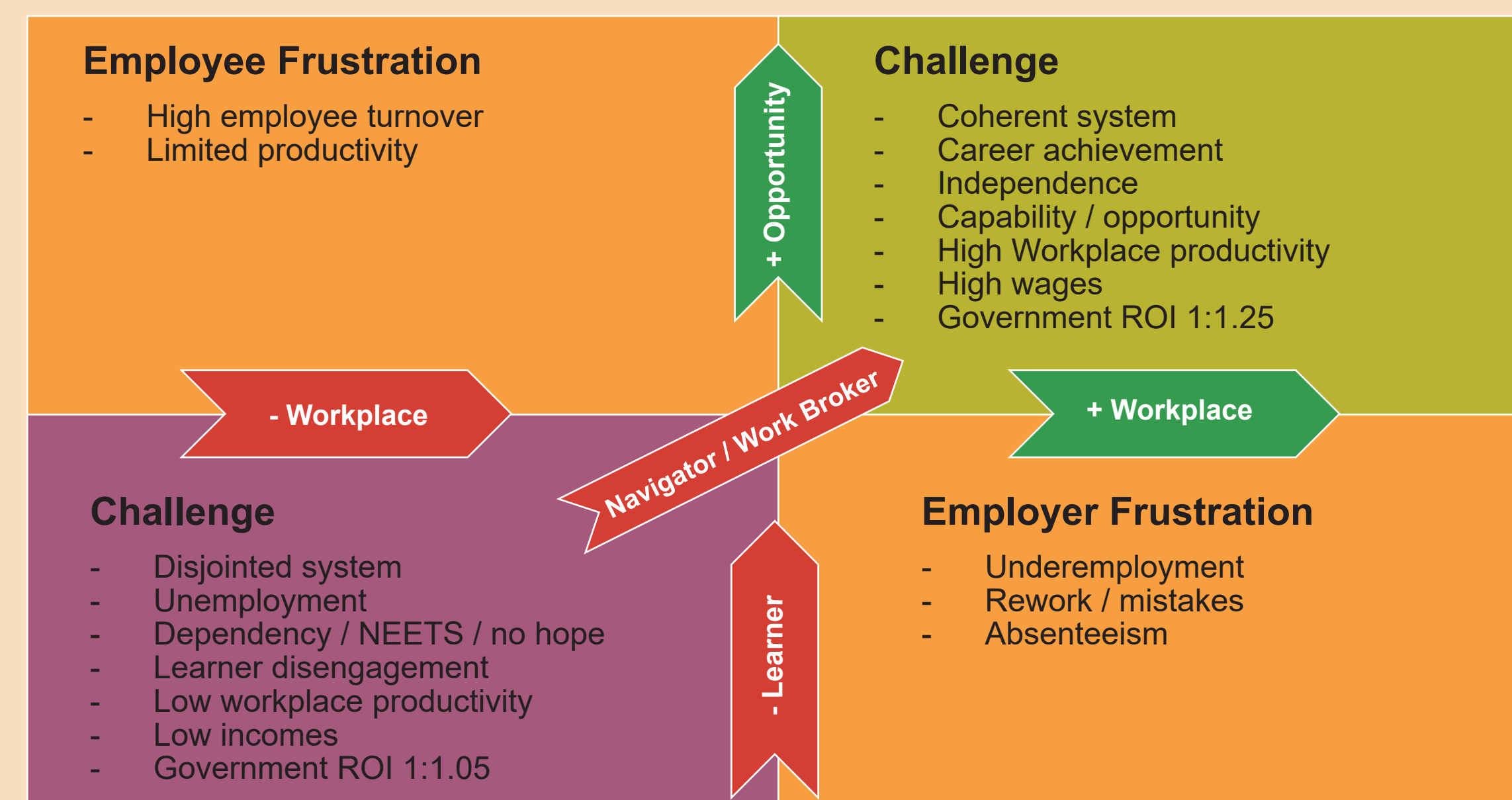
Education

"The whole school system is designed a certain way and there is a whole bunch of kids that don't fit that model...they are really capable." (Employer Set4life)

Feedback from teachers during the project indicated that learners placed in work experience situations were often not selected as part of a planned on the job learning experience but rather as a way to deal with disruptive behaviour or to cope with teacher shortages.

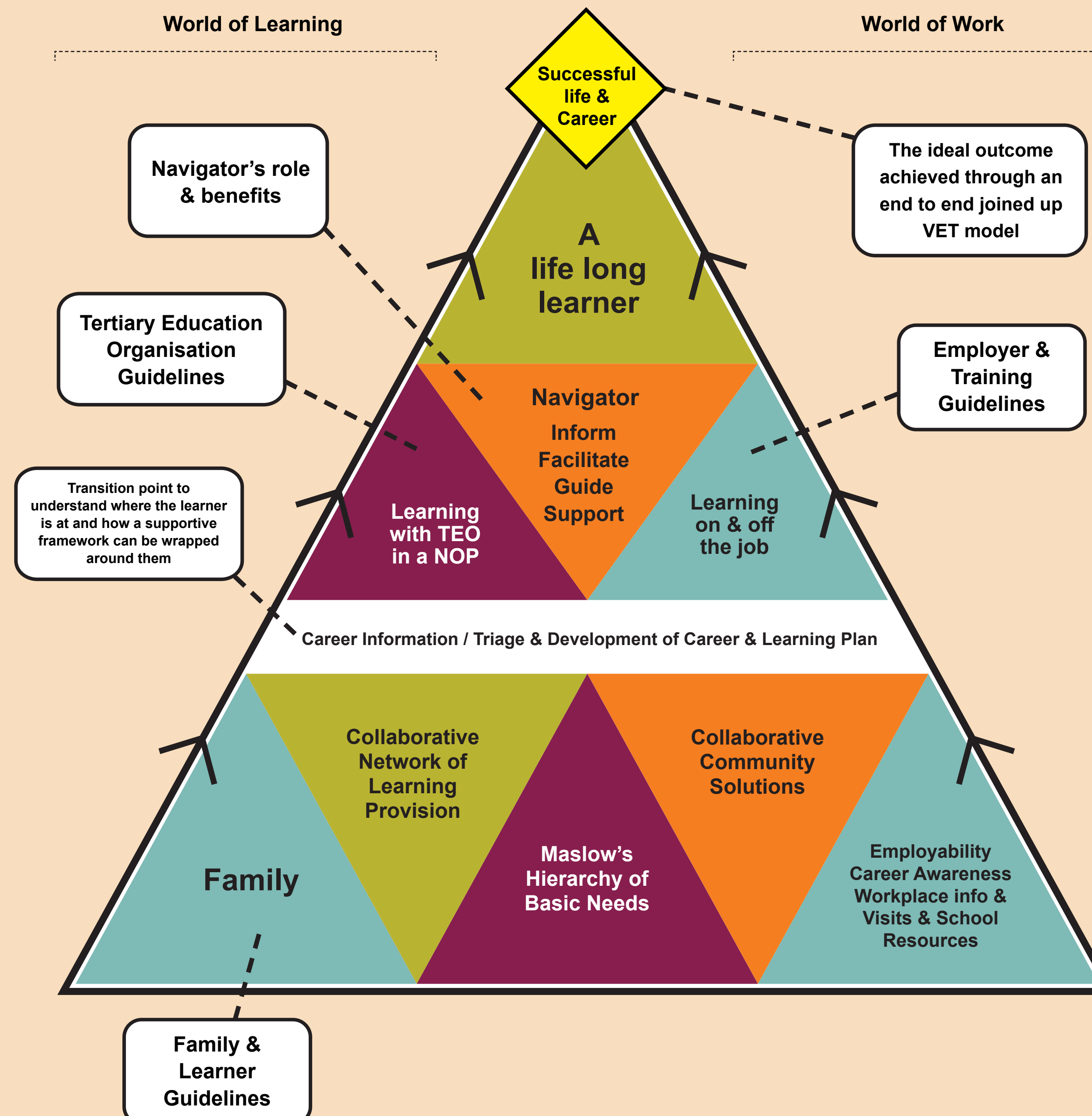
The transition from school to work is a very confusing and congested space, *"We were thinking of doing a spreadsheet because we got confused between MIT Trades, Gateway, Set for Life, then some are doing STAR courses at MIT - it's a juggle and that's why the attendance thing is important"* (Schools).

Education funding and measurement of success has resulted in silos and this can restrict pathway progression.



A system build for a Lifelong learner

Government funding and success measures need to focus on sustainable employment outcomes and incentivise a "whole of system" approach. School learners and whanau need to hear directly, the opportunities and skill requirements and be supported into and across career pathways involving on and off job skill development facilitated by navigators.



Conclusion

The risk of not investing in a whole of system approach across the transition space will increase the number of people not realising their full potential. The Set for Life project enabled the employer's voice to be better heard and responded to by schools and TEOs. Learners are better informed about career choices and supported through the associated learning plan that includes focused work experiences, improved employability, foundation & technical skills to succeed in employment.

Guidelines developed for all stakeholders are available. For more information email: kene@skills.org.nz