

1. Platform Strategy Guides

Advertising on TikTok and Instagram is highly beneficial for youth apprenticeship recruitment because these platforms are where young people already spend their time. Here are some things to keep in mind while posting:

TikTok

- **Audience:** Primarily Gen Z (ages 15–18)
- **Content Style:** Short-form, authentic, trend-driven
- **Best Practices:**
 1. Use trending sounds and challenges to boost visibility
 2. Keep videos under 60 seconds for maximum engagement
 3. Include clear calls-to-action (e.g., “Click the link in bio”)

Instagram

- **Audience:** High School Students and Parents
- **Content Style:** Visually polished, aspirational, story-driven
- **Best Practices:**
 1. Use Reels for reach, Stories for engagement, and Posts for credibility
 2. Leverage “carousel” posts to showcase multiple aspects of a program
 3. Use location tags and hashtags to increase discoverability

2. Visual Branding Tips

Visual branding is important because it helps organizations create a recognizable and trustworthy identity that resonates with their audience.

Design Guidelines

- **Color Palette:** Use bold, energetic colors that appeal to youth (e.g., teal, orange, purple)
- **Fonts:** Stick to clean, modern fonts like Montserrat, Poppins, or Arial Rounded
- **Logo Use:** Keep logos small and unobtrusive—focus on the story, not the brand

Visual Consistency

- Use templates for Reels and Stories to maintain a cohesive look
- Include subtitles for accessibility and engagement
- Use emojis and stickers sparingly to enhance—not clutter—your message

3. Hashtag & Trend Library

Hashtags will help your content get discovered by the right audience. They connect your posts to trending conversations and communities youth are already engaging with.

Core Hashtags for Apprenticeship Content

- #CareerReady #CareerPathways
- #WorkforceDevelopment
- #SkillsForLife
- #FutureFocused
- #NextGenWorkforce
- #LearnAndEarn
- #EducationAlternatives
- #CollegeIsntTheOnlyWay
- #TradeSchoolLife
- #VocationalTraining
- #RealWorldSkills
- #PostGradPlans
- #ApprenticeshipWorks
- #SkilledTradesMatter
- #TradeCareers
- #HandsOnTraining
- #EarnWhileYouLearn
- #ApprenticeLife
- #BuildYourFuture
- #ToolboxTalk
- #BlueCollarPride
- #WomenInTrades
- #YouthInTrades
- #TechApprenticeship
- #GreenJobs

Trend-Driven Hashtags (Update Regularly)

- #POV (e.g., “POV: You just landed your dream apprenticeship”)
- #DayInTheLife
- #BeforeAndAfter
- #HowItStartedVsHowItsGoing
- #CareerTok
- #GenZCareer

Tips for Using Hashtags

- Mix 3–5 niche hashtags with 1–2 trending ones
- Avoid overloading posts—quality over quantity
- Monitor which hashtags drive the most engagement and adjust accordingly

4. Engagement Playbook

Posting is just the beginning—responding to comments, DMs, and shares builds trust and community. Youth want to feel seen and heard.

Comment & DM Response Tips

- **Be timely:** Aim to respond within 24 hours
- **Be human:** Use emojis, casual tone, and affirming language
- **Be helpful:** Provide links, next steps, or offer to chat more

Engagement Boosters

- Run polls or quizzes in Stories
- Host live Q&As with current apprentices
- Repost user-generated content (with permission)

5. Analytics & Metrics Guide

Tracking performance can help organizations understand what content resonates, refine their strategy, and demonstrate impact to stakeholders.

Key Metrics to Monitor

- **Reach:** How many unique users saw your content
- **Impressions:** Total views, including repeat views
- **Engagement Rate:** Likes, comments, shares, saves divided by reach
- **Click-Through Rate (CTR):** Percentage of users who clicked a link
- **Follower Growth:** Change in followers over time
- **Video Completion Rate:** How many viewers watched the full video\

Platform-Specific Tips

- **TikTok:** Use the Creator Tools dashboard to track video views, profile visits, and follower insights

- **Instagram:** Use Insights to monitor post reach, engagement, and story interactions

Best Practices

- Review metrics weekly or biweekly
- Identify top-performing posts and replicate their format or tone
- Use low-performing content to learn what doesn't work—then pivot!

6. Content Calendar Template

A content calendar can keep your team organized, ensure consistent posting, and help align content with key dates and themes.

Tips for Planning

- Align posts with school calendars, career fairs, and national awareness days (e.g., National Apprenticeship Week)
- Use scheduling tools like Later, Buffer, or Meta Business Suite
- Leave space for spontaneous content (e.g., trending sounds or challenges)

7. Collaboration Toolkit

Partnering with influencers, schools, and youth organizations can expand your reach and build credibility with young audiences.

Types of Collaborators

- **Micro-influencers:** Local creators with 1K–10K followers who share career or lifestyle content
- **Schools & Educators:** Career counselors, CTE teachers, guidance departments
- **Youth Organizations:** Nonprofits, clubs, and community centers focused on workforce development

Collaboration Ideas

- Co-create content with apprentices or alumni
- Host joint Instagram Lives or TikTok duets
- Share each other's posts to cross-promote

- Offer giveaways or incentives for engagement (e.g., “Tag a friend to win a career coaching session”)

Outreach Templates

- **DM to Influencer:** “Hey [Name], we love your content! Would you be open to collaborating on a post to help youth discover apprenticeship opportunities?”
- **Email to School:** “We’re building awareness around youth apprenticeships and would love to partner with your career services team. Could we set up a quick call?”

8. Youth-Centered Messaging Guide

The tone and language you use can make or break your connection with youth. Gen Z values authenticity, inclusivity, and clarity. Messaging should feel like a conversation—not a corporate pitch.

Core Messaging Principles

- **Be Real:** Avoid jargon, buzzwords, or overly polished language. Speak like a peer, not a brochure.
- **Be Inclusive:** Use gender-neutral language and highlight diverse voices and pathways.
- **Be Aspirational:** Focus on opportunity, growth, and empowerment—not just job duties.
- **Be Clear:** Keep sentences short, direct, and action-oriented.

✔ Messaging Do’s

- Use clear, relatable language like: “You don’t need college to build a career you love.”
- Ask engaging questions or use direct calls-to-action: “Want to get paid while you learn?”
- Make the opportunity feel tangible and aspirational: “This could be you in 6 months.”
- Encourage interaction: “Tag a friend who needs to see this.”

✘ Messaging Don’ts

- Avoid institutional or jargon-heavy language like: “Our program offers alternative post-secondary pathways.”
- Don’t use overly formal phrasing: “We offer compensated experiential learning opportunities.”
- Skip vague or passive statements: “Participants may qualify for placement after completion.”
- Avoid robotic CTAs: “Refer a peer to our program using the provided form.”

Messaging Examples

- **Hook:** “College isn’t the only way to win. Here’s how I started earning at 16.”
- **Caption:** “No debt. Real skills. A paycheck. That’s the apprenticeship life.”
- **CTA:** “DM us to find your fit. We’ll walk you through it.”