

Aspirations

An Initiative
of ABCN

Aspirations is designed to familiarise high school students with a modern workplace and equip them with the skills to get there.

Research shows there is a growing gap between what young people learn at school and the skills that they need to be successful in the workplace. For students from high-needs schools this is compounded by a lack of access to social networks, work opportunities and professional role models. In many cases, their choices beyond school are influenced by a lack of understanding about their own strengths and skills, limited knowledge about different pathways and no sense of entitlement to further education or career options outside the local community.



Aspirations focuses on Year 11 as this is a critical stage for students in determining what type of further education they will pursue, or whether they will continue with school at all. It enables students to engage in the workplace and build an understanding of the types of skills that are required in a modern work environment. Working in teams, the sessions include interview techniques, understanding strengths and developing essential employability skills such as communication and problem solving.

THE RESULTS

- > 100% of students learnt more about themselves and their strengths.
- > 93% of students gained a better understanding of their career options.
- > 87% of students felt that they gained practical skills necessary to apply for jobs.
- > 90% of students gained a better understanding of the skills that employers look for.
- > 85% of students increased their awareness of the link between education and career options.
- > 82% of students are more confident.



100% learning.
100% fun.

Student



To the students - it was an absolute privilege to be a part of this journey with you!

Mentor



The program was very helpful and effective in getting us to think about what paths and goals we would like to achieve. It gave me the motivation and aspiration to achieve the absolute best in my life and career.

Student

ABCN
Business Partnering with Education

THE PROGRAM

The program typically runs over one to two school terms. It involves a launch at the school, four subsequent sessions of two hours each and a completion ceremony, all held at member company venues.

Session	Where	Who	Duration
Mentor Briefing	School	Principal, teacher(s), <i>Aspirations</i> coordinator, mentors, facilitator, ABCN	30 mins
Program Launch (held immediately after Mentor Briefing)	School	Principal, teacher(s), students, parents, <i>Aspirations</i> coordinator, mentors, facilitator, ABCN	1 hr
Sessions 1-4	Company	Teacher(s), students, mentors, facilitator, ABCN	2 hrs each
Completion Ceremony (held immediately after the final session)	Company	Teacher(s), students, mentors, facilitator, ABCN	30 mins

THE MENTOR'S ROLE

A key requirement of being a mentor is to act as an important role model in the student's lives and to mentor them at each of the sessions. For some students participating in the program, their mentors may be the only positive and dependable role model in their lives. By agreeing to participate in the program, it is critical that mentors attend all sessions they have committed to unless there are exceptional circumstances. If mentors experience an unexpected change to their work or personal schedule and they believe they may not be able to attend a session, they must inform their company champion as early as possible to enable a shared mentor to step in.

For more information about your role as a mentor, please refer to your *Aspirations* Mentor Manual.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- > No contact with your student(s) outside scheduled sessions.
- > Do not give your business card, home address or phone, email address or social media information to your student(s).
- > Do not reveal confidential information about yourself or your employer.
- > Do not give money or buy gifts for your student(s).
- > Talk to the school or ABCN if you are concerned about something said to you in confidence (eg child abuse, neglect).
- > Be sensitive to the financial and environmental constraints of your student(s) and their religious/cultural background.
- > Stay professional in conversation – refrain from comments about their physical appearance or dress.
- > Be respectful of the different values you and your student(s) may have.
- > You are required to complete the relevant *Working with Children* documentation for your state. Please contact your company champion for more information.



Aspirations gave me a better understanding of what employers are looking for and practical skills when trying to apply for a different job.

Student



Thank you for turning the lights on for our students.

School Principal



Seeing the changes in individuals, in their confidence and personalities, from the first day to the last, was very rewarding.

Mentor



Their leadership and confidence have been significantly improved ... *Aspirations* had a great impact on their skills and their presentation.

School Principal