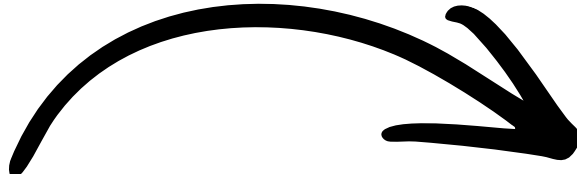




FROM POTENTIAL TO OPPORTUNITY

Solving youth unemployment through
purpose, skills and support



Belong

Contribute

Thrive



YMCA SOUTH MIDLANDS

ELLIOT MOORE

Employment Coach | YMCA South Midlands



Elliot Moore is the Employment Coach at YMCA South Midlands, supporting young people to build confidence, develop employability skills and achieve their career goals. Using a person-centered approach, he provides guidance on career pathways, training opportunities, CV writing, job applications and interview preparation. He also supports residents in sustaining employment and progressing in their careers.

Through strong partnerships with employers across Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire, Elliot helps create opportunities for jobs, training and career development. Known for his commitment, encouragement and authenticity, he empowers young people to achieve successful and fulfilling futures.

YMCA SOUTH MIDLANDS

From the national picture to local practice

The statistics tell us the scale of the challenge. The real question is what sits behind those numbers - and what helps an individual move forward.

1.01m

**16-24-year-olds were NEET
Jan-Mar 2026**

13.5%

**of all 16-24-year-olds
were NEET**

“For the first time since 2013, the number of young people who are NEET exceeded one million.”

House of Commons Library, July 2026

We also need to focus on how young people reach them [jobs], how employers recruit, and why the transition into work has become less reliable than it once was.”

Independent Young People and Work Review (Alan Milburn), 2026

What we see on the ground

Many of the challenges we see nationally are reflected locally: low confidence, disrupted routines, practical pressures and uncertainty about the first steps towards employment.

LOW CONFIDENCE

“I don’t think I’m ready.”

LOST DIRECTION

“I don’t know what I want to do.”

PRACTICAL PRESSURES

Housing, transport, digital access,
money, routine and wellbeing

TRANSITION RISK

Starting work is only the first step -
staying in work brings new
challenges

**The relationship matters because
young people are more likely to share
the real barrier once trust exists.**

What can look like low motivation may be fear,
uncertainty, poor previous experiences or not
believing work is realistic yet.

YMCA South Midlands: Why employment support sits here

Supported housing creates a unique opportunity to work with the whole person, not only the job search.



Employment support works best when it sits alongside housing stability, wellbeing, relationships and practical help.

What meaningful employment support looks like

Relationship-led support helps reach young people who may not engage with traditional employment routes.

1 Engage

Engage people who may otherwise be missed

2 Understand

Trust, rapport and consistent 1:1 support

3 Prepare

Bespoke plans that build confidence through action

4 Connect

Translate potential into employer-ready pathways

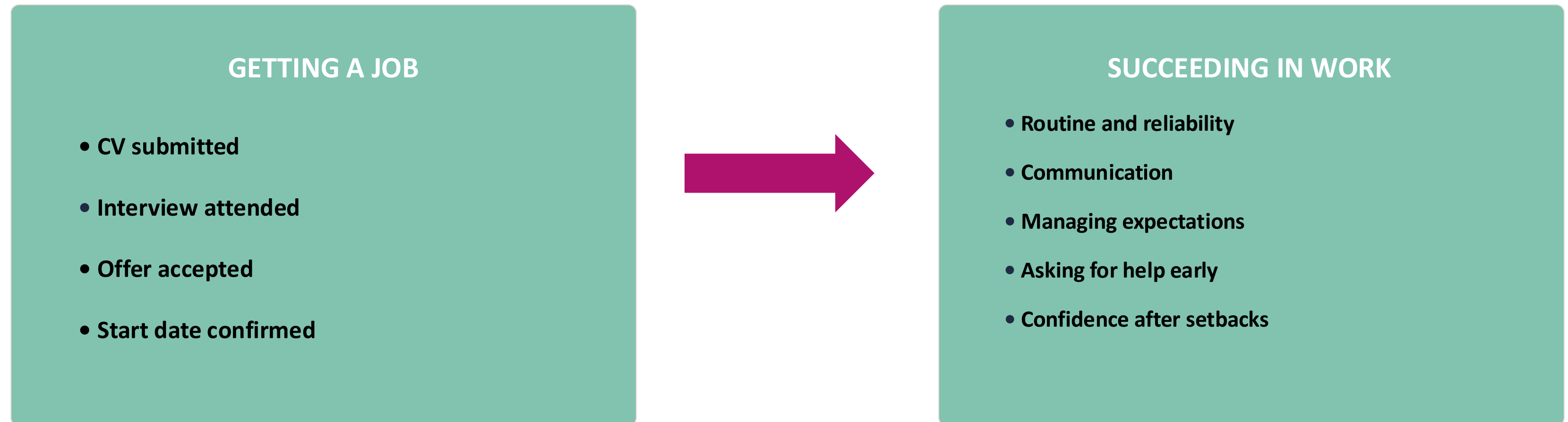
5 Sustain

Support after day one so progress can stick

In my experience, the relationship itself can be part of the intervention. Once trust exists, the real barriers are much more likely to come to the surface.

Job ready ≠ work ready

Skills beyond qualifications determine whether a young person can access, sustain and progress in work.



A successful outcome is not only a start date. It is sustained progress, increased independence and a young person believing they can keep moving forward.

Employer partnerships: creating genuine opportunity

YMCA can prepare young people well, but employers and partners help create the first chance and support the transition.

Employers

Real entry points
Workplace insight
Feedback and inclusive recruitment

Charities

Trusted relationships
Whole-person support
Practical coaching

Community & skills

Local reach
Training routes
Early links to opportunity

Employers are not just vacancy holders, they are part of the support network.

Our impact: local outcomes

The evidence behind the relationship-led approach.

68

young people supported
into employment

89

job outcomes
achieved

65%

Stage 2 & 3 residents
in employment

22%

Stage 3 residents progressed
through YMCA pathway

+3 percentage points year-on-year

283 practical employment interventions in the most recent three months

Employment is supporting more than job starts, it is helping residents build stability, progress through the housing pathway and move towards independent living.

What residents say about the support

The outcomes matter, but resident feedback shows the difference the support makes at an individual level

RESIDENT VOICE

“You supported me not just in employment, but also in my growth as a person.”

Employment support can build confidence, identity and long-term development - not only job outcomes.

RESIDENT VOICE

“Elliot took the time to understand what I was looking for. His support helped keep me calm and focused on new opportunities.”

Rapport, realistic advice and encouragement help young people keep moving forward.

TRUST

Young people feel understood

CONFIDENCE

Progress feels achievable

ACTION

Support becomes next steps

GROWTH

Employment links to development

What can we do differently tomorrow?

Practical ideas for employers, charities and communities.

- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 | Reach differently | Who is not engaging and why? |
| 2 | Build relationships before outcomes | Trust and consistency come first. |
| 3 | Look beyond the CV | Recognise transferable skills, attitude and potential |
| 4 | Support the transition | Help should not stop at the job offer. |
| 5 | Work in partnership | Each organisation holds a different part of the solution. |

Youth unemployment is not solved by vacancies alone. It takes purpose, skills, support and genuine opportunity working together.