

Future Thinkers

An Initiative
of ABCN

Future Thinkers is a three-hour program that aims to build creative and innovative problem solving skills through the process of design thinking. Design thinking is a human-centred approach to innovation, increasingly used by organisations to solve problems and transform challenges into opportunities.

The Foundation for Young Australians' *New Work Smarts* report (2017) analysed over 20 billion hours of work to predict the key skills and capabilities required for the world of work in 2030. The report reveals future employees will spend 100% more time using problem solving skills and 41% using critical thinking and judgement skills.

Building these key transferrable enterprise skills in our future workforce is critical for Australia to remain competitive and thrive in a rapidly changing global economy.



The *Future Thinkers* design thinking program is a structured session, guided by a facilitator and held at a corporate venue. It involves small groups of Year 9 or Year 10 students working with mentors.

Activities include creativity and problem solving icebreakers, and working in teams to design solutions to a problem using design thinking methodology. Students present their solution to the challenge at the end of the program.

Mentors wishing to participate do not require a prior knowledge of design thinking. Initially developed in partnership with EY, *Future Thinkers* is now a core ABCN program.

THE RESULTS

- > 89 % of students said that they understood how to use the 5 Ds of Design.
- > 97% of students said they are able to come up with creative solutions to problems.
- > 94% of students said they are able to develop and test new ideas.
- > 94% of students said they can communicate and present their ideas to others.



The *Future Thinkers* program was a valuable experience. It was good to get out of your comfort zone and think about creative things - the students broaden your mind.

Mentor



The *Future Thinkers* program helped me personally to improve my ideas and communicate with others in a fun way.

Student

THE PROGRAM

Future Thinkers consists of one three-hour session held at a corporate venue.

Activity	Where	Who	Duration
Mentor Briefing	Company	Facilitator, Mentors, ABCN	15 mins
Welcome, Session Commencement and Design Thinking Activities	Company	Facilitator, Mentors, Students, Teacher, ABCN	2 hrs
Lunch	Company	Facilitator, Mentors, Students, Teacher, ABCN	30 mins
Session Wrap-up and Review	Company	Facilitator, Mentors, Students, Teacher, 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.

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.



Future Thinkers is a great opportunity to learn about the future generations and mentor them, which will improve your own skills.

Mentor



The students expanded their ability to work collaboratively to solve problems.

Teacher