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Inexperienced Geologists — Our Industry's Most Underrated Human Resource

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Worries about the shortage of geologists abound and geoscience programme enrollment data for the past ~15 years generally supports this concern. Fewer people are choosing the geosciences as a career path.

Herein, I argue that the notion of experience gaps and shortages of qualified professionals is over-blown. Industry experts and professionals need to pivot and re-think their assessments of emerging geologists. Job advertisements, for example, are littered with minimum requirements including years of experience, specific deposit type experience and task experiences such as core logging. These quantifiable traits are routinely used to disqualify candidates as “inexperienced”.

Equity's approach, however, focuses on identifying talent and potential in candidates. After training 100s of early career geologists, we find highly ambitious, hard-working, keen and enthusiastic explorationists out-perform “suitably experienced” geologists. The key to this success, however, is support. Emerging exploration and mining geologists need mentorship and support that is real-time and omnipresent, without being over-bearing and smothering. True drive is fueled by autonomy and a desire to master tasks, not by being micro-managed.

Our industry can close the experience gap but we need the courage to lean on our inexperienced industry newcomers to get the job done.