

Young South Africans need to change, say experts

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Young South Africans need to change their mindset from looking for a job to creating jobs by starting their own businesses, audit and consulting firm Deloitte says.



Youth in SA need to look at creating their own jobs instead of waiting to get one. Image: [Come Recommended](#)

Unemployment, which stands at about 25%, remains one of the greatest challenges facing South Africa. Youth unemployment has risen to about 48%, and Parliament recently adopted the Employment Tax Incentive Bill, which aims to reverse the high levels of youth unemployment by using tax incentives to encourage employers to take on young trainees.

During the School Entrepreneurship Trust's inaugural panel discussion held at the Bandwidth Barn in Cape Town, Eugene Daniels, education expert at Deloitte and previously district director in the Western Cape education department, said youth unemployment had reached crisis proportions.

"Education has not kept up with developments in our global economy and educational standards remain mediocre, despite a huge investment in education," Daniels said.

He said pupils needed to leave school with meaningful skills that allowed them to create their own jobs instead of joining the unemployment queues.

No job - make one yourself

"Industry is crying out for learners with the necessary skills and appropriate attitudes. We need to transform schooling so that it is more relevant to the world of work," Daniels said.

Marius Alberts, Deloitte's regional leader in the Western Cape, said the high rate of unemployment among SA's youth was cause for alarm. "The greatest challenge in fixing the youth unemployment crisis is to create more jobs," he said.

Alberts said initiatives such as the School Entrepreneurship Conference were vital to drive the change needed among the country's youth.

The panel discussion was the culmination of the conference, held at the University of Cape Town this month. The event, co-sponsored by Deloitte and the Technology Innovation Agency, brought together 100 high-school pupils from disadvantaged communities to participate in lectures, workshops and a business pitch competition.

Alex McLeod, founding trustee of the School Entrepreneurship Trust, said an entrepreneur is a change agent who wants to make a difference in the world.

"The world's most successful entrepreneurs all started young - some even from the age of eight or 10," McLeod said.

The School Entrepreneurship Conference is now in its second year and there are plans to expand its scope to include a school entrepreneurship olympiad, run in association with the University of Cape Town and Rhodes University.

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