

BUILDING BUSINESS ARTEFACTS THROUGH EXPERT INTERVIEWS: CREATING PROFESSIONAL FOOTPRINTS THAT LAST

SERIES OF EXPERT VOICE

INTERVIEW WITH BERNADETTE HURLEY FOUNDER OF KEDAL RESOURCES LTD

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Bernadette Hurley founded Kedal Resources Ltd in Dublin in 2013, bringing diverse experience from teaching, customer service, and finance across London, San Francisco, and Dublin. Her vision: a boutique recruitment partner focused on quality over quantity. Kedal Resources specialises in temp, contract, and permanent placements, building inclusive workforces through personalised service. She leverages an extensive network to match exceptional talent with the right organisational culture, creating lasting relationships with both clients and candidates. Kedal Resources adopts a bespoke and highly personal approach, with a clear focus on quality rather than quantity. Bernadette's vision was for Kedal Resources not to operate as just another recruitment agency, but as a trusted partner supporting clients throughout the journey of finding the very best talent while helping organisations build more inclusive workforces that reflect the customers they serve.



Bernadette Hurley

INTRODUCTION – FUTURE SKILLS, COMPETENCIES AND THE ROLE OF VET

The rapid transformation of labour markets, driven by technological change, digitalisation, and evolving organisational models, places increasing emphasis on future-oriented competencies. Adaptability, continuous learning, digital literacy, and strong interpersonal skills are no longer optional but essential for young people entering the workforce. At the same time, employers increasingly seek individuals who combine technical knowledge with creativity, problem-solving abilities, and social awareness. In this context, Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays a crucial role in bridging education and real-world professional expectations by equipping learners with practical, job-ready skills aligned with current labour market needs.

This interview forms part of the VETEED – Education for Entrepreneurship Development Project Series: Expert Voice, implemented within the framework of the project VET Education for Entrepreneurship Development (Project No. KA220-VET-000158937), co-funded by the European Union. Launched on December 1, 2023, the project aims to support young people and future entrepreneurs through the development of innovative educational approaches that strengthen employability, entrepreneurial thinking, and readiness for professional and economic life. The Expert Voice series brings together practitioners and industry leaders whose experience provides valuable insight into the competencies required for future workforce participation. By sharing practical perspectives from the recruitment and talent development sector, this interview contributes to the broader discussion on how education, business, and VET initiatives can work together to better prepare young people for sustainable career development in a changing economic environment.

Dr Aleksandra Marcinkowska: Future Skills & Competencies: What do you believe are the most important “competencies of the future” for young people entering the workforce today, and how do you see the demands for these skills evolving over the next 3-5 years?

Bernadette Hurley: The most important future skills combine human abilities with technical knowledge. Adaptability and continuous learning are essential as jobs change quickly. Digital skills, AI literacy, data analysis, cybersecurity, will become standard requirements, not specialties. At the same time, human skills grow more valuable: communication, teamwork, emotional

intelligence, and ethical judgment matter more as automation takes over routine tasks. Over 3-5 years, companies will seek hybrid talent, people who combine technical skills with creativity, problem-solving, and cross-cultural teamwork. Success belongs to those who blend technology capabilities with human insight.

YOUNG JOB SEEKERS FACE CLEAR CHALLENGES TODAY

Dr Aleksandra Marcinkowska: Youth Employment Challenges: From your experience in recruitment and talent placement, what are the biggest challenges young job seekers face in today's labour market, and what strategies have you seen work best to overcome them?

Bernadette Hurley: Young job seekers face clear challenges today. The biggest is the experience gap, employers want experience, but entry-level roles require it. Many also face a skills mismatch: what they studied does not match employer needs, especially in fast-changing fields. What works best: gaining hands-on experience through internships or projects; building portfolios that show real work; networking via LinkedIn and industry events; learning new skills through online courses. Success comes when young people combine education with practical experience, stay adaptable, and build strong connections in their field.

Dr Aleksandra Marcinkowska: VET and Real-World Skills: Vocational Education and Training (VET) is often cited as key for aligning education with labour market needs. How do you view the role of VET in preparing young people for work, and have you seen improvements in outcomes for those with vocational skills? Research shows VET can improve labour market integration and job quality for youth.

Bernadette Hurley: VET plays a crucial role in bridging education and employment by providing practical, job-ready skills that align with industry needs. The biggest advantage is hands-on learning, students gain real workplace experience, not just theory, making the transition to work smoother. VET graduates often secure jobs faster than traditional academic pathways because they have specific technical skills employers need now. Outcomes improve significantly where VET programs partner closely with industries, keeping training current. Young people with vocational qualifications show stronger labour market integration and better job quality in skilled trades and technical fields.

Dr Aleksandra Marcinkowska: Recruitment & Talent Development: Kedal Resources focuses on matching candidates with roles that suit both skills and culture. How do you assess candidates' future competencies beyond technical ability—such as creativity, teamwork, and lifelong learning potential?

Bernadette Hurley: At Kedal Resources, we look beyond technical skills when hiring. We ask candidates to share real examples of problem-solving and teamwork from their experience. Scenario-based questions help us understand how they adapt and learn. During interviews, we assess communication skills, curiosity, and willingness to grow. We especially value self-aware candidates who actively work on improving themselves, as this shows strong potential for long-term success. Our approach helps us find people who will contribute meaningfully to our client's team and will continue developing throughout their careers.

Dr Aleksandra Marcinkowska: Company Role in Workforce Transition: How does Kedal Resources support both young candidates and employers in navigating the changing labour market, especially in rapidly growing sectors like tech and digital services?

Bernadette Hurley: Kedal Resources connects emerging talent with opportunities in the tech and digital services industry. We work closely with employers to understand their specific skill requirements and match them with candidates who demonstrate strong learning potential and a growth mindset. Our comprehensive approach includes pre-placement preparation to ensure candidates develop job-ready skills and have clear expectations about their roles. Additionally, we provide dedicated post-placement guidance to help candidates integrate successfully into their new roles, overcome initial challenges, and build sustainable, long-term careers in the tech sector



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SEEK MENTORS ALREADY WORKING IN THAT AREA.

Dr Aleksandra Marcinkowska: Supporting Young Talent: What advice would you give to young people who may not follow a traditional university path but are considering alternatives like apprenticeships, vocational training, or direct entry into the workforce?

Bernadette Hurley: Young people have many valuable pathways to success beyond university. Apprenticeships offer hands-on skills while earning money, and vocational training provides direct routes into growing industries. Direct workforce entry builds real experience early and avoids student debt. Research your chosen field thoroughly. Seek mentors already working in that area. Consider which skills employers actually need, not just what sounds interesting. Stay adaptable you can always add qualifications later. Many successful professionals started outside traditional academia. The key is commitment to continuous learning, whatever path you choose.

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Expert interviews represent one of the most powerful forms of business artefacts because they transform professional experience into structured knowledge that remains accessible over time. Unlike temporary conversations, interviews document expertise in a way that allows others to understand professional thinking, decision-making processes, and industry insight long after the discussion has taken place. For experts and entrepreneurs, interviews become part of a lasting expert portfolio — a professional footprint that supports credibility, visibility, and trust. The following interview with Bernadette, founder of Kedal Resources Ltd, illustrated, how industry experience, when captured in a structured format, contributes both to knowledge sharing and to building durable professional artefacts that continue to serve clients, candidates, and the wider professional community.

CONTEXT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)

Within the context of Vocational Education and Training (VET), expert interviews gain additional importance. VET initiatives aim to bridge the gap between education and employment by integrating practical experience with learning processes. Interviews with practitioners provide real-world insight that complements educational frameworks, allowing learners to understand how competencies function in practice rather than only in theory. By documenting expert perspectives, VET knowledge becomes more accessible, contextualised, and applicable for young people preparing to enter the workforce or develop entrepreneurial pathways.

A dedicated and personalised approach, such as the one reflected in this interview, highlights the importance of understanding talent development as a long-term process rather than a single transaction. The interview format allows this philosophy to be articulated clearly, showing how recruitment, workforce inclusion, and skills development intersect in real organisational environments. As a result, the interview itself becomes a learning resource — a reference point that can be revisited by educators, professionals, and young job seekers alike.

Over time, a series of expert interviews creates a cumulative body of knowledge that leaves a professional footprint. These artefacts remain available as evidence of expertise, documenting how professionals contribute to their sectors and how their thinking evolves alongside industry changes. In this way, expert interviews not only preserve individual experience but also support the development of professional communities by making knowledge visible, transferable, and sustainable across time.