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**Mock Interviews:
Experience
Volunteer Guide**



Skills for the Future of Work

Interview skills, both online and offline, are crucial to employment pathways. Ardoch is offering a Mock Interviews: Knowledge and Skills program to support students towards their career aspirations.

What we know

In Australia, we know that disparities in educational attainment lead to major differences in many areas of life: people who miss out, face increased likelihood of experiencing unemployment or underemployment, poor health, crime and public welfare dependency. (Mitchell Institute Factsheet 2017). That means we must be committed to ensuring young people do not miss out on full participation in education.

What's needed?

Employability skills, or soft skills, cover a broad range of personal attributes and transferable skills that are important to employers. The skill that employers consider to be most essential are 'people skills', in particular, how we engage with others. Research shows that around 70% of employers place at least as much emphasis on employability skills than they do on technical skills (Australian Government Department for Small Business, Australian Jobs 2018). That means we need to think about how to help young people learn those skills at school.

The future of work

Analysing over 4 million job advertisements across all industries, FYA's research has identified a range of skills and capabilities that young people will need to thrive in a very different world of work.

Young people will need to not only acquire foundation and technical skills, but be able to use these in an increasingly entrepreneurial and creative ways, as well as possessing a thirst for ongoing learning. (Foundation for Young Australians 2017). That means we need to help young people prepare for jobs of the future, that we may not yet know about.

Many young people also believe they lack the required interview skills (26%) and job application skills (25%) to be able to gain full time employment (Foundation for Young Australians, The New Work Reality, 2018). We need to support young people to develop these skills and gain confidence when in an interview setting.

Program outcomes

All of Ardoch's programs are designed around five key impact areas that we know make a difference in supporting children and young people to be engaged learners and to realise their full potential. The five impact areas are confidence, aspiration, wellbeing, social skills and engagement in learning. Collectively, these outcomes areas represent Ardoch's CAWSE.

Confidence: Children and young people believe in their abilities. They have the courage to take risks, take on challenges, and learn from these experiences. They demonstrate an awareness of their own strengths and personal identity. They have a strong sense of self-worth, self-awareness, and a positive self-image.

Aspiration: Children and young people understand themselves, build their experiences and achievements, and develop their capabilities. They consider opportunities in learning, work, and future pathways with the belief that these are accessible to them. They have a sense of hope and optimism about their lives and the future. They understand how personal strengths, interests and characteristics influence career decisions, and demonstrate an awareness of their own personal qualities in relation to building their aspirations.

Wellbeing: Children and young people develop the capabilities necessary to thrive, contribute, and respond positively to challenges and opportunities in life. They manage their emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. They can identify activities that improve their wellbeing, show enthusiasm for wellbeing activities, and understand the factors that contribute to building their resilience.

Social skills: Children and young people understand themselves and others, and manage their relationships, lives, work, and learning effectively. They demonstrate empathy for others, work effectively in teams, and handle challenging situations constructively. Children and young people develop the necessary interpersonal skills to form and maintain healthy relationships, to prepare them for their potential life roles as family, community, and workforce members.

Engagement in learning: Children and young people are interested and actively participate in learning. They develop a range of dispositions and skills that facilitate learning and can transfer and adapt what they have learnt from one context to another. They value education and learning and understand its importance for future pathways. They strengthen their engagement through student voice, agency, leadership, and increasingly seek to resource their own learning.

Program outcomes

The Mock Interviews program is intended to achieve the following outcomes for students:

Building confidence

1. Students are more confident to ask and answer questions in an interview setting.
2. Students have a stronger belief that they can be successful in a job interview.
3. Students have greater overall confidence in themselves.

Inspiring aspiration:

1. Students have increase knowledge about the job seeking process.
2. Students have increased ability to describe their strengths in relation to potential work roles

Further developing social skills:

1. Students have stronger skills in connecting, communicating and interacting with unfamiliar adults in an interview setting.
2. Students are more skilled in preparing for a job interview.

Engagement in learning:

1. Students increasingly see connections between their education and future pathways.
2. Students are more motivated to undertake the additional learning required to succeed in their career.

Monitoring and Evaluation

So that Ardoch can continue to deliver Pathways Beyond School programs, we will be issuing teachers, students and volunteers a survey after the completion of the activity. We appreciate your support and ensuring their completion in a timely manner.

Your role in mock interviews

Thank you for committing to take part in Ardoch's Mock Interviews program! This program provides secondary school students (usually aged 14–16) with the experience of being interviewed for an employment opportunity, in a safe environment where your support and encouragement is invaluable.

During the mock interview, you will support students to practice and build interview techniques by playing the role of employer, and asking sample questions which you will be provided with in advance.

How to prepare for Mock Interviews

For this program to be successful, you just need to bring along your wisdom, experience, and supportive nature. When you arrive at the allocated venue on the day of the program, you will be briefed by Ardoch's Education Partnerships Coordinator and given a pack which will include:

- The schedule for the session, including student names and allocated interview times
- Sample interview questions
- Feedback checklist forms for you to complete at the conclusion of the interview

Each interview lasts around 10 minutes, with 5 minutes afterwards to provide feedback.

What to expect of students

Confidence: The interview, though an opportunity for practice, may cause anxiety in some students. As such, they may be quite nervous when they meet you. Some adolescent young people are growing in their confidence and ability to converse with adults, especially those they have not met before. The students you interview may need some 'warming up' to make them feel comfortable at the beginning of the interview. This could include greeting them with a warm smile and checking in to see how they are feeling before getting started.

Language: Many of Ardoch's partner schools are in communities with high migrant populations. Some of the students you interview might speak English as their second, third or even fourth language, and therefore may require you to adjust your speed of speech, and the technicality of the language you use. The school should advise you if a student is an EAL (English as an Additional Language) student.

Sample Position: Retail Assistant

Join Our Team as a Retail Assistant!

Are you passionate about fashion and enjoy helping customers find the perfect outfit? Do you have a keen eye for style and a flair for providing exceptional customer service? If so, we have an exciting opportunity for you to join our team as a Retail Assistant.

Job Responsibilities:

- Create and deliver amazing customer service
- Maintain store appearance by replenishing and merchandising products for our customers to shop
- Collaborate with your team to drive results
- Respond to customer inquiries and resolve complaints promptly

The successful applicant will have:

- Strong customer service skills: A genuine passion for delivering exceptional customer service and creating positive shopping experiences
- Fashion knowledge and flair: A keen eye for styles and trends, with the ability to provide fashion advice and assist customers
- Teamwork and collaboration: A cooperative mindset, with the ability to work effectively as part of a team, contribute to a positive work culture, and drive results collectively

Interview questions:

- *Why did you apply for this retail store?*
- *Retail can be fast-paced and demanding. How do you prioritize tasks and handle multiple responsibilities?*
- *Describe your approach to providing exceptional customer service in a retail environment.*
- *How would you handle a challenging customer?*
- *Teamwork is essential in a retail environment. Tell me about a time you demonstrated good team work.*
- *Can you share an example of a time you went above and beyond to assist a customer? What did you do, and what was the outcome?*



Sample Position: Hospitality

Join Our Team at QuickBites Fast Food Restaurant!

Are you someone who thrives in a fast-paced environment and enjoys working as part of a dynamic team? Join our team as a crew member!

Job Responsibilities:

- Food Preparation: Prepare and assemble a variety of delicious menu items with speed and accuracy, following our recipes and food safety guidelines
- Order Taking: Greet customers with a friendly smile, take their orders and ensure accuracy while using our point-of-sale system
- Customer Service: Provide exceptional service to our customers by answering their questions and delivering prompt and friendly service
- Cash Handling: Handle cash transactions accurately and efficiently, ensuring proper cash management procedures are followed
- Up selling and Promotion: Proactively promote special offers and upsell additional items to enhance the customer experience and drive sales

The successful applicant will have:

- Strong attention to detail
- Excellent customer service and communication skills
- Knowledge of food safety practices

Interview Questions:

- *Why are you interested in working at our restaurant?*
- *How do you handle challenging customer situations?*
- *Can you describe a time you had to work collaboratively with a team member to achieve a common goal. What was the outcome?*
- *Can you share a time that you provided or received great customer service? What made it great?*
- *Our menu may have special promotions or new items. How would you promote and upsell these to our customers?*



Sample Position: Administration

Join our dedicated team at our leading health centre, committed to improving the mental well-being of our community's youth. We are currently seeking a Receptionist/Administration Officer to provide essential support.

In this role, you will:

- Function as the welcoming, safe and respectful first point of contact for young people and their families and friends accessing our service.
- Provide administration support, including assisting with data entry and managing appointment schedules
- Coordinate the administration of centre meetings, agendas and minutes as required.

Requirements:

- Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage with young people, families and staff from a range of backgrounds
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, Outlook) and general computer literacy
- Sound written and verbal communication skills
- Organisational and time management skills

Interview Questions:

- *What interests you about this role?*
- *This role involves managing appointment schedules, data entry and coordinating meetings. How have you previously demonstrated strong organisational skills and attention to detail?*
- *Tell me about a time you had a disagreement with a coworker. How did you address the situation and maintain a positive working relationship?*
- *Describe a time when you had to manage multiple tasks with competing deadlines. How did you ensure nothing fell through the cracks?*
- *Can you provide an example of a time when you faced a difficult challenge at work or in a team? How did you handle it?*



Sample Position: Construction

A business in South Melbourne is seeking a part time Construction Labourer (up to 20 hours per week) to join our team.

We are a leading provider of contract labour and trade services to the construction industry. Currently, we have job opportunities for new Construction Labourers to assist on 7 active projects between structure and handover stage.

The duties during these current stages will include:

- Assisting with deliveries
- Moving/clearing materials, assisting trades, etc
- Basic power tool use may also be required depending on your experience

Requirements:

- Min. 2 months' experience in construction
- Valid Construction Induction Card (Red/White Card)
- Full PPE
- Communication skills
- Punctuality

Interview Questions:

- *Tell me about yourself.*
- *Can you provide examples of construction projects you have worked on? What were your specific responsibilities and contributions?*
- *How do you ensure the safe handling and transportation of materials on a construction site?*
- *Describe a time you encountered a challenging situation or problem on a construction site. How did you handle it and what was the outcome?*
- *How do you communicate and collaborate with team members on a construction site? Can you give me an example?*

Interview questions

Some students may not be interested in applying for one of the specific roles, and may opt for a general interview instead. Please use these questions to guide the Mock Interview.

Warm Up Questions

- What is your favourite subject at school?
- What are your hobbies? Do you play a sport?
- Have you had a job before?
- Why do you want a job?

Who are you Questions

- How would your manager (best friend or teacher can be used as an alternative) describe you?
- Can you describe two strengths that you could bring to a workplace?
- What are two areas you need to improve in?

Transferrable skill Questions

- Can you give an example of a time that you worked in a team?
- Can you give me an example of a time that you had to meet a deadline or due date?
- Can you give an example of a time that you were challenged, needed to resolve a problem, or had to overcome an obstacle?

Extension Questions

- Can you give an example of a time that you had to influence or persuade a peer of something?
- How would you respond to a customer that appears frustrated?
- How would you respond if your manager asked you to do a task, but you were unsure of how to complete it?

Giving Feedback

When providing feedback for a Mock Interview, it is essential to focus on both strengths, and areas for improvement. We want students to feel good about the experience so make sure to provide plenty of positive feedback! Be genuine, authentic and specific and use the checklist to guide the conversation. When commenting on areas that need improvement, provide easy and practical future steps they can take, as well as examples.

Here are some tips for giving effective feedback:

Use feedback sandwiches:

- Positive comment: *"I really liked how you spoke very clearly during your interview. That showed confident communication!"*
- Constructive criticism with explanation of how to improve: *"One area for improvement is to remember to always include detailed examples. For example, when asked about how you work in a team, think about a time you demonstrated that skill, what your role was and the outcome of that. By sharing specific details, such as the challenges you faced, the actions you took, and the positive outcome you achieved, you provide a more compelling and memorable response. This helps the interviewer understand your capacities and showcases your practical experience in real-life scenarios. So always strive to include relevant and detailed examples in your responses to showcase your skills effectively."*
- Positive comment, or contextual comment: *"Overall, you did such a great job participating in the Mock Interviews! Your enthusiasm and willingness to answer all the questions was terrific."*

Use catchy abbreviations:

- EBI: Even Better If...
- HTI: How To Improve...
- YNS: Your Next Steps...
- WWW: What Went Well...



Interviewer feedback checklist

Interviewer: _____

Student First Name: _____

Student Class Group: _____

<p>What you did well generally:</p>	<p>Example feedback: You were well-prepared. I could see that you were well-prepared because you had notes with you, well done! That is a great thing to do in a real-world interview too. You also asked me questions at the end, which an important part of an interview.</p>
<p>The question/s that you answered especially well and why these were good responses:</p>	<p>Example feedback: When I asked you what interested you about the role, you explained that you are very good at administration and believe that you would be a really good addition to the team. This was a good answer because you spoke about your skills and what you can contribute to the team.</p>
<p>Tips for what you can do even better next time:</p>	<p>Example feedback: Next time try to come prepared with examples of how you have done a task in the past that might relate to the job. For administration, you could share an example of what you have done before, like using Microsoft Office or planning tasks based on due dates.</p>



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<p>What you did well generally:</p>	
<p>The question/s that you answered especially well and why these were good responses:</p>	
<p>Tips for what you can do even better next time:</p>	



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