

RETHINK Webinar – Careers in Everyday Industries

Anne - Host (00:24):

So, we have with us today, Professor Erica Smith, who is leading research onto the importance of everyday industries, we also have with us Katrina Hiam, who is the head of education and training at restaurant and catering industries association. And we have Kate Stephan, who is the head of multi-skilling at Woolworth's group. So, welcome everybody. All right, So I thought what we might do is that I'd like to speak with Erica first if we could. Erica, So I was wondering if you could talk to us about firstly, what is an everyday industry?

Professor Erica Smith (01:01):

well, an everyday is the name that I give and other people I'm sure give to industries. It's pretty simple industries that you see every day and that you probably don't think about very much. So, if you think about during your average day, you probably go into a shop if we are locked down at the moment, then it's probably only a supermarket or a news agent or a pharmacist or whatever you are allowed to go into. But most people would go into a shop most days and they would see people working there and, they might go into a cafe, even if they're only allowed to go in and pick up a coffee or a takeaway. So, we see these in industries and the people that work in them every day. And it's just as simple as that most, most other industries, most other occupations, you don't come across every day, but these you do. And they're absolutely essential to everyday lives.

Anne - Host (02:00):

You're currently leading research in regard to everyday industries and career paths. Can you explain a little bit more about the need to have this research done?

Professor Erica Smith (02:11):

Well, what I found in previous research, so I've been researching young people work, training in industry and associative matters for a few decades now and what I found over this period of time is that there's certain industries that people don't think about as potential, career homes for them and they're basically taught both explicitly and also implicitly that these are not industries in which to aim at careers. And yet due to my own background, which was originally in retail, I know absolutely that they are, and also due to my own research. So, I've led a number of research projects in this area, and when the opportunity for research funding came up from the national careers Institute, which I'd like to thank for funding this research project. I immediately knew what I wanted to do, I wanted to work with colleagues of like minds, and I have colleagues at other universities and also at skills IQ, which is the skills service organisation for these and other service industries. I knew that I wanted to really research the actual careers in the industries, and I wanted to research the actual reasons why people don't careers in these industries. So as I say, I'll find out over many research projects, the attitudes that people have, but I really wanted to research why they have these attitudes, and I wanted to find some really firm evidence about the research, sorry about the careers that people have in the industries, so that they could be put in front of those people who influence young people and other Australians that are looking for career opportunities. So, we want to end up the project with some very, as I said, very clear evidence. We want to try to investigate the reasons why attitudes are often so negative and try to change the minds of those people who have those negative attitudes.

Anne - Host (04:30):

Erica, I just wanted to actually ask you, when we talk about these everyday industries, like such as retail and hospitality, which consists of, you know, accommodation restaurants, catering, hotels, et cetera like

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that. Can you talk to me a little bit about, or give me an idea about the importance of these industries to the Australian economy and to, or how they actually sit within the workforce?

Professor Erica Smith (04:56):

Yeah, well, looking at it, I think from the workforce point of view, retail and hospitality employ over 20% of the Australian workforce. The other thing about those industries is that they are everywhere. So, they're not only every day, they're also everywhere. So, you can get a job in retail or hospitality anywhere within a few kilometres of your home, almost always. So, to people as employers, they're absolutely vital, but also to the economy. I think if you, if you just look back at what's been going on in the pandemic, I don't know what we would all have done without the retail industry. Not only in the fact that it kept us fed and clothed and so on, but also that we could be with other people in a safe way, we could see these industries adapting and hospitality is the same as retail but adapting in different ways to the way they had to operate. If you went into shops, you saw that they were stocking goods that you needed during the pandemic which changed over time. So, they're absolutely vital to everybody in Australia and throughout the world. And when you look at international organisations that comment on economic matters like the OECD they've also really recognised the role of these industries and the fact that people will begin to have a greater respect for these industries when they've seen how they've helped us during the pandemic. When you look at an everyday job that people might think is not terribly important, but I do, half a million people work as retail assistance in Australia, that's absolutely massive. A hundred thousand people work as waiters, and then we have the managers within those industries as well. So, the contribution they make of directly to the economy, but also indirectly through people being employed is, is absolutely true tremendous and yet when people talk about important industries and key industries, they're often talking about industries that are much smaller and just really overlooking these industries.

Anne - Host (07:11):

Yeah. Thank you, Erica. I can see that while you are talking Katrina and Kate are sitting in there going "absolutely, absolutely, yep we are, we are the powerhouse of Australia and also the world" in regards to, especially in this time, of the COVID, of our COVID situation. I just wanted to ask you one more thing Erica, before I go on, is why is there now such a focus on service industries? And I suppose I'm talking about where did service industries sit, like take 10 years ago or 20 years compared to where service industries now sit, have you got any comments that you can make on that?

Professor Erica Smith (07:55):

Well, I'm not an expert economist, but I know that's service industries are now predominance in most of the world. Including the developing world where actually, it's generally understood that we move from primary industries, which is things like, agriculture and mining, onto manufacturing and then onto service industries in the developing world they're actually often leapfrogging that middle stage going direct from primary industries into service industries. And it's partly because fewer people are needed in those, other industries, primary industries, and manufacturing, because the work can be done with fewer people a lot of it's automated, but also as society evolves, people have more need and desire for sometimes non-essential service industries, but there are other service industries. So, retail and hospitality are one aspect of service industries, but usually under the umbrella service industries, things like age care are included. So that's important to remember as well. So, people are moving away from producing and extracting things that people need to providing actual if you like personal services to people and that's where these industries fit in.

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Anne - Host (09:24):

Okay. You're in the restaurant and catering, industry association and you head up education and training. What were your first thoughts when you were hearing Erica speak on that?

Katrina (09:34):

I think it's really important I mean, I obviously love hearing, stories and obviously examples that Erica was talking about, and I can completely resonate with the, going to university and obviously making that decision not to go to university. And, for me, it was went to a very, very awesome, amazing school in the Northern beaches of Sydney, decided like obviously when I was turning 18 that not going to university and working straight into the hospitality industry, which I'd been doing since I was 15, I was working with McDonald's doing that in between school time and for me it wasn't about, moving to university and then moving into a trade, and so the stories that Erica was talking about before, like really hit home because that's a lot of the stories that I tell people where, I'm talking about my background and my experience and how I ended up as, head of education and training at restaurant and catering association and the hospitality industry is so broad and it is so large and I, again, completely agree with the fact that it is really supporting so many hundreds of thousands of jobs from waitpersons through to HR as a function in hospitality. So, yeah, I completely agree I think there's so many different stories and the industry is one of the largest industries and really funding through that pandemic at the moment and giving people employment has been incredibly important through COVID.

Anne - Host (11:14):

Okay. So, thanks for that Katrina, I suppose, where gonna explore, actually, your career path yourself to give us an example of how people can move in and out of the hospitality industry. But I wanted to actually just ask you just briefly, what is changing in the hospitality in the restaurant industry? Can you give us an idea, you know, could you speak to us about reality versus perceptions? in regard to careers in the industries and maybe some of what are some of the emerging or some of the areas that maybe wasn't available, maybe five or 10 years ago as a career option or career path?

Katrina (11:53):

I think one of the first examples that comes to mind is everything that's happened through COVID and, restaurants and normally normal cafes that are seating, I don't know, 50, a hundred, hundred and 50 people, really using that word pivot, and moving their business offering into a quasi retail space into where they've got a like a little supermarket where they've got their suppliers that they're using, bread newspapers, they're now bottling and preserving. So, they're actually changing the model of their normal cafe restaurant to survive, to be able to still offer, a service to clientele and to customers that they normally would have come into the restaurant on a daily lunch, instead being able to pick up the sandwich and moving it to a takeaway option. I think the second one that comes straight to mind is, the home delivery services, the takeaway service, turning that beautiful, fine dining, or even down to that local cafe, offering and having that delivered through whether it's a takeaway platform or if it's an individual business that's doing that, to really be able to bring that consumer experience into their home so that they've still got that same experience that they would coming out of a cafe and or a restaurant and being able to offer that keeping people employed, changing the service offering and being able to do it, It's almost to the minutes at the moment because it's in lockdown, it's outta lockdown or in the lockdown. And changing that perspective, constantly for businesses is, crucial to be able to be able to pivot that quickly, to keep themselves alive and obviously to keep them employing people within our

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industry, been incredible, it's been incredible watching some of those stories come across and, yeah, it's been amazing thing to watch and be able to support, to be honest.

Anne - Host (14:01):

Thank you for that Katrina cause it's really interesting that we're talking about a hospitality industry and retail and then you're then actually started to change the whole concept about, well, the model is completely changing that we've actually now moved into a retail space. We're actually now taking up elements of the retail, which shows about that transfer of skills and everything. But what is incredibly amazing, is also that you've actually gone into starting into some of the production you've gone into supply, you've got into logistics, it's almost you're going into warehouse. So, we're starting to actually pick up complete, elements that are moving in and out of other industries as well. And I am gonna say, as you know, my background is in the hospitality industry and events industry as well. So, I can see that that need, it's almost in moving into fast food or sorry, fast, consumer goods that we're actually now starting to move in. Katrina, I'll come back to you in a moment in regard to asking you some more information in regards about your career path, but I thought we'd bring Kate in at the moment. So, Kate, I would like to actually bring you in to have a bit of a conversation in regard to, what's happening in the retail sector. So, Kate, you are coming to us from the Woolworths group, and I wanted to start by asking you this question about you are the head of multi-skilling and I was wondering if you could just explain to you, where did that title come from? Cause, and where did that, how did that evolve and what does it actually mean now?

Kate (15:35):

Absolutely fantastic. So, thanks, Anne, really appreciate, the opportunity to be here and a great question. Absolutely. So, my role came about from two key things really, the first one being our team have regularly been, letting us know through our engagement's surveys, through general feedback that they're really looking, for more hours, more meaningful work and they wanted to grow their careers, with Woolworths. And that might be that they want to move into management positions, or it might be that they just want to learn new skills to keep things interesting, to be able to contribute to different areas across the store and work in different departments. So, we, secondly then to that, we also have our 2025 sustainability plan where part of that and part of our commitment is to provide and create meaningful careers, as part of our future of work and program and commitment. So the combination of the sustainability plan and ensuring that we are sustainable in terms of our team and our careers, as well as the feedback from our teams about wanting more meaningful hours, learning new skills, developing their careers, both of those, I guess, opportunities combined then led to the role that I'm in, and creating a role about leading the multi-skilling and actually trying to look at what is the opportunity to multi-skill our team, and bring in all the different programs of work that we have in Woolworths together, to try and support our team to have those meaningful careers and meaningful opportunities.

Anne - Host (17:09):

So, thanks for that Kate. This is just a prime example of, if you had spoken to somebody say 10 years ago even and said "oh I'd like to do a job in HR. I'd like to do a job in retail". And I think all of you would agree, you would never hear somebody saying, well, I'm actually heading up the head of multi-skilling and people and culture in regard to, you know, identifying career paths and creating of meaningful work. It just really shows how the whole industries are just changing rapidly, to meet society's expectations, cultural needs, and also just the complete changing demographics of who shops, where do they shop and, how do they get there? How do they get there in the retail environment? How do they get their groceries? How do they do all of these shopping? And also, in the hospitality industry that

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incredibly demand for diverse products and services that meets a need. So, coming back to Kate, I just wanted to ask you, so why did Woolworths come, go down this path? I mean, was it frustrating people or were you finding it difficult to attract people to come into the retail industry? You know, can you explain a little bit more about, that component for us, Kate?

Kate (18:25):

Absolutely. So, we definitely have, we have fantastic team members, and we have lots of team members. So, across the Woolworths group, I think we have almost 200,000, team members, working, whether it's in Australia, New Zealand, Asia. And we want to make sure that the team that already work for us, as well as those that we're going to be recruiting in the future, whether that's in our support functions or in our stores or in our distribution centres, that were able to offer, careers, roles, opportunities, meaningful employment. So definitely wasn't from, I guess, due to as not being able to, have, or find or attract team members, but it was about how do we, retain and grow and make work more interesting for those that we already have. As well as make sure that when people are looking at Woolworths, as a place to work, or not looking at Woolworths, but hearing about Woolworths that people are talking about that the careers are varied, and really you can actually be recruited to do a specific role, but you're not sort of, I guess, constrained by the title, you're able to contribute where the work is needed. So, you might have a specific position or role to play, but where the work is and what the opportunities are, you're able to learn and grow new skills by being surrounded by people with different skills to yourself as well.

Anne - Host (19:47):

Great. So, and I think that's what one of the things that, I mean Erica, I suppose your research we'll be drawing on, is the whole idea about the positive career stories and, what are the opportunities and that growing dream. It may have actually existed forever, but I think we are talking about it now. Would you say that that would be the case?

Professor Erica Smith (20:09):

When you look at other countries, they're much more acknowledging of these industries. So, for example, in Germany and Switzerland regarded as the homes of the apprenticeship system, retail assistant is one of the top five apprenticeship occupations for both girls and boys. Now in Australia, retail is nowhere near that, and I think it shows that we can be much more positive about careers in retail and hospitality, and we can train people much better, and we can really focus on these as career paths for people.

Anne - Host (20:48):

So, it's interesting that you talk about that Erica, because the hospitality industry is exactly the same as well, Isn't it, Katrina. Overseas in European countries, the status of frontline workers in terms in the hospitality, such as your waiters, sommeliers, they're actually the top of the line and incredibly well regarded and seeing that as a really massive, career path, would that be correct Katrina?

Katrina (21:16):

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, obviously in Australia decades ago the constant conversation was going to university go to university, don't think about a trade, trade is not the done thing go and study university go and be a lawyer or a doctor, or any of those sorts of pathways. But I think what people, don't see, and didn't see at that time was that you learn so many skills in hospitality that go through so many

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different industries. The skills on customer service, the skills that you learn about working with others, the skills that you learn on managing conflict, the skills that you learn like Kate just said about multi-skilling, there are so many different skills that you learn in hospitality that you do not get in any other industry. And this is in, and obviously retailers are very similar. You don't go in and learn the skills of customer service and managing conflict resolution, as a lawyer, as a doctor, as anybody else. Where in hospitality you learn those fundamental skills, when you're going through the vet qualifications, when you are learning about multi-skilling and working through a service period, and you've got three different types of dishes that are going on, or you've got five different customers that you're working with. You don't learn those skills in any other industry, and I think people when they go into hospitality and they may be studying at uni, there are a big portion of people that don't end up finishing their degree and staying within hospitality because they fall into something that they absolutely love. Or you get the ones that are going through hospitality, studying at the same in time and they get to the other end with so many other skills that are going to help them with their future career of a lawyer, or, I don't know, like I said before, a doctor where they're able to use those customer service skills, they're able to use those multi-skilling skills. So, I think, yeah, hospitality is, and retail, is an amazing career to yeah to start with. And I think that we under, we don't give it enough accolade and we don't give it enough sort of kudos, like the overseas, like Italy, like Germany. Yeah, agree, completely agree, I wholeheartedly agree.

Anne - Host (23:52):

Fantastic. So, it was interesting that your, all of you are talking about what is essentially the now inand skills, which are these so-called soft skills, all these employment, employability skills they used to be called, but they're now called these, these skills like conflict resolution, problem solving, critical assessment, or critical analysis, or the ability to think on your feet teamwork. And I keep thinking with these everyday industries of retail and hospitality, this has lived every day, isn't it is, this is just part of the normal job description, these aren't "oh, yes, on top of everything else I do, I better go and learn" that this is from day one hitting there, that this is actually how the actual programs actually work. Kate, could you just expand on some of the emerging jobs or some of the areas that people can go into?

Kate (24:47):

Absolutely. Anne and I sort laugh when you talk about, the comment about it's the job you do while you're deciding what you want to do, what you wanna to be when you grow up and there's a lot of us who joined straight from school or worked in retail, or hospitality throughout our studies and 12, 20 years later, we're still in retail, either still working out what we want to do, or we maybe we found what we want to do, as well. So, absolutely, in terms of retail and one of the reasons I've stayed in retail for a long time is that there are so many different industries and career opportunities almost within retail. So, most people think retail and they think about our supermarkets and our stores, and absolutely the front line is where the vast majority of our teamwork. It's the focus and the most important roles in the Woolworth group for our team members, working in our stores, working in our distribution centres, serving our customer. And if you're not serving the customers and working in the stores, you're leading teams and as Katrina mentioned, phenomenal skills that you learn and develop working in a store. So, everything from, customer service, problem solving, leading teams, and then the commercial aspect as well. So, our team managers, our store managers are accountable for significant, P and L or, commercial accountabilities, as well as developing team members, you're responsible for the experience of people's first jobs, as well at Woolworths, we hire a lot of people where it's their first role and that's a huge responsibility, that's not just "here's some training and off you go". How we nurture and grow and the experience we give people can shape how you view retail or how you view the workplace, as well as

your confidence, ongoing as well and there's lots of different opportunities. So, whether you work in the store or you work in our, Woolies x our digital area, you work in distribution centres, you work property and buying in marketing. There's so many different, areas that you could go into. One of the emerging areas, or ways of working really and I guess it's one of the reasons why I'm in the multi-skilling role is during COVID, we've really had to adapt and going from this is where I normally work, to actually volumes of fluctuations of different types of customer shopping habits. So online shopping, as you can imagine, there's has absolutely taken off more than ever before. So, we're expecting, and I'm asking our team to be open to training and working across different departments. You also play a role in the community. So some of the areas I've spoken about, how do we lead and support teams, the financial aspect, the customer aspect, but also the role in the community, and how do we work with community partners and how do we make sure we provide the right shopping environment for team members, well, for customers and in this point in time is just so critical when we have people in isolation, we have vulnerable team members, vulnerable customers. How do we make sure that everybody's able to get the food, that they need, whilst also having a good experience, as well? In terms of retail opportunities, we have, you know, number of different opportunities from a Woolworths perspective, and some of the programs that we have in particular focusing on stores or frontline teams, we've just introduced, or recently introduced an apprenticeship program in terms of refrigeration and air conditioning. It's a four-year structure program, which is a structured program on and off the job and that's an apprenticeship. We also have our meat development, we have our bakery apprenticeship, we have opportunities where you can move from some of our store roles through, into finance, into culture and people, and attain a certificate or a diploma. There's lots of different opportunities to study and learn, as well as on the job training as well.

Anne - Host (29:07):

So Kate, thanks very much for that, Cause it probably reinforces what we're all here talking about is that, you don't have to start with say a certificate two in retail, or a certificate three in retail, or a certificate two in hospitality or a short course, you're more than welcome to, and I know that, so it would be, you know, you might do a barista course, or you might do, a front of house or a certificate three or a traineeship specific to the industry of either retail or hospitality. But in essence, it's not necessarily the only way in and out of the industry. And I think that's, probably what we're having this conversation is that the scope of work is enormous, and I can't even think of a better work for it, so I'm very, very welcome and open to ideas of how we can talk about this giant opportunities that are actually available in there. I just wanna come back to Kate for a moment, Katrina for a moment, because Katrina, we were going to be speaking. I just wanted to talk about a little bit about your, career path through, hospitality and through your pathway and your journey.

Katrina (30:20):

Yeah, sure. So, the word I'm thinking for you, Anne is an ecosystem or some kind of fluffy word like that, by the way, I was thinking about it just before for you. An ecosystem of hospitality jobs because everything is interlinked, right? So, I started Maccas 14 and nine months, like many of us do that we wanna fund being able to go to the beach, fund our first car, hang out with your friends, and do all of that. And for me, McDonald's was an amazing foundation of learning about hospitality, customer service, dealing with six-year-olds to 60-year-olds, 80-year-olds. Like you literally deal with every type of person. And hospitality for me was, or Maccas was front of house and then I did back of house and then I was a like a junior manager for a while. And that was all the way going through school, worked at McDonald's, I went to the beach, I did all of that and, uni just wasn't the plan. And so, I went overseas for a couple of years and came back and honestly, we were sitting down my mum and I, we were in the

Dandenong Ranges with my family. My mum turned to me and said, you like cooking and I was like, yeah, I like cooking. And she said, well, why don't you be a chef? And so, mom and I sat down, looked up, seek, found a job. It was the middle of summer, which in the hospitality is the worst time to start a job because of the stress, because everybody's out wanting to eat. And I started in fine dining Italian in Melbourne in south bank. And look, I'm not gonna lie it was hard. It was incredibly hard. I didn't know anything, about the industry. All I knew is that I enjoyed baking on the weekends. I had no idea what being a chef was going to be. And you walk into a kitchen and there's just something with it where I felt like this was me. Like this was me, I got to be creative, I got to run a section, I got to work with people that were also like-minded. So, obviously did my apprenticeship, I went through and got these cert three commercial cookery and then I decided to go back and do my cert three in patisserie as well, because I wasn't sure where I sort of would land with my career working through kitchens, I worked through predominantly Italian and European fine dining, here in Victoria, which was an amazing stepping stone into being a head chef or a junior sous chef and then a head chef. And look, the hours are brutal, there was no doubt about it, this is also 15 years ago where the industry was very, very different and I was burnt out. And so, one of the things that I did is that I knew I always wanted to be in hospitality, I knew that I didn't want to go into law, I didn't wanna go into journalism, I didn't, I wanted to stay in hospitality. And so, I used my customer service skills, my managing conflict, all the stuff that we've already been taught about, and I went into business development and sales still within hospitality for manufacturing. And so, I could still get the kick from being in hospitality. I could still get to converse and talk to chefs in front of house, but I also got a little bit of lifestyle and sort of got my hours back and my weekends and all of that stuff that I'd really given to the industry. Then after that, I moved into buying my own cafe because every hospitality professional wants to own their own business. My husband is also a chef by trade, or we work, obviously at that time, we were both working in the industry. We bought a little a cafe and we got some really good accolades, and we won some awards, and we did all of that and it was just a tiny little thing. But what it taught me was that I wanted to help the industry bigger, I wanted to really make a difference with apprenticeships and traineeships and people coming into the industry and wanting them to have a really good experience in the industry. But I wanted people coming into the industry to really have a good training experience and want to upskill and want to stay in the industry. And so, again, because hospitality is a family and it's a community, I rang a couple of people and said, how do I get into training? And so, I studied, and I got my cert four and I went in and started, teaching apprentices, cert free commercial cookery and it sort of stemmed from there. I moved to Sydney, and I was working with TAFE New South Wales for a while and I worked as a Le Cordon Bleu for a while, being a trainer and came back to Melbourne again, hospitality, so I was working with resources and, I met the CEO Belinda at a couple conferences, and we got talking. And so, I ended up at restaurant and catering as head of training and education. So, it's kinda like 20 years down to about three or four minutes, but it's always been hospitality. I think that making a difference now and being able to start at Maccas at 15, and now being able to head up training and education and really have a say on the next generation of hospitality professionals is pretty humbling. It's pretty awesome.

Anne - Host (36:08):

Great. So, thanks for that Kate. I just wanted to just pull on a few things there. One of the really interesting things, and I know Erica, you could support this, this is that probably when you were starting, Katrina, you know, was those 15 or 20 years ago. And the difference that the service industries and the importance of the service industries have now made in Australia and around the world and the recognition that it forms such a large part of our psych now, comes with also the realisation that what was then considered a more, not one of the most important industries now, retail and hospitality are now up there and said, well, we need these people. So, we have to treat them well, you know, so there

had to be a lot more work where it was all almost like hidden. Now it's now, no, we can't do those hours, no we have to create conditions that can actually inspire and allow people to stay with us. So, I think one of the things is, and that's what I'm saying, when you talked into coming into this area of wanting to move in and help and create that. I think that's also part of that changing psychic, in regards to, how do people perceive the industry and how it actually is in reality now, and I'm not taking anything away from the idea of both in retail and hospitality, the fact that it is seven days a week, it's day and night in some cases, completely 24 hours, but people choose to do that and that actually matches some people's needs or what they want to do and how they wanna live life. And so, it's great to see that, Katrina, I just wanted to ask you one thing, if you had to ask or give some advice to career advisors or parents, or for people looking for a career path, how should they proceed or what should you, what would your recommendation be?

Katrina (38:01):

I think that giving the opportunity to work in retail and hospitality whilst you are going through school is incredibly important. And any trait, I'm not just talking about hospitality and retail specifically, but obviously that's the conversation and that we're having today. But to get kids into jobs, get them to start testing and trialing and really working out what they wanna do. Give them the opportunity to test and taste test and have work experience and try different things. Go and try being a barista, go and try being a weight person, go and try working in retail, so that they get those experiences before they have to make that decision ultimately, of where they want to go, if they want to go down that path. The other one is have a gap year, talk to kids about the opportunities outside of just going to university and give them that understanding, because like I said, hospitality is an ecosystem and you can move front of house, back a house, producer, farmer, there's so many opportunities that can be very successful and very rewarding.

Anne - Host (39:17):

And that's a great thing I believe about these everyday industries is the ability that you can walk in, you can do some training on the job, you can go some skillset training, you can go full qualifications, you can go into the micro credentialing area as well at the moment and have that capacity to move in and out. And it's almost like they try before you buy and that's a critical component to it. Kate, I wanted to come back to you and ask you, in regard to the retail side, if you had to give some advice over to parents or, career advisors or people who are thinking, what would be your advice, how should people proceed, or what should they do if wanna get into retail?

Kate (39:57):

In terms of my advice for anybody that is looking at wanting to either start in retail or doesn't actually know that you want to start in retail, but is looking for an opportunity to, you know, start a new role to work with other people, to work with the community, to learn a broad range of skills. There's a real social aspect and element as well to working in retail. I would definitely suggest going onto the Woolworths WOW career site or walking into your local Woolworths and seeing what opportunities there might be available at the moment. The type of roles, if you're joining brand new into a supermarket you would in initial department, you would get trained and then as you become more proficient in that role or your availability changes, you'd be able to let managers know what other areas you're interested in working in, as well, you'd able to new skills, meet new people, work with the local community, as well. And as time progresses, if for those that are interested in progressing further and maybe moving into running a department, or even running a store, we absolutely have internal pathways to support our team to do that. So, before we're being promoted to any position, within a

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supermarket, as you progress, we have a real structured store leadership pathway. And we are looking at what credentials and opportunities the internal pathway may provide, in terms of more formal qualifications as well. But we work on the job off the job and there's a real structured pathway to be able to move from working as a team member in one department to two departments, to being the two IC or the second in charge of the department, to being a team manager. So, there's plenty of opportunities and we've got lots of information on our career site as well for carers, for parents, for those wanting to support others and to seek their first role or to seek a role in retail as well.

Anne - Host (41:55):

Great. Cause I think one of the really important things, Kate and also Katrina mentioned, and Erica, we'll talk about that is the idea that it's not necessarily you only just, you don't always just go to vocational education to get your training, or it's not necessarily in-house. The capacity to use that as pathways, go into maybe university programs, come out of university programs, go into industries, then do vocational qualifications, skillset training, is just as critically important for a conversation to be had. They don't have to stay in isolation, do they? in regard to what we offer or the pathway. There are multiple pathways in to be successful in retail and in hospitality and I think that's a, the critical thing as well that we come out of here, we speak about the number of jobs that you have during your lifetime, the amount of different industries that you might enter into, and this forms all part of that conversation that needs to be actually had. Erica, I wanna go to you for your last word and what would your recommendations, especially from your research perspective, in regard to some of your findings in the past and what you're working on now, what would be some of your recommendations or what would be your advice to parents?

Professor Erica Smith (43:13):

So, if you were a parent or somebody about to leave school, I really like Katrina's advice to take a gap year. I actually, from my most recent research, ended up with that conclusion because I think people do a lot in a gap year. They continue working in their current part-time jobs or they might try something different and so often when you talk to young people who've been outta school a couple of years, they've actually completely changed track and I think that the gap year helps to, helps you to look at different things that you can do and one of that might be staying in your part-time job and moving up the ladder. So, I think one thing that people haven't necessarily discussed so far today is the fact that you can become a manager and I'm thinking particularly in retail, but I'm sure it's the same in hospitality, certainly in fast food, you can become a manager at such a young age. There are not many industries where you can be managing 50, a hundred staff when you are in your late twenties and go on further up the ladder in your thirties and earning huge amounts of money. So, it's actually a wonderful career path. Anne you were talking about retail being fast moving consumer goods, it's actually a fast-moving career path as well. So, if you really want to get on and grow, retail is great, you can either work in a big company and move onto all those opportunities that have just been mentioned, or you can own your own business and the same with hospitality, you can own your own business as well, so there's those two choices. If you're thinking that you as a young person or your child, if you are a parent or caregiver, might want to go into professional work, such as law or accounting, then it's sitting there in the big companies, both have in both of those industries, you don't have to go outside them as we've discussed earlier. So, I think the breadth of careers that are available, the speed at which you can move along the career path and just as, as has just been said, the interest in working with lots of people from lots of different backgrounds and in mixing with customers and clients, it really is unparalleled, these industries are unparalleled as really interesting careers for people. I'd just like to say something, from a careers advisor point of view, I know the careers advisors they're often overwhelm by demand, but I

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think with regards to these particular industries, sometimes it's forgotten that, you know, that phrase, what you see is what you get, well, what you see in retail and hospitality, isn't what you get. So, what you see as a customer, isn't what you get as a career. So, you can stay working in a customer facing role, but you can also very, very likely to move behind the scenes to be a manager, to orchestrate things, to order supplies, to, you know all those other things that happen behind the scenes. So, I think if careers advisors could think of retail and hospitality and think what you see, isn't what you get, they would be much better able to advise young people about the possibilities in these careers, of careers in these industries and after all careers in these industries are the most accessible careers, apart from maybe health, retail and hospitality, as I started off by saying, at industries that are everywhere. And so, these are really accessible careers and really, fantastically fast-moving careers. So, I would say encourage young people to enter these industries.

Anne - Host (47:06):

I'd like to thank all of you for your insights and the information that you've actually given to us. I think it's critically important that we have these discussions and also to make sure that what we are giving is accurate information that is not skewed by ideas about how industries were 10 years ago, 15 years ago. So, thank you very much, Erica, Kate, and Katrina for your help. And I wish you all the best. So, thanks very much.

Kate (47:33):

Thanks.

Professor Erica Smith (48:15):

Bye