

Starting The Trek To Find The Next Generation

Recently, I have seen federations, companies and training organisations pulling together to get our industry on the radar of younger people who will be the key to filling the skills gap now and in the future, writes John Mannell, a technical officer at the GGF.

It can be a challenge attracting attention at careers fairs when limited to a 4x2.ft table, pop-up on a very small stand, writes the GGF's John Mannell.

Most young visitors don't know what they want to do and so their main query is 'how much will I earn and how hard will I have to work'?

Pay rates

It is interesting to note what the trades tend to earn now as starters and then as experienced workers:

Trade	Starter Salary	Experienced Salary	Work Week (Hours)
Glazier	£14,000	£27,000	43 to 45
Window Fitter	£16,000	£27,000	43 to 45
Window Fabricator	£20,000	£27,000	37 to 42
Construction Labourer	£17,000	£32,000	42 to 44
Plumber	£15,000	£40,000	37 to 40
Electrician	£18,000	£42,000	30 to 40
Heat Pump Engineer	£22,000	£45,000	35 to 43

How much will I earn and how hard will I have to work?

The salaries on offer to glaziers, window fitters and window fabricators probably won't seem that attractive when compared to other trades. However, there are far more job types and careers available in this sector – and thus different skill-sets and earning power.

The Building Our Skills Trading Cards allow holders to describe their job role quite accurately and those descriptions can then be used to reinform the National Careers Service and spread awareness of all opportunities.

Building Our Skills – Making Fenestration, Glass and Glazing a Career of Choice is an organisation supported by the GGF amongst others. It is committed to bridging the growing skills gap by working closely with employers and other organisations to attract new entrants to the industry.

It is also committed to training so that by upskilling the existing workforce, we will find more people inspired to see the industry as a home for their long-term career ambitions and not just a job for now.

Taking on the challenge

The challenges of recruiting young people into the industry were discussed in a Building Our Skills meeting at the beginning of the year where the Advisory Panel laid out plans for two industry-specific career events in March. The meeting also focused on continued plans for the GGF to promote the sector at apprenticeship and further education fairs across the country.

Jobs Board

The GGF and FENSA now have a dedicated Jobs Board which will allow members to connect to

employees from a range of backgrounds, whether school leavers, ex-offenders or someone looking for a new challenge.

The employability skills clinics for bespoke industry careers fairs in March

Building Our Skills (BOS) will make 'employability skills clinics' a feature at the first of its series of bespoke industry careers fairs. The clinics will cover CV writing, tips for interviews, personal skills assessment, qualifications, training, apprenticeships and other career pathways.

BOS aims to show the industry to over 1,000 school children and their teachers over the course of two pilot events.

'Career Families' are another facet of the careers fairs that will help students understand the many career options open to them as they get closer to the world of work. The eleven 'families' together encompass over 100 individual roles, demonstrating career progression opportunities, training, qualifications and how students can start out on their career journeys in the industry.

Where are they

The two pilot events are to be held as a part of National Careers Week. The first will be at the home of Barnsley Football Club, with the second at the Etihad Stadium, home of Manchester City. **■**