

BRIDGING
THE
TALENT
DISCONNECT:
CHARTING
THE
PATHWAYS
TO
FUTURE
GROWTH



BY ELLIOT LUM,
Vice President, Talent Strategy and Program Development

Executive Summary

BRIDGING THE TALENT DISCONNECT: CHARTING THE PATHWAYS TO FUTURE GROWTH IN THE MARKETING AND ADVERTISING INDUSTRIES

BACKGROUND:

In 2016, the ANA Educational Foundation (AEF) responded to the growing concern in the marketing and advertising industries about the challenge of attracting and retaining the best entry-level talent. To assess the issue, the AEF contracted GfK Research to execute the first ever study that surveyed all stakeholder perspectives, including from: a) C-suite executives, line managers, and human resource recruiters, b) deans and professors from both public and private institutions, and c) current students and recent new hires to the industry.

Three core objectives drove the survey:

1. Better understand the dimensions and causes of the talent problem
2. Identify potential remedies to both attract and prepare top talent to enter and excel in the marketing and advertising industries
3. Inform, inspire, and instruct talent acquisition and retention

CORE FINDINGS:

Marketers and the agencies that work with them are facing an unprecedented talent challenge or “talent disconnect” as millennials look to other, seemingly more appealing fields to build careers. This is driven in large measure by a lack of common vision, vocabulary, and perceived relevance among marketers, young professionals, and the schools that are expected to educate them.

Overall, the report concludes students are unclear about career paths in marketing and advertising and question whether it constitutes “meaningful work.” At the same time, universities

are scrambling to develop curricula that anticipates rapidly changing industry realities. They are conflicted by the desire to prepare the job-ready graduates the industry demands and provide an education that develops the broad critical thinking capabilities needed for future leadership in society. All this as marketers and ad agencies struggle to decipher and adapt to the millennial mindset while being frustrated that recent graduates are often unprepared to enter the field.

There are significant reasons for this disconnect:

1. Digital transformation complicates new marketing and advertising career paths. New digital channels have changed the way the industry communicates with consumers. Roles within organizations that didn’t previously exist, like social media and digital analytics managers, are mandating new “hard skills” in data management and advanced analytics. These constantly evolving skill requirements and job definitions have made it difficult for marketers and agencies to define and promise clear career paths to students and prospective hires with any consistency.

2. College and university curricula cannot keep pace with the rapid change going on in the industry. Course work and textbooks are out of date almost as soon as they’re published, and much that is taught about marketing and communications is outdated and unrelated to management expectations and students’ actual experience in the field.

3. Marketers and agencies now directly compete with technology companies for highly skilled talent. As demand for data analytics and digital expertise in marketing increases, marketers and their agencies find themselves competing with consultancies and

tech giants like the Boston Consulting Group, Google, Facebook, and Apple — all of which readily offer more generous compensation packages to new hires, both in terms of salary and perks. Aggressive recruiting tactics in the tech world further help them connect with talent faster and make concrete offers well in advance of marketing and advertising companies.

4. **“Great expectations” are defining today’s crop of young talent.** Differing generational expectations for job responsibilities, quality of life, and career advancement are challenging middle- and senior-level marketing executives on how to effectively manage, motivate, and retain the new generation of workers. Young talent often seeks “purpose” in their work along with “creative” job environments, like those established by the startup and tech culture. Many also feel they’re not getting the level of responsibility and opportunities for rapid advancement they expect, fostering more frequent job turnover.

FACING THE CHALLENGE

The AEF’s mission is to serve as the bridge connecting the advertising, marketing, and academic communities. Together, we look to inspire the next generation of talent. In convening its key stakeholders to take action, the AEF proposes to address collectively what it perceives as the three most critical issues surfaced by the study:

Challenge 1: Marketers and agencies seeking “job-ready” talent from universities

Challenge 2: Academia seeking better ways to adapt and prepare students for careers in a digital, data-driven world

Challenge 3: Students seeking clarity on professional growth and a career that matters

A CALL TO ACTION: PATHWAYS 2020

The Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and the AEF are calling on marketers and agencies to partner with educators to inspire and prepare the next generation of marketing and advertising leaders. The movement is called Pathways 2020 and aims to create a wider, more diverse, and better equipped pool of talent to fuel industry growth. At the same time, it will make the case for what a creative, innovative and rewarding career marketing can be. The AEF plans to measure progress on this collective effort against three specific initiatives:

1,000 Industry Campus Visits

- The AEF and the ANA are collaborating to power over 1,000 marketing and advertising executive campus visits by 2020.
- The AEF will create a formalized toolkit for industry representatives to ensure professional consistency of content and engagement.
- The AEF will employ new technologies to enable more efficient and scalable campus participation from leading marketing and advertising executives.

1,000 Professors Inspired

- The AEF will expand the reach of its current “Visiting Professors” program to ensure at least 1,000 professors will have on-site industry experiences by 2020.
- The AEF will welcome professors to ANA member conferences and committee meetings.

1,000 Students Immersed

- The AEF will create formal, “certified” guidelines and best practices for the internship experience that will bring industry consistency in the identification, recruitment, and training of students coming into the marketing and advertising industries.

- The AEF will actively engage its extensive network of professorial and campus relationships to better source promising talent for the two industries.
- The AEF will create a more efficient, codified process to screen and recommend talent for summer internship programs within the marketing and advertising industries.
- The AEF’s goal is to have 1,000 students participate in AEF immersion programs, such as a summer internship or a week-long immersion experience by 2020.

The research further confirmed that the talent disconnect is tied to the issue of diversity in the marketing and advertising industries. Its role is crucial in evaluating the three initiatives, and the AEF will be tracking diversity goals within each initiative and across all programming efforts. However, this talent effort alone is not sufficient to make an impact on diversity. The AEF is therefore partnering with the Alliance for Inclusive and Multicultural Marketing (AIMM) and is looking to join forces with other organizations to drive greater diversity in the marketing and advertising industries.

While these three Pathways initiatives cannot solve all the issues surfaced in the GfK research study, they represent a strong first step toward addressing challenges that have been festering within the marketing and advertising industries for some time. The industry is confronting a growing deficit of talent, and needs to demonstrate a clear commitment to its development. **Visit www.aef.com/pathways2020 to download the full study and learn how you can pledge your support.**



BRIDGING
THE
TALENT
DISCONNECT:
THE
REPORT

Disconnected from the Most Connected Generation

Focusing on the Next Generation of Talent Today

GROWTH IS CORE to the sustained health of any organization. Drivers of growth can range from a new product introduction to a persuasive marketing campaign to smart deployment of financial capital. A critical but often overlooked driver of growth is the quality of talent that is behind all of these corporate initiatives. A McKinsey study found quantitative evidence that deploying the right kind of talent with the right mix of skills will drive growth.¹ This is especially true in marketing and advertising, where there is a premium placed on breakthrough creative thinking and rigorous analysis.

However, our talent foundation has eroded. Talent coming into the industry might be addressing the labor demands of today, but they often fail to grow into the leaders of tomorrow. They might be cultivating expertise in one specific marketing skill, but they can't apply it to a broader context as their careers progress. This problem of attracting and retaining high-quality talent who can grow with the needs of the business is only getting worse as businesses are all trying to do more with less.

For many marketers and agencies, the talent pipeline begins with recruiting college graduates into the industry. The goal is to attract an influx of high-caliber, diverse workers who have the right set of skills to drive growth for their company and for their industry. The best way to attract and retain this talent might seem simple on the surface, but it is in fact incredibly complex when we dig deeper into the mindsets of all the stakeholders involved in the process.

The mission of the ANA Educational Foundation (AEF) is to be the bridge that connects the advertising, marketing, and academic communities. Together, we educate and inspire the next generation of talent while advancing the understanding of marketing and advertising in society. This is why the AEF commissioned the research company GfK to conduct the first qualitative study that surveyed all stakeholder interests:

- 1. THE TALENT:** Students and new hires
- 2. ACADEMIA:** Deans, professors, and career counselors
- 3. INDUSTRY:** CMOs, HR executives, and line managers at agencies and brands

Given the broad nature of this study, the AEF recognizes that there are topics that might not be covered in sufficient depth. What the AEF hopes to achieve, in publishing the study, are the following outcomes:

- **Provide an open forum to talk about talent:** Everyone has a point of view about people coming into the marketing and advertising industries based on their own experiences. Those points of view will start to sharpen if there is a productive forum to exchange ideas about how to elevate the quality of the talent pool entering the industries.
- **Create greater clarity around skills needed today to grow tomorrow:** The talent conversation has become even more complex, driven by the digital transformation that has taken place over the past decade. New digital distribution channels have attracted an influx of marketing and advertising dollars from brands looking to get their message in front of consumers. This new infrastructure has required a different set of skills to succeed and thrive. Greater complexity drives even more confusion around what the attributes of top talent look like, where that talent is sourced, how to communicate what marketing and advertising are to this talent, and how to roadmap a career in these industries.
- **Incite action to be taken now instead of later:** Talking about talent without set objectives leads to frustration. The marketing and advertising industries is frustrated because they aren't getting the people they need to expand their businesses. Universities are frustrated because they aren't able to keep pace with industry demands. Students are left in a bind because they are often not given the proper guidance on how to progress in a marketing or advertising career. In the short term, this situation is uncomfortable but manageable, but in the long term this cycle will erode the foundation for the next generation of talent.

1. "Connecting Talent with Opportunity in the Digital Age," McKinsey (June 2015)



I.

**TALENT TRENDS:
UNDERSTANDING
THE ISSUES**





1. Anxiety About an Uncertain Future

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE:

Under Enormous Pressure to Deliver Growth

Marketers are under significant pressure to deliver growth. According to a Deloitte study surveying 200 marketing executives²:

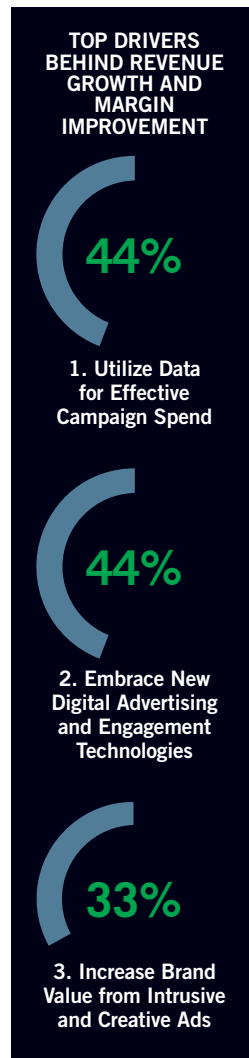
- 27 percent said that the CMO is primarily responsible for growth strategies and revenue generation, versus 21 percent who said it is the CEO's job.
- 68 percent said that growth is one of the top expectations by senior management and the board.
- As seen in the chart (right), the top methods for marketers to drive growth come from a diverse set of skill sets, from analytics to digital to creative.

As marketers are looking to grow, so too are agencies. However, they are under a different kind of pressure from their clients: to deliver results at a more cost-effective price. Marketers are teaming up with procurement to help drive more cost out of the system. In a survey of 100 marketing procurement executives, 63 percent said they were facing moderate to significant pressure to lower agency compensation annually.³ Doing more with less while also keeping their talent pool engaged with creative work is a constant struggle for agencies.

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE:

Struggling with Maintaining the Integrity and Purpose of College

Since 2011, the average cost of college (including tuition, room, and board) rose 12 percent for a private four-year school to \$45,370 annually, while the average cost of public college rose 10 percent to \$20,090.⁴



Colleges are struggling to justify the rising cost of attaining a higher education as families are re-evaluating the price they are willing to pay and are putting pressure on schools to deliver a return on their investment for their children.⁵ The GfK report cites Dawn Lerman, associate dean at Fordham University, who said, “This is a challenge in undergraduate higher education: balancing what industry is expecting from us and what parents are expecting in terms of ROI with what we understand higher education should be providing at that age and level of maturity.”

University deans are grappling with this need to train their students for specific jobs while preparing them for the real world.

“I feel strongly that students need a well-rounded undergraduate education and to be exposed to all sorts of issues. It should be a time of exploration as opposed to hard and fast direction.”

— DAWN LERMAN, PH.D.,
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies,
Professor of Marketing, and Executive Director, Center
for Positive Marketing, Gabelli School of Business,
Fordham University

This pressure to deliver the industry job-ready workers first starts with what is being taught in schools. However, as Jef Richards, professor at Michigan State University, commented in the GfK report, making any change, however slight, at a university can be like “trying to steer a barge with a feather.” The speed of change happening in the

business world is making it difficult for universities to keep their curriculum up to date.

“I think that the business world is changing much more rapidly than academia. And that’s why I bring in industry professionals to my classes to speak, because they’re on top of what is actually happening in the field. The cycle within academia for developing new content is too slow.”

— GREGORY LA BLANC,
Distinguished Teaching Fellow,
Berkeley Haas School of Business

Moreover, skilled faculty are being lured away by industry, which can offer more lucrative compensation packages and promise larger data sets for their research endeavors.

“It’s hard for universities to keep their talent. I know someone who taught a top business school, and he got a job offer from Uber. Even as a tenured professor, he’d rather quit that job and go work for Uber because you

2. “Marketing as Growth Driver,” Deloitte (2017)
3. Vast Majority of Procurement Execs Pressured to Cut Agency Fees Annually,” *Ad Age* (May 2015)
4. “Trends in Higher Education,” College Board (2017)
5. “Trends in Higher Education, Marketing, Recruitment, and Technology,” Hanover Research (2014)

1. Anxiety About an Uncertain Future

can — it's not just about getting paid more, it's about having more interesting data at his disposal and he can do experiments and research that academics can only dream about."

— GREGORY LA BLANC,
Berkeley Haas School of Business

Universities are feeling the pressure from industry across many fronts that is forcing them to evaluate what their future holds.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE: Figuring Out What to Do with Life

Students are anxious about paying down their student debt, as 70 percent of graduating students come out with an average of \$37,200 in loans. Close to 60 percent don't know how they might even pay that back.⁶ Decisions about employment prospects are often made within these financial constraints. Beyond these considerations, students still don't know what their career prospects hold. That lack of uncertainty manifests in several ways. For some, it's a trial and error process to figure out what they want to do by figuring out what they don't want to do,

"I have no idea about how to prepare for my first job. It's kind of concerning how little I am prepared for the real world. I can tell you what I don't want to do. I don't want to be doing something repetitive and I don't want to be stuck sitting behind a desk."

— STUDENT, Business College

For others, it's empowering to know that they are not shackled down by their first jobs. They know they have the power to leave, and they come in with the mindset that they will leave if it is not the place for them.

"I have no loyalty at all. Times are changing. Millennials are focused on ourselves. If it requires me to leave to go do something better after six months, I would do that."

— STUDENT, Liberal Arts

Finally, for others, it's distressing to know many of their classmates already have a set future almost a year before graduation while they have to wait for the hiring practice to begin in the marketing and advertising world close to when they leave school.

"I have a lot of friends who are already signed and have bonuses and they will be making good money. The agency we worked with basically told us, 'We can't hire people until you graduate, so we'll talk later.' It's just a different process. I've come to terms with that a little bit, but it is nerve-wracking."

— STUDENT, Liberal Arts

6. "10 Student Loan Facts College Grads Need to Know,"
U.S. News & World Report (May 2016)





2. A Tectonic Shift in Skills Requirements

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE:

What Is in Demand Today

A McKinley Partners⁷ marketing study highlights what skills are most in demand for 2017 as seen in the graph at right. Digital marketing is the skill that companies are most looking for in the marketplace.

The functional breakdown suggests that there is an imbalance in the supply and demand in several key areas, but most acute in digital marketing. Even though digital skills are critical, two aspects are becoming increasingly important.

a. Know How to Apply Analytics to Business

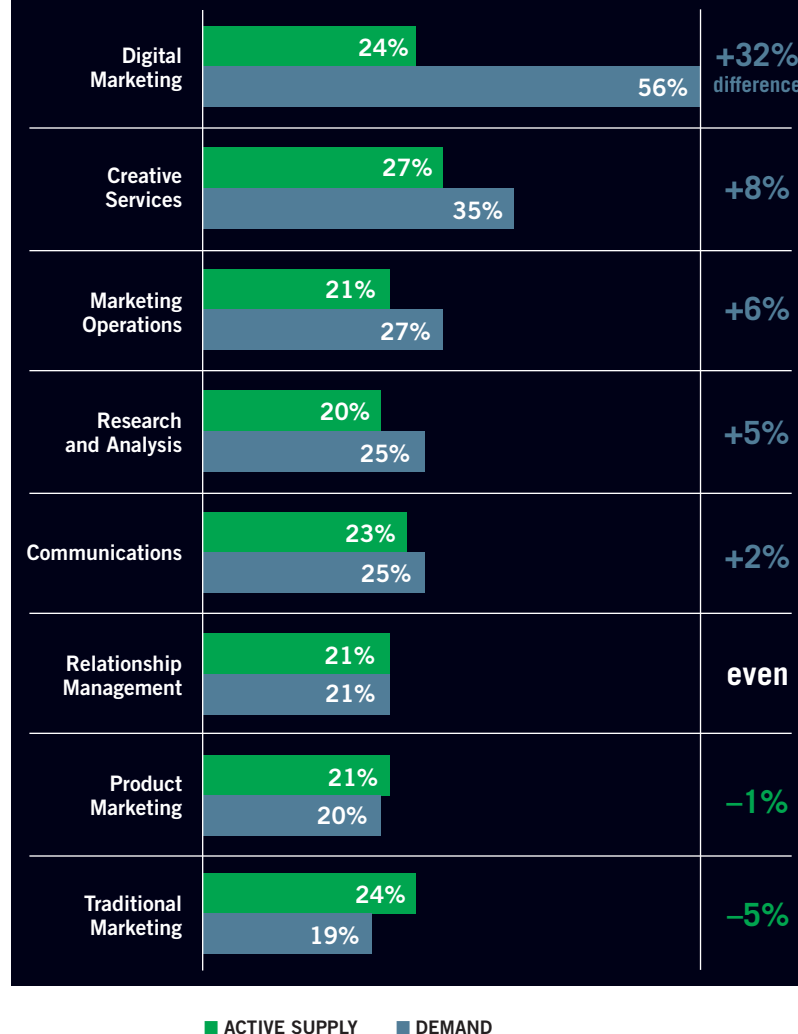
Decisions: It's not enough to know how to analyze a problem. It's about identifying what the data is actually saying and then acting upon that data to drive a business decision. This process often requires softer skills — communication, organizing, writing, and consensus-building — to drive that decision forward.

“In this world, the ability to sort through fields of data to find insight and opportunity and understand how to do that well at a broad level is critical for everyone. Of course, there are specialists who will dig deeper but everyone has to have more appreciation for how to use data and know what is meaningful or meaningless.”

— MARKETING EXECUTIVE

b. The T-Shaped Candidate: The McKinley study also suggests that soft skills — specifically communication and problem-solving — as core to being successful. That helps people translate

SKILLS GAP BETWEEN LABOR SUPPLY AND DEMAND



what they do to other functions within marketing and also other departments in the organization, which is what one interviewee calls the T-shaped candidate.

“The holy grail for us is the T-shaped graduate. The bottom of the T is the strong discipline expertise, but the top of the T is the ability to apply that discipline across the board.”

— RENETTA E. MCCANN,
Chief Talent Officer,
Publicis Communications NA,
Leo Burnett USA

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE: Chasing Down Analytics

While students are looking for real-world experience, universities are looking to prepare these students with the tools to help them be successful. One of the newer disciplines is analytics, which schools are looking to offer their students.

“Students must have a greater facility with analyzing and interpreting data. At our school, we are spending more time talking about how to build that facility, how it emerges in our curriculum, and how it cuts across different disciplines.”

— JENNIFER SCANLON,
Professor of Gender, Sexuality,
and Women's Studies,
Bowdoin College

7. “2017 Marketing Hiring Trends,” McKinley Marketing Partners (2016); n=314



2. A Tectonic Shift in Skills Requirements

“What we’re hoping now is with the trend of the industry, we can get more students excited about analytics. Because that’s certainly the future. We’re also engaged in shopper marketing and brand activation because those areas have really taken off in the industry. And so I think that we try to usher them toward the cutting edge if we can, so that they’re prepared as the jobs open up there.”

— JEF I. RICHARDS, J.D., PH.D
Professor, Department of Advertising + Public Relations, Michigan State University

Those leveraging analytics are being rewarded with more positions available for them to consider at a higher wage premium.⁸ These candidates are often not coming directly from marketing and advertising departments, but from those fields that already have a quantitative disposition.

“The folks that I see going into what I see as the best marketing jobs are not even coming out of business schools. They are coming out of computer science departments, engineering schools, and even physics departments.”

— GREGORY LA BLANC,
Berkeley Haas School of Business

As industry has changed, the scope of marketing has as well, which has led many into the field, particularly in technology, without them knowing it.

“What’s interesting is that a lot of the tech firms have strange positions like Chief Growth Officer or Chief Product Officer. Those positions often have responsibilities that we used to think of as being part of the traditional CMO. So I think a lot of people don’t think of themselves as going into marketing even though that is what they are doing.”

— GREGORY LA BLANC,
Berkeley Haas School of Business

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE: It’s About Real-World Experience

Students aren’t necessarily thinking about what kinds of skills they need to take up a career in marketing or advertising. They are more worried about getting that first job out of college. The path to getting that first job is primarily through securing internships that demonstrate that they can contribute right away.

“I did an internship in marketing and felt really gratified by the work I was doing. I was helping write press releases and interacting with clients. I realized that I was much more of a people person than I had originally thought.”

— NEW HIRE, Marketing

Students also get to experience the reality of how the business world actually works versus how it might work in theory.

“We were given real-world opportunities in the classroom but weren’t ever looped into how client relationships work. We would be doing these multi-million-dollar campaigns that would never happen in the real world. It would take too much money. I had no idea of the limitations of working with certain clients or understanding the nuances of these relationships.”

— NEW HIRE, Advertising

Real-world experience also provides better clarity on what a marketing career looks like.

“A math career you have to know exactly how it works while marketing is more vague. If you have that creative mindset, classes aren’t always necessary. Experience is more important.”

—STUDENT, Business College

8. “Liberal Arts Colleges, in Fight for Survival, Focus on Job Skills,” WSJ (April 2017)



3. The New Landscape of Work

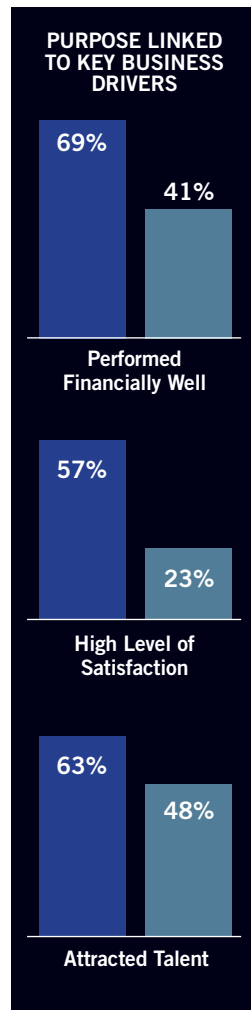
INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE: Struggling to Understand the Millennial Generation

A Deloitte study of more than 7,500 millennials showed that more than 50 percent would be willing to take a pay cut if the job aligned with their values.⁹ In a generation that values a higher purpose than money, these millennials gravitate to companies — both as consumers and employees — that can offer them something greater than just profit. The chart at right demonstrates how millennials perceive that sense of purpose drives different business variables, from financial performance to job satisfaction to attracting new talent.¹⁰

There is a recognition from industry that this generation has a different set of values, but companies find that this younger workforce is often not prepared for the reality and intensity of the working environment. Many new hires come in with high expectations only to realize how challenging it is to execute their own ideas.

The challenge is not just attracting this talent but also finding ways to retain them — to keep them engaged in the work and to prevent them from leaving for another competitor or the industry altogether.

“We put so much emphasis on hiring people at that entry level year over year, and the expectation of sticking around more than a year or two isn’t great. You go through all of this vetting and courting. Entry-level salary is a pain point, and bringing people in to do a job they may or may not want to be doing is a pain point. Everyone can raise their hand to be rotated and try new experiences, but



■ STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE
■ LACKING STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE

another pain point is that the maturation of the individuals coming in varies. The more mature and self-aware somebody is, the better for everybody.”

— AGENCY TALENT EXECUTIVE

“I think our business is getting younger and we have to adapt to that. The average age is 28 or 30, but management is aging, so ensuring that we have an organization that understands millennial culture and what motivates them and how to keep them is difficult. I think our challenge has always been and continues to be high turnover. These are hard-to-find people, so retention is becoming a key issue for us. We need to work on changing social norms and what may motivate a younger, more digitally savvy audience — they’re informal, issues-driven people. We’re competing with Google, Snapchat, and Facebook.”

— JOHN MONTGOMERY,
Executive Vice President,
Global Brand Safety, GroupM

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE: Trying to Set Expectations

When they get the opportunity, professors look to coach students about what to expect in the workforce.

“Everyone wants to matter and make a difference. Sometimes you have to do the really mundane and tedious work on the journey.”

— MICHELLE STEWARD,
Associate Professor, Marketing,
Wake Forest University

“Students have this image that ‘I’m going to be a director when I graduate,’ and I respond, ‘No, you are most likely going to be an assistant.’ And I want them to be a director, but I am just trying to be realistic with them about what they need to learn and the experience they need to get to eventually become a director.”

— EDWARD E. TIMKE, PH.D.,
Lecturer in Media Studies,
University of California, Berkeley

Career counselors are in the best position to help guide students on what to expect in the industry. They not only provide them with job leads but also with help to frame why they feel the work is important.

“Students are really interested in doing something meaningful. Purpose is important. I ask students, ‘Do you care where you work, what you do day-to-day, about flexibility, and who you want to work with?’”

— CAREER SERVICES DIRECTOR

9. “Winning Over the Next Generation of Leaders,” Deloitte (2016)
10. “Mind the Gaps,” Deloitte (2015). N=7,806. *In thinking about the company you work for, to what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements?*



3. The New Landscape of Work

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE:

We're Taking Over the Workforce on Our Terms

Workforce demographics are dramatically shifting. In Q1 2015, the millennial generation (those born between 1981 and 1997) represented the largest percentage of the workforce, surpassing generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) and the baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964).¹¹

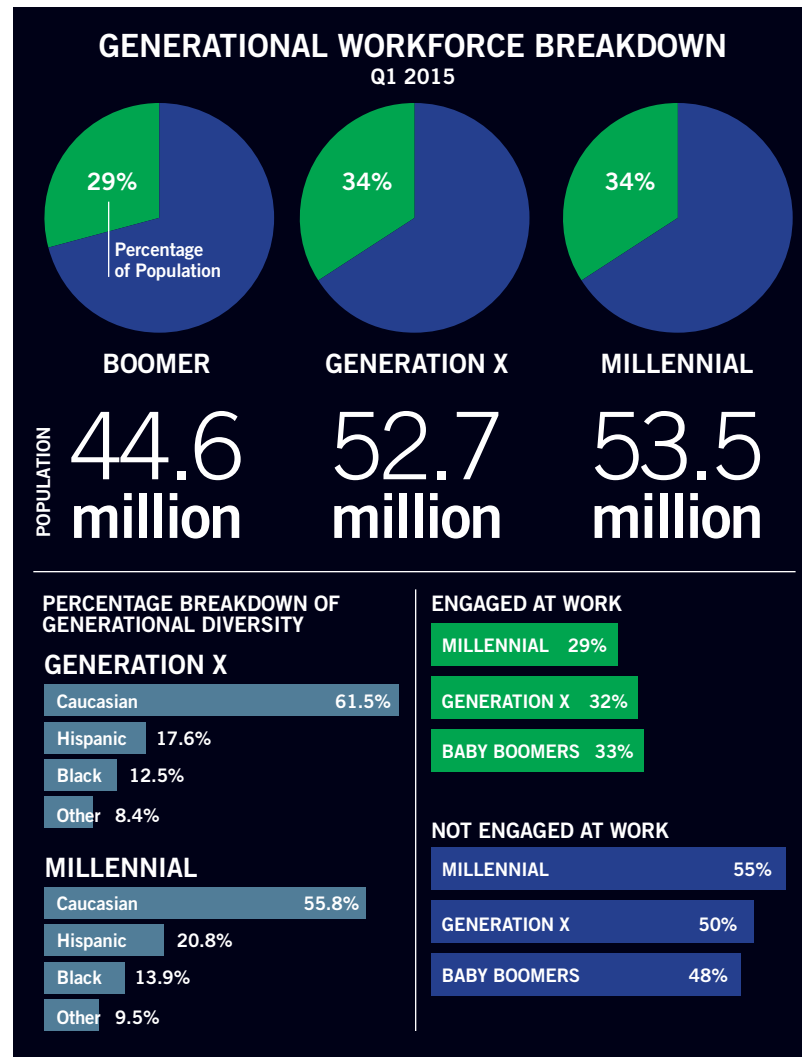
Labor projections indicate that by 2020 the millennial segment will represent close to 50 percent of the workforce, and by 2025, it will represent 75 percent of the total workforce.¹² It will also be one of the most ethnically diverse generations.¹³

According to a Gallup study,¹⁴ when it comes to working for their employers, millennials are the least engaged of all generations.

When they are not engaged, they have a higher likelihood of leaving. An HBS study found that 21 percent of the millennials surveyed quit their jobs to do something else, which was three times higher than a non millennial.¹⁵ This is consistent with some of what the AEF heard in interviews with students.

“Knowing how much people in our generation supposedly switch around jobs, I know a lot of people that are two or three years out of college, and that are on their second or third job. I know that’s not the end-all and be-all.”

— *STUDENT, Business College*



“My two goals are to find something I enjoy and live a lifestyle I want to live. As far as number of years, I don’t know, but I would jump ship if there is something better.”

—*STUDENT, Liberal Arts*

11. “Millennials Surpass GenXers as the Largest Generation Work Force,” Pew Research Center (11 May 2015)
 12. “Brookings Data Now: 75% of the 2025 Workforce Will Be Millennials,” Brookings Institute (17 July 2014)
 13. “Diversity Defines the Millennial Generation,” Brookings Institute (28 June 2016)
 14. “How Millennials Want to Work and Live,” Gallup (2016)
 15. “What Millennials Want from a New Job,” *Harvard Business Review* (May 2016)

II.
**KEY RESEARCH
TAKEAWAYS:
DIAGNOSING
THE ISSUES**





Talent Is Imperative for Driving Growth, But It's Both a Short- and Long-Term Investment

— A McKinsey study estimates that identifying and connecting the right talent to the right employment opportunity can add \$2.7 trillion to global GDP growth.¹⁶ This impacts all industries, in particular marketing and advertising, which need a very diverse mix of talent — in terms of skills, perspectives, ethnicity, and gender — to drive creative ideas forward. Oftentimes, the importance of talent takes a backseat to other business priorities. Neglecting to develop and cultivate talent, particularly at the entry level, may not have immediate short-term implications. The long-term impact, however, may severely hamper growth as an organization scrambles to find the right talent to handle even more complex business problems in the future.

Recognizing this, the ANA has made talent a key focus for its CMO Masters Circle, a leadership initiative. This leadership community will work together to find ways to attract and retain diverse and high-caliber talent who will drive growth for their companies and the marketing industry.

Digital Transformation Is Making All Stakeholders Play Catch Up

— Digital has disrupted not just industry business models but also the way in which business gets done. New skill sets are required to keep pace with the change as new job functions have emerged from programmatic media to content marketing. The marketing industry is sorting through all of these new tools to decipher how

best to maintain a relationship with the consumer or customer. Universities are also struggling to chart their own course and build curricula that meets the reality of what the market is demanding. Left in the lurch are students who are trying to determine, in all of this chaos, what career path to pursue.

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

“The number of channels by which we communicate has proliferated. The touchpoints are far greater because the tech changes so quickly. You need everyone on the team to have the ability to quickly analyze and think through how to respond with the right message in the right channel.”

— SHAWN ZUPP,
Group Account Director, R/GA

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

“The world is changing so fast in terms of technology. Our responsibility is to enhance how students think in this fast-paced world. Even though students today consider themselves digital natives, there are still ways in which they need to be taught to think critically with data.”

— JENNIFER SCANLON,
Bowdoin College

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“It’s a little bit frightening to see how quickly the pace of tech develops. This past year we were required to take a management

information course. The professor was really convincing in saying this is the future and there is no avoiding that. But as a marketing major my textbook, which was assigned by my professor, is extremely out of date. It’s a class that I’m in right now that could be completely obsolete next year.”

— STUDENT, Business College

It Takes a Village to Raise a Marketer and Advertiser

— Marketers and advertisers are continually looking for “fully formed” or “whole brain” candidates, those who show a solid combination of hard and soft skills, balancing good strategic thinking and problem solving with hard technical skills for true job readiness.

“On the one side we need the new breed of data and analytics types, but on the other side we need creativity and critical thinking. It’s not one or the other. GOING FORWARD WE REALLY NEED THE WHOLE BRAIN. We need the schools to help bring all those talents together.”

— DEBORAH WAHL,
Former CMO, McDonald’s U.S.

16. “Connecting Talent with Opportunity in the Digital Age,” McKinsey (June 2015).

17. “Big Demands and High Expectations, Millennial Survey,” Deloitte (January 2014)



The reality is that learning soft skills takes time, practice, and experience. Every company culture is different and managers have their own unique style. Patience is required to get fresh talent to adjust to the working reality and coach them to understand how to act and behave in the business world. With analytical skills, it's less about learning a particular skill and more about how to apply that skill set in a business context.

Developing and growing talent takes time, energy, and resources. That requires patience and dedication, not just from that one particular hiring company but across the industry.

“If somebody could help us identify and develop talent with learning agility and critical problem solving, I would love it. These are key areas that we don’t typically look at or benchmark for understanding how well an applicant would do in a world with ambiguity and change.”

— DENIS SISON,
Head of Marketing Excellence and Global Marketing Services Operations,
Johnson & Johnson, shares

Marketing and Advertising Career Paths Are Undefined —

There is general lack of consensus among industry experts about what a marketing or advertising career path looks like. It's less a career ladder and more a career jungle gym, with many new hires left to figure out which direction they want to go without much guidance. It's often easier to leave the company to make more money than to stay if the pace is too rigorous and there is no path

forward. As one advertising new hire shares, “The agency is diverse, but it feels like it's a lot of work for not a whole lot of money. The work environment is fun, the culture is great, but when working in NYC, the salary isn't great.”

Tackling Diversity Strategically and Decisively Is an Opportunity Area —

A McKinsey study found that ethnically diverse companies are 35 percent more likely to outperform their peers.¹⁸ Jennifer Lashua, chief of staff of digital and media at Intel, cited the investment her company is making to have full representation for historically underrepresented populations by 2020.¹⁹ Despite best intentions, the marketing and advertising industries have historically lagged in hiring and recruiting diverse talent. A study called “Impact Study — From Where I Stand” documented that Caucasian and multicultural advertising professionals had diverging viewpoints when it came to career development and advancement, mentorship, and work satisfaction.²⁰ Also, the *Wall Street Journal* conducted a diversity audit of the advertising business after finding that some of what was shared was not as detailed as other industries, like technology.²¹

Internships Provide the Best Real-World Experience

In addition to national student competitions and required team case studies/projects, internships are becoming a must-have for students and marketers alike. Whether they are for credit collegiate programs that round out graduation

requirements or a summer work experience, internships foster skill set growth and provide students with an opportunity to “try on” the major and determine if a potential employer is a good cultural career fit. Marketers believe internships are a win-win; they give students the opportunity to learn, grow, and get real-world experience while giving an organization the chance to test potential talent fit without incurring significant hiring resources.

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

“The summer internship gives the intern functional expertise of a specific department, plus the collective experience of teamwork. We use the internship to identify new hires within a six to nine-month time frame.”

— RENETTA E. MCCANN,
Chief Talent Officer,
Publicis Communications NA,
Leo Burnett USA

18. “Why Diversity Matters,” McKinsey (January 2015)

19. “The Intersection of Diversity and Digital,” Association of National Advertisers (October 2016).

20. “The Impact Study – Why Diversity Matters,” Tangerine Watson (2011).

21. “Why the Picture of Diversity on Madison Avenue is So Murky,” *WSJ* (March 2016).



INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

“An important ingredient to our recruiting is the internship program. We have about 40 interns every summer. They are highly vetted. Each year the class gets bigger and bigger, and they blow us away with how engaged and clever they are. We try to hire as many interns as we can.”

— AGENCY TALENT EXECUTIVE

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

“We have a mandatory internship requirement for an undergrad. All the internships are managed on an online course, 30 students per faculty member. We work with the employers who are learning about the students while the students figure out if this path is fulfilling to them.”

— MICHELLE STEWARD,
Wake Forest University

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“If you don’t have an internship every summer of your university career, you are at an extreme disadvantage. It’s very competitive nowadays. The talent sphere is entirely different today. I have interned every summer for the past five years and it’s only because of that that I’m interviewing with companies I really love. The real education happens outside of the classroom. Those who think the classroom is the only way to get a new job may need a little more exposure.”

— STUDENT, Liberal Arts

Internships Are a Crucial Part of The Learning Experience but the Experience Is Variable and Inconsistent

— Internships are a huge part of exposing students to how a company operates. Students recognize it’s important to demonstrate on their resumes a track record of real-world experience. Universities have increasingly started to integrate industry experience into their curriculum. The demand for internships is coming from the industry, which places a premium on this kind of experience.

“I find that graduates who do not gain experience outside of the classroom have a more difficult time assimilating into agency life — the pace, the culture, the vernacular, and the process to develop great work cannot be taught in a classroom.”

— MICHELE PROTA,
Global Chief Talent Officer,
KBS

While the internship experience is an indicator that the student got exposure to the working environment, it doesn’t reflect the quality of the experience. The experience can be highly variable, as factors such as source of placement, interest from the manager, the quality of the project, and the drive of the intern play into that experience. That doesn’t dissuade the industry from placing a premium on this kind of experience. However, the lack of standardization in the internship experience puts the onus on the student to source and extract the most value out of an internship.

Student Audiences Are Not One Size Fits All

— The process of attracting students into the marketing and advertising industries is not a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, a liberal arts student might not uncover marketing until an industry expert comes into one of his/her classes. At a business school, students might struggle to find which mix of marketing electives to take to best position themselves for an entry-level role. At communications schools, advertising students might wrestle with the challenge of investing more time in building their creative portfolios against taking more creative classes to keep them up to date with what is happening in the industry. STEM students might focus heavily on building products while remaining indifferent or ignorant to the value that marketing and advertising can bring to their endeavors.

Industry Experts Who Preach and Practice Is What Excites Students

— For the past 30 years, the AEF has organized thousands of campus visits for industry executives looking to speak directly to students. The AEF works directly with a wide network of professors who see value in having industry experts provide real-world context to supplement the more theoretical concepts they are teaching.

New Competition Dynamics for Top-Tier Talent

— Hiring in the marketing and advertising industries happens more on a real-time basis than on an annual planning cycle. As one agency talent executive explains, “Most of our interns were rising



seniors, and they weren't able to get a job a year from now. The business cycle in advertising and media doesn't work like that. All the other places can extend an offer a year in advance."

The competition for talent has increased as technology giants from Silicon Valley look to gobble up the best and brightest students. In this competition for high-caliber talent, many agencies are competing with Google, Facebook, and Apple. Research suggests that agencies have more limited flexibility when it comes to delivering attractive offers in a more timely manner.

The result is that the expectations for what students are looking for has changed given the range of benefits these kinds of companies are offering, which often include better salaries, more perks, and greater flexibility.

"What the candidates are looking for has changed, and it forces agencies to meet them where they are at. It continues every year as a 'war for talent.' We have to give them something more than just their start in media."

— AGENCY TALENT EXECUTIVE

Quality Talent Is Everywhere but Companies Are Resource Constrained

— There is incredible student talent across the country. Students are clamoring to get into the marketing or advertising industry, but at times have difficulty getting noticed because they aren't from a core recruiting school. One liberal arts student states, "I can understand

why businesses want to hire from a more prestigious school. They think they are more qualified, but a person from my school could have just as much drive. Those companies are missing out on potential great employees. I think they should give everyone a fair chance."

Many companies have built deep pipelines into select schools where they recruit talent. The process has been institutionalized, which makes it hard to change to expand the talent pool.

"I wish we could be everywhere at every school, meeting everyone, which would be amazing. But you concentrate on the schools with programs that best feed your talent pipeline. We hire a lot of young talent from schools such as VCU Brandcenter, Carnegie Mellon, School of Visual Arts, Creative Circus, Savannah College of Art and Design, and the University of Oregon. At the same time we need to continually search for new programs and sources of talent, especially if companies seek to make progress with diversity and inclusion initiatives."

— LIONEL CARREON,
Global Director, Creative Recruiting,
R/GA

Tension in the Mission and Purpose of College

— A common tension for academia in support of the collegiate core mission is the strong belief that higher education's purpose is not to support the marketer or advertiser's immediate

return on recruiting dollars but rather the ROI of students' tuition dollars, with a long-term view of career success and advancement potential.

"We are not preparing students to get jobs. We train leaders, not workers."

— LEE D. BAKER,
Mrs. A. Hehmeyer Professor of
Cultural Anthropology,
Duke University

In fact, despite the growing skills needs for industry, universities are looking to build out curriculum to support those demands. The time to learn these skills and other foundational skills, however, has not increased but remained the same.

Professors Are an Incredible Resource for Talent

— An underutilized asset for recruiting high-caliber students is through professors. For the past 20 years, the AEF has coordinated the matching of more than 500 professors with an equal number of host companies through its visiting professor program. The goal is to give professors a view of what the real world looks like so they can bring that learning back to the classroom. It's a chance for companies to build a dialogue with the professors who are interfacing directly with the students and helping to shape their career choice decision.

III.
**THE TALENT
DISCONNECTS:
IMPACT ON
THE INDUSTRY**





There Are Many Talent Disconnects

— Our research suggests that there are multiple disconnects — skills, hiring and retention, and expectations — that threaten to erode the talent development ecosystem. Students entering the workforce is the most obvious friction point as there is a significant adjustment for talent to get accustomed to a new life after four years of academic, personal, and professional exploration. However, the research uncovered other issues that prevent students from considering and pursuing a marketing career. Lack of action to address these disconnects threatens to discourage high-quality talent from even considering entering the marketing or advertising industry at a time when both need the best talent.

SNAPSHOT OF THE TALENT DISCONNECTS

	Skills Misalignment	Outdated Hiring and Retention	Misguided Expectation
INDUSTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant gap between what is taught and how that teaching gets applied in a real-world context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow recruiting process and lack of flexibility with salary ranges results in losing candidates • Significant pressure on managers to recruit and retain talent from diverse backgrounds, but they often lack a full understanding of how to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived lack of awareness around the time required to be successful and the current expectations of how quickly that success can be achieved
ACADEMIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope of what is required to be successful in industry has expanded, but the time to teach those kinds of skills has not changed • Data analysis is a skill set that universities are emphasizing more, but they have trouble convincing students to cultivate a comfort level with quantitative study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall lack of coordination across professors, career counselors, and student clubs on how to get students more interested in marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge to reconcile the tension of preparing students to be “job ready” while also staying true to the mission and purpose of college
STUDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want greater opportunity to explore electives earlier in their education to ensure they made the right career choice, but unable to do so due to core curriculum classes • The lack of real-world practical applications in the classroom limits the ability for students to gain the skills to add value immediately to industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to lock down jobs early on in the recruiting cycle, since most agencies and marketers aren’t on the same timeline as other industries, such as finance or consulting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t feel they had sufficient time to explore classes that might help them in the real world • General lack of agreement around what training companies are expected to do versus what students are expected to know coming into the role



1. Skills Disconnect

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

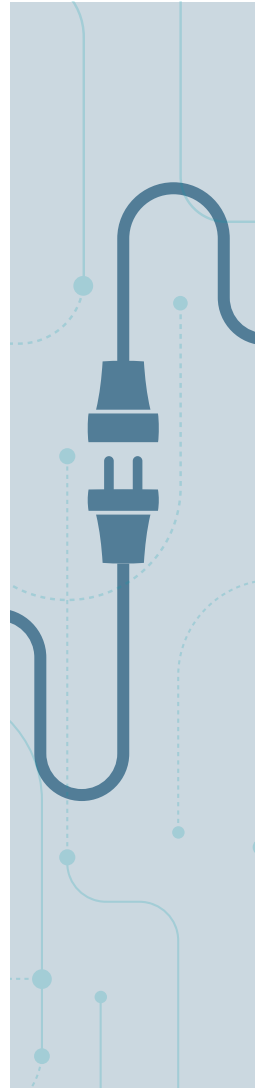
The marketing and advertising industries recognize there is a significant gap between what is taught and how that teaching gets applied in a real-world context.

“It is the role of the university to teach the students how agencies are practicing now. Universities must teach them to fly a Dreamliner, not a DC9. If you tell me I am getting a pilot, I want one who can fly today’s planes!”

— **RENETTA E. MCCANN**,
Chief Talent Officer,
Publicis Communications NA,
Leo Burnett USA

“Many professors of advertising, communications, and media are using teaching materials that haven’t evolved as quickly as the industry. The landscape is innovating so quickly that it’s been nearly impossible for the academic community to keep pace. This has to change for the benefit of the students, and setting them up for success and technology may be one way to expedite this.”

— **KRISTEN METZGER**,
Managing Partner,
People and Culture, MEC



ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

The scope of what is required to be successful in the marketing and advertising industries has expanded, but the time to teach those kinds of skills has not changed.

“I would be interested to know what we are not doing well enough. I think there is a disconnect between what we can realistically do in the short time that students are with us, and what the industry says it needs. One thing we hear quite often in conversations with other deans and business executives is that students need to have tremendous technical skill and that we are not giving enough, but they also need to have the soft skills, and we are not focusing there enough, so that is a challenge — how do we do all of that?”

— **DAWN LERMAN**,
Fordham University

Data analysis is a skill set that universities are emphasizing more, but they have trouble convincing students to cultivate a comfort level with quantitative analysis.

“There’s a big gap that needs to be filled, and the best way to fill that gap is by making sure all students understand data. Marketing isn’t just about Toucan Sam and Cap’n Crunch. It’s about understanding how to understand your customer and then how to

match customer needs with product features. You need fundamental quantitative skills to do that.”

— **GREGORY LA BLANC**,
Berkeley Haas School of Business

“It’s always a challenge to attract people who are both qualitative and quantitative. They have the big picture and detail orientation to be trained in that fashion, but companies would like people who are more comfortable with data. They would like people who know some amount of computer science and programming languages, in addition to being able to think creatively. And that’s a challenge for the schools.”

— **RAVI DHAR**,
George Rogers Clark Professor of
Management and Marketing and
Director of the Center for Customer Insights,
Yale University

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Students want greater opportunity to explore electives earlier in their education to ensure they made the right career choice, but they are unable to do so due to core curriculum classes.

“The core curriculum is a stumbling block — and the longer you study something, the more disconnected you are from how it is in the real world.”

— **NEW HIRE**, Marketing

1. Skills Disconnect

“By the time you realize what you are really interested in, it’s ‘time to get in the real world.’”

— STUDENT, Business College

“I was extremely frustrated with the core curriculum. The first two years I had to study what was chosen for me without much actual choice in the matter myself ...”

— NEW HIRE, Marketing

“I don’t like that I didn’t start doing marketing classes until senior year. I am a little scared to start my career. There are some things I haven’t learned that I wish I had. I have a broad idea of marketing, but there are certain skills that I know I don’t have and won’t have.”

— STUDENT, Business College

“I’m almost three years through and I’m just getting into exciting marketing courses. They put us through those four intro courses. Had I not been previously interested, it would have pushed me away from the major.”

— STUDENT, Business College

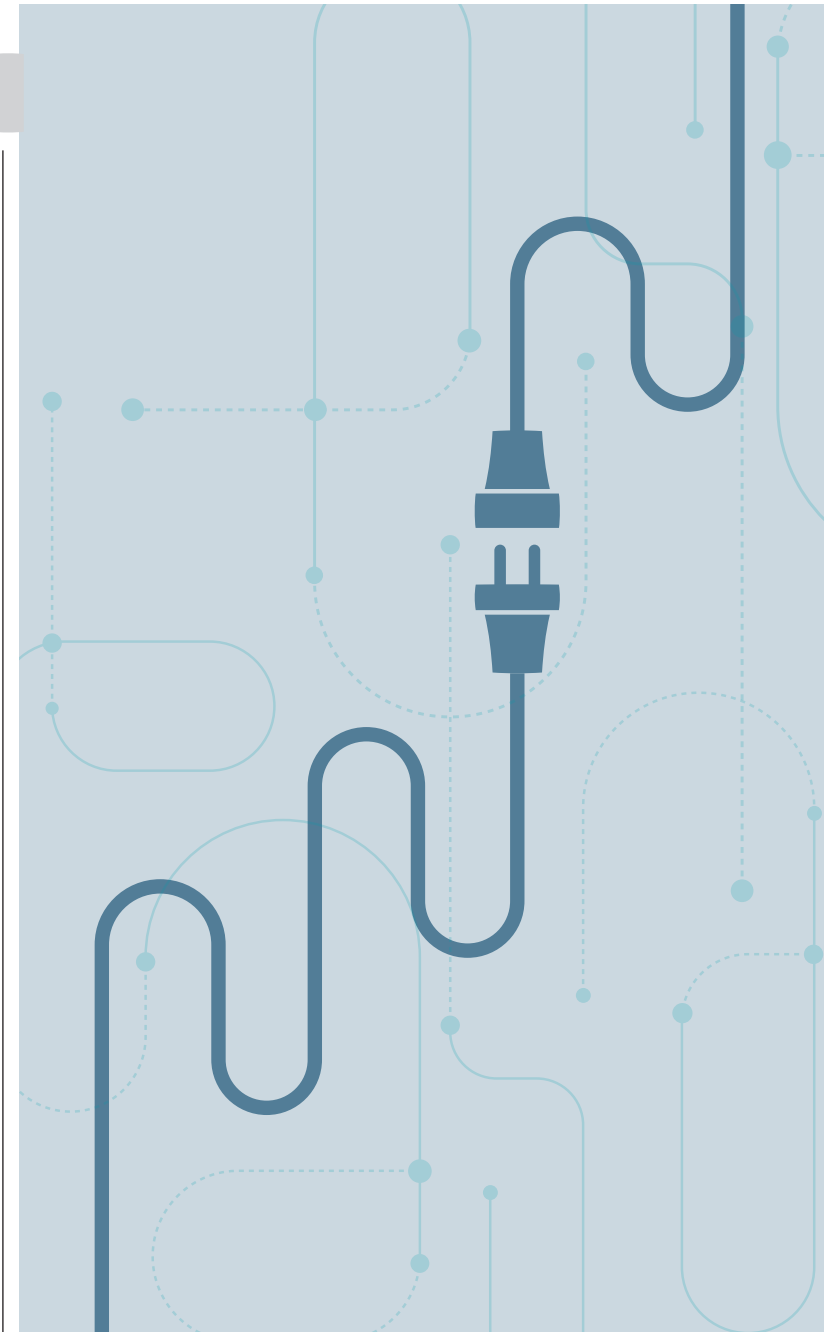
The lack of real-world practical application in the classroom stunts the ability of students to gain the skills to add value immediately to the marketing or advertising industry.

“Some of the professors have tenure and they’ve been there for a fair amount of time — they’re not necessarily acclimated to some of the changes that the industry is going through. We have multiple professors who came from pretty prestigious positions and well-known companies, but most of the professors who came from those companies have retired, so those remaining are not directly tapped into the shifts that the industry is facing.”

— NEW HIRE, Advertising

“We haven’t done enough application of what you are learning in the classroom. Applying that to a real-life situation is what we need to work on as a school.”

— STUDENT, Liberal Arts





2. Hiring and Retention Disconnect

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

A slow recruiting process and lack of flexibility with salary ranges result in losing candidates from the acquisition pipeline.

“You go through all this vetting and courting. Entry-level salary is a pain point, and bringing people in to do a job that they may or may not want to be doing is a pain point.”

— AGENCY TALENT EXECUTIVE

“We are not very fast as a company. We may not talk to folks we interview for a few weeks afterward. It is frustrating for the recruits and recruiters. We may not have budget approval. We’re trying to manage inputs from multiple schools. The people working as recruiters have full-time jobs as marketers themselves, so it’s hard to support all of that activity and maintain responsibilities. We’re doing more remote interviewing and Facetiming, and automating more responses, so there is less time commitment on the part of employees but less personal interaction.”

— CHANTEL LENARD,
Former Executive Director of U.S. Marketing,
Ford Motor Company

There is significant pressure on managers to recruit and retain talent from diverse backgrounds, but they often lack a full understanding of how to do so.

“Clients are saying our agency workforce has to match their workforce. If they’re 45 percent diverse, we have to have that same percentage.”

It’s good for us to understand because otherwise, we’re just going to hire people we know and sometimes we overlook other candidates from diverse backgrounds.”

“Pain points in hiring are diversity and inclusion. We don’t hire enough diversity at the entry level so therefore we don’t train enough to get them up into management. Diversity includes gender and economic background, not just ethnicity.”

— LIONEL CARREON,
Global Director,
Creative Recruiting, R/GA

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

There is an overall lack of coordination across professors, career counselors, and student clubs on how to get students more interested in marketing and advertising.

“Students are supposed to be introduced to core business topics early in their college careers. However, many students come in with preconceived notions that one or more of the core disciplines are not useful to them. Thus, they often defer some core classes until their senior year, when it is too late to pursue that topic. I have heard many times that students had no idea they actually loved marketing until they took the core class, but they are already committed to a career in another area. Many times these people end up switching careers later.”

— KEITH NIEDERMEIER, PH.D.,
Director of Undergraduate Marketing Program,
Adjunct Professor of Marketing, The Wharton School,
University of Pennsylvania

“We need more advice from people who are actually doing the job rather than people who have been in academia for their whole careers because then it is so hypothetical. There is often a gap between what students know or think they know about a career path and what it actually entails. We need to get more real-world professors or guest lecturers and give students a more realistic point of view.”

— CAREER SERVICES DIRECTOR

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Many students get nervous because they are unable to lock down jobs early on in the recruiting cycle, as most agencies and marketers aren’t on the same timeline as other industries, such as banking and consulting.

“I have a lot of friends who are already signed and have bonuses and they will be making good money. The agency we worked with basically told us, ‘We can’t hire people until you graduate, so we’ll talk later.’ It’s just a different process. I’ve come to terms with that a little bit, but it is nerve-racking.”

— STUDENT, Liberal Arts



3. Expectations Disconnect

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

There is a perceived lack of awareness around the time required to be successful and the current expectations of how quickly that success can be achieved.

“There is sometimes a mentality of ‘I can be the CEO tomorrow.’ That is something for us in our agency to manage.”

— SHAWN ZUPP,
Group Account Director, R/GA

“The thing I hate most is ‘I want an entry-level position where I can learn’ — that’s a red flag. If I ask you to alphabetize this spreadsheet, are you going to tell me you don’t want to do that because you are not learning? Of course you will learn as any beginner will learn, but that can’t be the only point of working.”

— BELLE FRANK,
Chief Strategy Officer,
Young & Rubicam Global Health Practice

“If I write my own blog, done this, done that, then I know everything. Students expect to do more than they are doing in their first job. In the agency, everyone has a voice, but you are not doing everything as a junior person. There is a lot to learn still.”

— SHAWN ZUPP,
Group Account Director, R/GA

“Our biggest disappointment is that some new hires give up too soon. There are multi-faceted reasons for problems. We lack someone to watch over or mentor new employees, and today’s workplace has four generations of workers who are very different from each other.”

— AGENCY TALENT EXECUTIVE

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

It is a challenge to reconcile the tension of preparing students to be job ready while also staying true to the mission and purpose of college.

“The challenge for us is understanding where the industry is going and trying to be out in front of that, so we’re preparing people for the careers and jobs that they are going to have, which are different from the jobs that are out there now. I don’t think that the organizations out there even understand that very well or are able to tell us what their talent needs are going to be in the future. So we try to figure that out and adjust our curriculum accordingly.”

— FRANK MULHERN,
Associate Dean, Integrated Marketing
Communications, Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani
Professor of Integrated Marketing Communications,
Northwestern University

“University should never be about ‘job readiness,’ and it’s easy to fall into that trap. Parents want students to get a job. A big part is preparing students for a career, but also creating thoughtful citizens. Step away from job readiness and consider all of the elements that will help students flourish.”

“We have a university-wide campaign about human flourishing. To think about employment as just a way to get a paycheck stunts innovation and personal growth. If I’m just working a nine-to-five job to get money to pay for a house, that is short-sighted. We want them to figure out how to find fit and flourish.”

— MICHELLE STEWARD,
Wake Forest University

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Even though there is a lot of time before graduation, many students don’t feel like they had sufficient time to explore classes that might directly help them choose their career.

“Since I was undecided for a while, everybody stressed that there’s no reason to decide, just take your time, but once it gets to your later years and you are taking those exploratory classes, it feels like you wasted your money and you wasted your time. You really don’t have much time to just screw around. That’s the reason I’m not going to graduate. You think you have time when you get here and you don’t. They really don’t tell people.”

— STUDENT, Business College

“I have no idea about a first job. It’s kind of concerning how little I am prepared for the real world. I can’t think of any very specific jobs. I can tell you what I don’t want to do. I don’t want to be doing something repetitive and I don’t want to be stuck sitting behind a desk. I want to do something creative.”

— STUDENT, Business College

There is a general lack of agreement around what training companies are expected to do and what students are expected to know coming into the role.

“Companies do have a certain expectation about what students will know. There might be some disconnect with companies which are going to train new hires on things that are more specific to them. They take for granted what students are taught in school.”

— STUDENT, Business College

**IV.
DISCONNECTED
FROM THE MOST
CONNECTED GENERATION:
LOSING OUT ON TALENT**





The chart at right provides a perspective on how students might discover the marketing or advertising industry when they start in college through to when they graduate and enter into the industry. It's a traditional marketing funnel which captures:

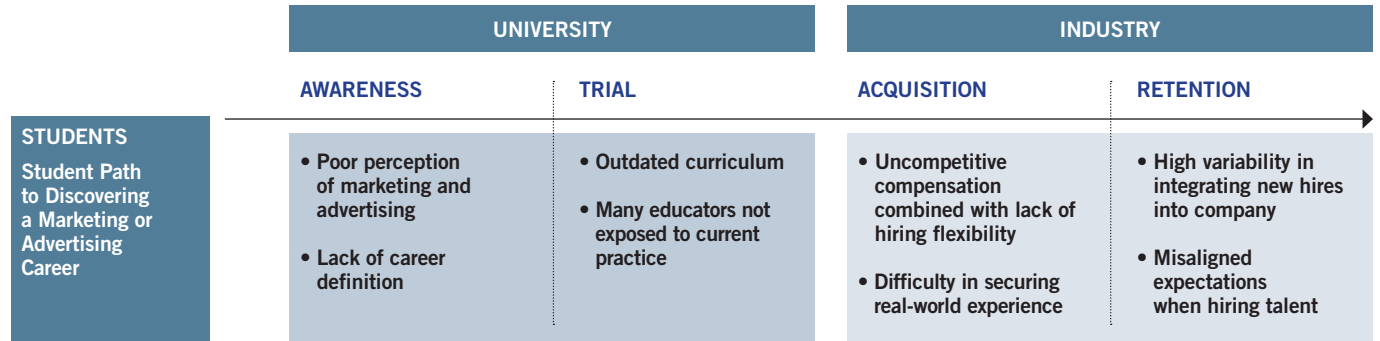
- **AWARENESS** — How do the students find out about marketing and advertising?
- **TRIAL** — What is the student's first experience in marketing and advertising?
- **ACQUISITION** — How do students find an internship and an entry-level job in marketing and advertising?
- **RETENTION** — How do students stay in the industry up to their first two years and want to start to invest in their careers?

Students move through this funnel first through their college experience and then, after graduation, through their industry-specific jobs. Today, that process of discovery is serendipitous at best without much structure. Specific problems identified at each phase include:

AWARENESS

- **Lack of Career Definition** — There is a general lack of definition around a career path in marketing or advertising. Students don't know what the possibilities are if there is minimal industry activity happening on campus.
- **Poor Perception of Marketing and Advertising** — Overall, there is a negative bias toward the professions of marketing and advertising today. A Gallup study

Disconnected from the Most Connected Generation



suggests that the honesty and ethical standards of the professions rank just below Congressman and right above insurance salespeople.²² That lingering perception carries over to the student population, which is looking for more purpose in what they want to do and don't often put marketing and advertising into their consideration set.

TRIAL

- **Curriculum Outdated** — Much curriculum is outdated material that draws from core marketing and advertising principles but doesn't reflect the energy of what either industry is like today. It turns students off before they even have a chance to get into the more exciting coursework.
- **Many Educators Not Exposed to Current Practice** — Many professors don't have marketing or advertising experience. That lack of connection

to the business world prevents students from getting an inside look into what it is like to work at these companies and how they operate.

ACQUISITION

- **Low Pay Combined with Lack of Hiring Flexibility** — Entry-level marketing and advertising salaries are on average on the low end of the pay scale across all industries. Moreover, students must often wait until they graduate to see if they can even enter the industry as many marketers and advertisers hire on an as-needed basis. This channels many students away from either industry and into more structured programs like banking, consulting, and

22. "Honesty / Ethics in Professions Today," Gallup (December 2016).

IV. DISCONNECTED FROM THE MOST CONNECTED GENERATION: LOSING OUT ON TALENT



technology because they need more security to pay off students loans or placate nervous parents.

- **Difficulty in Securing Real-World Experience** — The internship is crucial to proving to future employers that graduates have the experience necessary for an entry-level job. In many cases, the ability to find an internship in marketing or advertising is incredibly challenging. Students have trouble searching for those internships or lack the network to refer them to openings.

RETENTION

- **Inconsistency in Integrating New Hires into the Company** — New hires are expected to hit the ground running when they join a company. At many companies, there is little to no onboarding process, while any form of training to help that new hire acclimate to the corporate culture is minimal at best. Training has been cut back to the bare minimum as resources are constrained. Managers are also ill prepared to handle the new working expectations of this next generation of talent.
- **Misaligned Expectations for Hiring Talent** — The hiring process focuses on filling the job needs of today. The HR department is measured against the speed with which it can fulfill current vacancies. Marketing and advertising leaders, though, are looking for talent who can do the job today but also grow to be the future leaders of tomorrow.



V.
**CALL TO ACTION:
CHARTING THE
PATH FORWARD**





The AEF mission:

The AEF is the bridge that connects the advertising, marketing, and academic communities. Together we educate and inspire the next generation of talent while advancing the understanding of marketing and advertising in society.

A Call to Action

The talent disconnect is real, and the divide is growing deeper. Marketers are seeking job-ready talent but are not getting the caliber of appropriately educated and motivated new hires they need. Academia is seeking to adapt and prepare students for a digital, data-driven world but curricula is out of date and educators often out of touch with current practice. And students are seeking clarity and a career that matters, but urgently need more guidance and real-world exposure.

We must take action now. The Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and the AEF are calling on marketers and agencies to unite behind a new movement: Pathways 2020. Our vision is simple:

“Talent is the key to our future growth and business success. Together, we will partner with educators to inspire and better prepare our next generation of marketing and advertising leaders.”

The Pathways 2020 movement aims to create a wider, more diverse and better equipped pool of talent to fuel industry growth. It will immerse educators in the latest industry practice and help inform curricula to ensure it is current and stimulating. And most importantly, it will demonstrate to students just how creative, innovative and rewarding a career in marketing and advertising can be.

PATHWAYS 2020 PROGRAMS

Pathways 2020 will be a multi-faceted, accountable initiative to drive real change. It is intended to be an important first step in bridging the talent disconnect, and its goals are measurable and achievable by 2020:





PROGRAMS:

for 1,000 Industry Campus Activations

- **Speakers Program** — Together with the ANA, the AEF organized over 300 visits for industry professionals to speak to students in classrooms over the past school year. The impact has been tremendous, and surveys show 84 percent of students report an improved perception and understanding of the industry after a speaker visit. We will expand our network of speakers and create a foundation for lasting relationships between marketers and educational institutions.
- **Career Content** — The AEF provides career content from marketers and agencies to students through aef.com and social media. The new “FastForum” series was developed for the AEF by Hearst and includes over 300 videos of industry professionals providing career advice. The series will be expanded, and virtual classroom sessions added on a regular basis.

PROGRAMS:

for 1,000 Professors Inspired

- **Visiting Professor Program** — Over the years the AEF has graduated over 500 professors from its Visiting Professor Program — a 10-day fellowship that matches professors with agency and marketer hosts. The program provides professors with an inside view of the world of marketing and advertising, and helps to inform their teaching and research back in the classroom. Going forward we

will expand the scope and scale of the program to make it an even more immersive experience in current marketing and advertising practice, and add a new component that allows professors to shadow marketers and agency leaders.

- **ANA Member Meetings and Conferences** — The ANA hosts a series of peer-to-peer regional meetings all across the country to share best practices on a range of current topics, from content marketing to social media. We will open these meetings to the academic community with the goal to connect practitioners to professors on a national basis.
- **Supplementary Curriculum** — The AEF already provides a supplementary curriculum through its academic journal *Advertising & Society Quarterly (ASQ)*. In the future, we will build out a case study library by licensing content, collaborating with the ANA’s Marketing Knowledge Center, and building out proprietary content with with the marketing and advertising industries.

PROGRAMS:

for 1,000 Students Immersed

- **Certified Internships** — From October 2015 through September 2016 there were more than 35,000 marketing and advertising internships posted. However, the quality of these internship experiences is inconsistent at best. Our goal is to provide a level of standardization that creates a foundation for both the qualitative and quantitative skills that future marketing and advertising leaders

will require. We will launch a pilot internship program in 2018 that taps into the AEF professor network to identify high-quality internship candidates. At the same time we will leverage the latest recruiting technology to source, evaluate, and match the best internship candidates with the appropriate marketers and agencies.

- **Weeklong Fellowships** — To expand scale and provide more flexibility, we will also create a week-long immersion program to provide top students with a “real world” introduction to a career in the marketing and advertising industry.

DIVERSITY:

The study spotlights the importance of diversity in every aspect of talent acquisition and retention. Accordingly, diversity will inform every aspect of the *Pathways 2020* program development. We will partner with other associations and foundations, delve deeper into our research, and ensure all programs address the industry’s need to engage much more diverse talent from a broader range of colleges and universities. As a first step, the AEF is partnering with the Alliance for Inclusive and Multicultural Marketing (AIMM) to collaborate on the development and launch of our ANA/AEF accredited internship program in 2018.

TAKE THE PATHWAYS 2020 PLEDGE

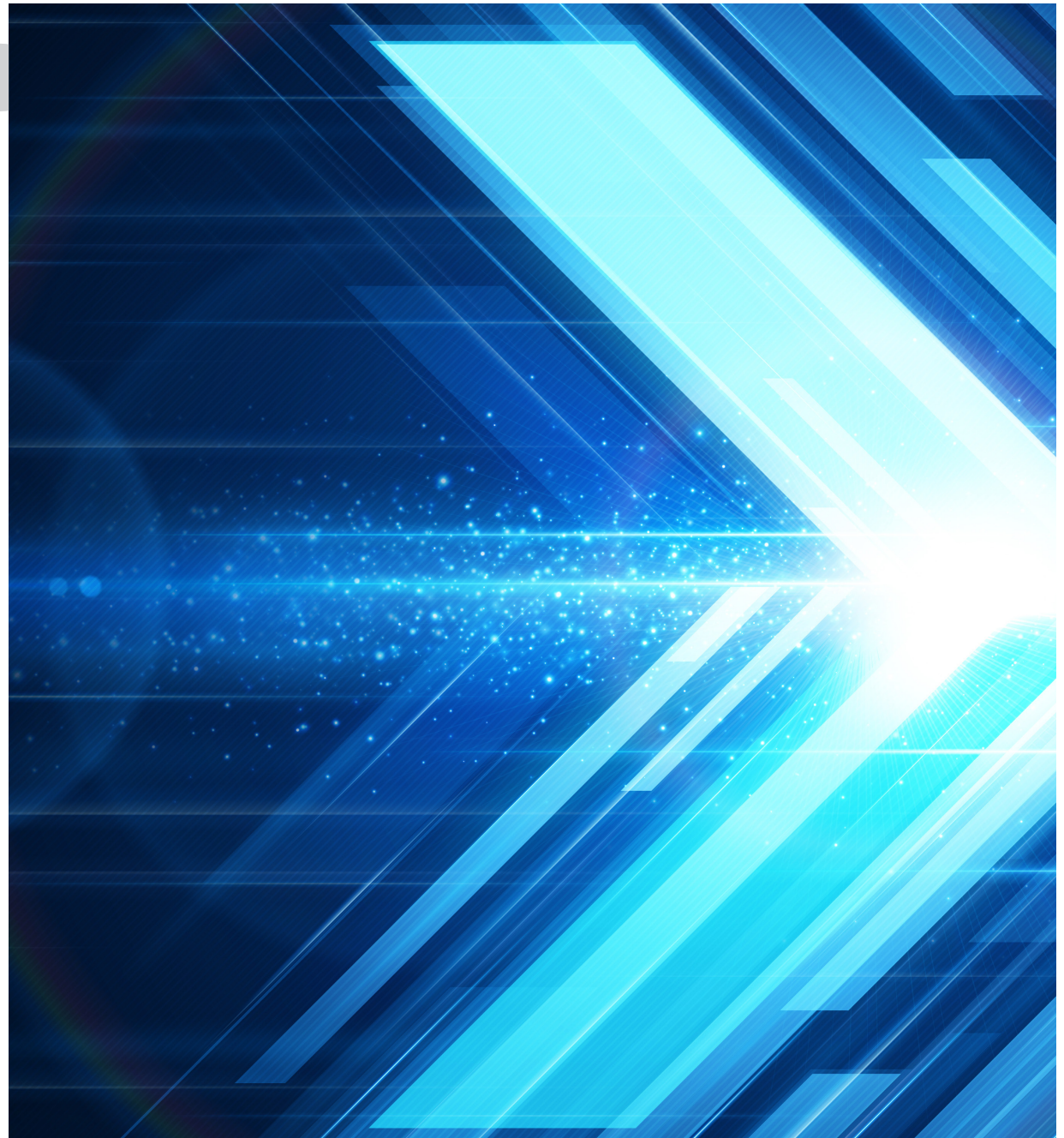
The *Pathways 2020* programs are ambitious. They are purposely ambitious because the time is now, not later, to chart the future course for the marketing and advertising industries. Acquiring and retaining the best talent drives business growth, and our success is wholly dependent on attracting diverse, engaged, and creative young minds.

The Pathways goals will make us accountable to every stakeholder, and we will continuously evaluate the impact of each initiative and use that data to measure our effectiveness. Together we can make a huge difference in building our next generation of marketing and advertising talent.

Sign up at www.aef.com/pathways-pledge to commit to one or more of the following:

- **Speaker Program:** Send a speaker to campus this fall or spring semester
- **Summer Intern Program:** Provide an AEF slot for your summer 2018 internship program
- **Visiting Professor Program:** Host a professor at your company or agency

We share an unprecedented opportunity to re-ignite growth in our industry by tapping into our greatest future resource. We're counting on your support to make their future ours.





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