HOST INFORMATION

WHAT IS MINDSHOP EXCELLENCE?

Mindshop Excellence is the community purpose of the Mindshop organisation – it's our way of giving back to the community by providing a valuable learning opportunity to future young leaders. It is a structured work place learning program, in place of the traditional work experience, where small groups of up to six Year 10 or Year 11 (15/16 year old) students are placed into a host organisation for one week. Acting as company 'executives' for the week, the group are given a real issue by the host company and using powerful problem solving tools, taught to the students on Day 1 of the program by an experienced Mindshop Advisor, find solutions to the issue as a team. On the final day of the program, students present their findings and recommendations to the host company's management, team, school representatives and parents. Following the presentation, students receive a certificate which is a great inclusion for their CV.

For students unable to participate in the core program, they can learn the same tools and processes through an online problem-solving course and apply the tools to a real issue of importance to the student.

OBJECTIVES

It is amazing to see the personal growth of students in just one week. They learn:
- Team work
- Presentation skills
- Researching skills
- Time Management
- Problem Solving
- How to challenge their way of thinking
- The feeling of making a difference
- How businesses work and gain a greater understanding of working in the REAL world!

IMPACT

- Over 5,000 students involved since the first program ran in 1993 in Melbourne, Australia
- Schools and businesses globally eager to become involved
- Strong relationships and partnerships forged as a result of involvement of schools with local businesses and community groups
- Countless major issues within the host organisations resolved by the team of students

MINDSHOP EXCELLENCE

WHY BECOME A HOST?

Mindshop Excellence is a fantastic opportunity to have a real issue addressed in your business by a fresh set of eyes. As the students learn and develop their skills, your company benefits with improvements that could increase growth and profit in your business. It's also an opportunity to put something back into your community by assisting the next generation of workers and give them a real insight into industry.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

There have been hundreds of real host issues addressed by students in previous programs including:
- Raising the profile of a community living and learning centre
- Lifting the weekend occupancy rate of a hotel from 75% to 90%
- What do Gen Y look for when choosing a financial institution?
- Improving a factory layout
- Solving packaging and labelling problems to increase efficiency
- Reassess the marketing strategies of a medical practice
- Develop a relocation plan for a manufacturing company
- Improve time management system and customer support services
- Reduce paper wastage in the office

SUCCESS STORIES

Ballarat Tech School, Victoria, Australia
The amazing team from St Patrick's College were given the challenge by their host Ballarat Tech School (BTS), of understanding BTS as a new learning centre and advising them on how to build their brand. The scope of the work included developing a unique tagline for the Tech School, consulting to Brown Ink Design on the internal communication design, making recommendations for how students will discover, innovate and collaborate when onsite and devising a social media and STEM based engagement strategy for the Tech School. The sign and tag line designed by the student team was proudly revealed on the new BTS building – "Discover today, design tomorrow"

BALLARAT TECH SCHOOL
Discover today, design tomorrow

Vitrafy - Cryogenics Holdings, Victoria, Australia
Cryogenics Holdings asked the student team from Ballarat High School to investigate if their technology could be adopted to assist with food waste in the region. This will be achieved by providing a cryogenic preservation apparatus. The students developed their solutions around creating a Food Bank. The supply of food would come from unsold items from various sources including supermarkets, and restaurants and then distributed to charities, schools and individuals in need

vitrafy

EXAMPLE 5 DAY ROADMAP

DAY 1:
- Groups are taught a variety of problem-solving tools by their Mindshop Excellence Advisor
- Groups are shown the importance of working in teams and elect a team leader
- Groups are given a brief OHS induction and guided tour of the host company and introduced to staff members
- At the **end of the day**, the group are given an important challenge and asked to solve it by a manager from the host company. One page scoping document provided to the team.

DAY 2:
- Groups spend the day discovering where the host company is NOW in relation to the challenge given to them
- Groups commence researching and gathering data
- Groups start documenting their findings into their written report and PowerPoint presentation

DAY 3:
- Using the visioning tools, groups work out WHERE they would like their host company to be in relation to the challenge given to them
- Groups commence surveying and interviewing if necessary
- Groups continue to feed their findings into their written report and presentation

DAY 4:
- Groups will now have collected enough data to determine HOW the company should solve the challenge using the recommendations the students have identified
- Groups complete their written report and presentation

DAY 5:
- Groups spend the morning rehearsing their presentation and finalizing their written report
- Typically in the early afternoon, all group members will present their findings to the host organization, their Advisor, teachers from their school and their parents

HOST FAQS

WHAT DO HOSTS NEED TO PROVIDE:
- Completed work experience arrangement forms provided by the school
- A current issue your company is facing, by way of a 1 page scoping document, that the students can work on that a representative from the host company can present to the students on the afternoon of Day 1 of the program. We strongly suggest the project is real and relevant to the organisation. Students are made to feel they are an important part of your team by making your staff available for interviews and with vital facts and figures shared, enabling them to solve a real issue of concern to your firm.
- A room large enough for 4-6 students to work in for the week
- Access to a photocopier / printer and internet connection
- An allocated company representative to be the students' point of call for the week to answer any questions as well as provide them with a tour of the business and required safety protocols
- A projector / screen and space, such as a boardroom for the students to present their findings to you, your team, as well as the students' parents and teachers on the final day of the program
- Potentially some basic catering (afternoon tea) for the group to enjoy after the Presentation on Day 5 (if space allows, some parents / teachers may also attend).

MINDSHOP EXCELLENCE

IS THERE A COST TO BE A HOST?

Work experience protocol varies for each region. In Australia, it is an OHS requirement for employers to pay the standard Work Experience fees to each student, in Australia this is $5 per day. This is not a payment for their services but a reimbursement of extra travel costs the students may incur. No payment is made to a student engaged under an Arrangement under a Commonwealth Act. Payment does not include payment in kind (ie. A gift card or voucher must not be used to pay students engaged under an Arrangement). Some employers value the benefits of the student's recommendations so much that they pay more than the rate but it's not expected. Mindshop Excellence is a charitable trust and any donations towards the future of our program are appreciated but completely voluntary.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

We recommend selecting an issue that is appropriate for the students that will not need any confidential material circulated but on the occasions it may, we suggest reinforcing when you present the issue to the students the need to keep all facts, figures and information confidential.

WHO SUPERVISES THE STUDENTS EACH DAY?

There will be a main point of contact at the host who can give the students a tour of the premises, inform them of any health and safety protocols / training, and answer any questions they have about the company. Hosts should liaise immediately or as soon as possible with the school work experience coordinator or the Mindshop Advisor regarding any issues arising in the workplace. If the student is absent without notification, the host should contact the teacher in charge of the work experience program straight away. In the unlikely case a student is injured or falls ill, the host must contact the school as soon as possible.

WHAT SHOULD I INCLUDE ON OUR TOUR OF THE PREMISES WITH THE STUDENTS WHEN THEY ARRIVE ON DAY 1?

- We encourage you to conduct an employee induction briefing, explaining any health and safety requirements, safe manual handing procedures, identifying any potential risk situations and reinforce safe work practices. Your tour of the premises should include:
- Where to store personal possessions and location of bathrooms
- Wi-Fi details and potential confidentiality issues.
- Coffee / Tea / Water or any other available refreshments
- Security, fire, emergency procedures and Restricted work areas and equipment that students must avoid
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HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS A SUITABLE PROJECT ISSUE FOR THE TEAM?

The Advisor coordinating your program will be in touch before the program to discuss a suitable project for the students. We encourage this project to be real and relevant to the organisation. This provides positive reinforcement to the students, that their project week has real purpose and that the host company is genuinely interested in the outcomes of their analysis and subsequent recommendations. Your Advisor will work with you on building a One Page Scoping document which will outline the challenge, objectives, suggested outcomes, hints on how and where students can access any relevant research material, and names and contact details of relevant company contacts.