



## **Espace Entreprise – Hands on apprenticeships for young people**

Espace Entreprise (EE) is a Swiss Government company which trains and develops apprentices.

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Switzerland	100 – 500 employees	Education	Early career



<p>How does EE assess their clients' needs?</p>	<p>EE has been operating for 10 years and over that time their apprenticeship program has evolved continuously to meet clients' needs. The market is changing rapidly and EE recognizes that organizations need to be flexible in adapting their skills strategy. Every year, EE uses research such as the World Economic Forum's "Future of Jobs" report to complete a business review of their current strategy and assess the future skills apprentices will need such as digital and soft skills. EE also engages with associations working on the future of jobs, such as Impact IA, Nomads Foundation, Virtual Switzerland and the International Labour Organization (ILO).</p>
<p>What programs have been implemented?</p>	<p>EE delivers hands on training to young apprentices and connects them with local businesses to work on various projects from marketing, social media, and website creation to other commercial activities. The program lasts three years and EE works with various clients to engage apprentices in real life working scenarios. Every team is composed of 12 people, rotating daily; 6 apprentices working remotely and 6 working in house. This challenges apprentices to utilize workplace and collaboration tools such as Trello and video conferencing to maximize their work. Importantly, apprentices are not in a simulated environment. From the onset of the training, they are in established workplaces which really aids the learner journey. EE adapted their programs in response to COVID-19 by incorporating future of work elements such as AI, gaming, VR and video apps into their curriculum, allowing apprentices to develop skills with these technologies.</p>
<p>Did the organization face any challenges?</p>	<p>COVID-19 meant that EE had to rapidly adjust their ways of working in order to deliver effective training online. This was not difficult from a technical perspective but EE found that working remotely, for many, was not easy. The apprentices faced practical issues which affected productivity, such as working across different time zones. More importantly, EE found that teaching and coaching was more difficult; it is much harder to coach virtually than physically, especially when the learning space is hybrid, with some learners in person and others online. In a world that is increasingly digital, human contact and 'soft skills' become even more important and it is difficult to teach these skills. EE believes that soft skills should be taught in conjunction with emotional skills. For example, how can someone work on communication without empathy?</p>
<p>How has the impact of the program been measured?</p>	<p>EE assess the program's impact in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional mechanisms such as the number of apprentices that pass the final exam</li> <li>• Surveys are conducted amongst apprentices to understand how many were able to secure a job after graduating from the program</li> <li>• Call center: every year, current apprentices are asked to reach out to graduates of the program to find out about their experiences and how they benefitted from EE. 50-60% of alumni are reached through this method, and it is a good way to understand the impact of the program.</li> </ul>