



# ADVISOR 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

## WHY BE A MINDSHOP EXCELLENCE ADVISOR?

The Mindshop Excellence Advisor plays a vital role in the 5 day face to face program as they are the catalyst that makes it work by providing the training in the Mindshop tools and processes on day 1 of the program and then act as a mentor to the students during the week. Advisors are then encouraged to help the team prepare for the presentation on the final day of the program and attend the final presentation to the host.

Advisors generously donate their time for part of the week, mainly Days 1 and 5, to help the group of students develop skills that will not only be integral for the weeks project but also life skills that will help them in their future to help solve problems.

While there are benefits to advisors such as providing great value to a client (host), creating community links between school and industry, building the Advisor's own confidence and fluency in the tools, but deeper than that, participating in Mindshop Excellence is the epitome of the 'value to others' philosophy, increasing your own self worth for doing something good that has such a significant impact on so many.

*"I think there are a lot of take home messages for us all, both in the value of the excellence program and the tools we tend to take for granted or under estimate their power. For me it was a great learning experience and I recommend excellence to those who have yet to take the step."*

**Mindshop Excellence Advisor**

*"It's a win, win, win, win. Students learn new skills and practical problem-solving in a real world environment. Schools are "blown away" by what their students can achieve in such a short period of time and the confidence they exhibit in presenting findings. Clients love the feedback from the students, and have identified some ideas they want to run with. Our team love getting involved and this really feeds into why we do what we do. Everyone in Mindshop should be doing this."*

**Mindshop Excellence Advisor**

## 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

## 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

## ADVISOR FAQs

### I'M INTERESTED! WHAT DO I DO NOW?

There are times when schools and hosts contact Mindshop Excellence directly to coordinate a program. In these instances, Mindshop Excellence will reach out to local Advisors who have expressed interest in participating in the program.

In most instances, it is the Advisor's responsibility to make contact with a local school and a host (which may be a client) and gauge their interest. Marketing flyers can be downloaded through Mindshop Online in the Mindshop Excellence area (accessible to Mindshop full Advisors only) to help you promote the program.

## ADVISOR FAQs CONTINUED

### WHAT DO I NEED TO PROVIDE?

- A full day of training on Day 1 of the program to students
- Be available by phone and email throughout the week to keep track on the group's progress and provide guidance (some Advisors choose to make a mid-week visit to the group but this is purely optional)
- Assist the group in preparing for the final presentation on the final day of the program
- Present certificates to the group members on conclusion of their final presentation

### WHAT IF I HAVE NEVER RUN A PROGRAM BEFORE?

For those Advisors yet to participate in a Mindshop Excellence program, we will always try to 'buddy' you with another Advisor who has for the week to show you the ropes and provide support. Please contact us ([excellence@mindshop.com](mailto:excellence@mindshop.com)) if you would like us to suggest a Buddy to you.

### WHAT SUPPORT RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED TO ME?

Mindshop Excellence have developed everything you need to run the 5 day program. Marketing flyers, Day 1 PowerPoint presentation with built in presenter notes, roadmaps on how you can effectively support the team, student manuals, certificates and much more which is all downloadable through Mindshop Online (only accessible for Mindshop full Advisors).

## STEPS TO LAUNCHING AN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

### STEP 1: ENGAGE A SCHOOL

There are times when schools and hosts contact Mindshop Excellence directly to coordinate a program. In these instances, Mindshop Excellence will reach out to local Advisors who have expressed interest in participating in the program.

In **most** instances, it is the Advisor's responsibility to make contact with a local school and gauge their interest. The schools and their students are the purpose of Mindshop Excellence; without them, there would be no Excellence programs.

Once you have a local school in mind, reach out to the school's careers counsellor to explain the program. A school information pack can be downloaded via the Mindshop Excellence website or through Mindshop Online (in the Mindshop Excellence area).

Once a school has confirmed they would like to participate, find out dates for when they typically run their work experience during the year so you have dates ready to offer to your host.

Further information around how a school selects students, gets you the relevant work experience forms and more, can be found in the School Information Pack.

## STEPS TO LAUNCHING AN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

### STEP 2: ENGAGE A HOST

There are times when schools and hosts contact Mindshop Excellence directly to coordinate a program. In these instances, Mindshop Excellence will reach out to local Advisors who have expressed interest in participating in the program.

In **most** instances, it is the Advisor's responsibility to make contact with a host business, which often is a client you would like to add value to, an organisation know through family or friends, an organisation that has links to a school, or even an organisation noted for it's enterprising commitment to the community and young people. A larger organisation is preferred as they typically have the resources (i.e., boardroom space) to run a program.

To promote / explain the program, a host information pack can be downloaded via the Mindshop Excellence website or through Mindshop Online (in the Mindshop Excellence area).

Once a host agrees to participate, coordinate the dates, in line with the schools available dates.

Closer to the date of the program, you can liaise with the host to work on a suitable project for the students

### STEP 3: ENGAGE A BUDDY (OPTIONAL)

While an Excellence program can be run with just one Advisor, two provides a couple of different perspectives and styles for the students and provides backup in case of emergencies. 'Buddies' or trainees can also be added to ease new Advisors in slowly as observers or as general support resources for the program delivery. If you would like to be matched with a buddy in your region, please contact [excellence@mindshop.com](mailto:excellence@mindshop.com)



## PRE-PROGRAM CHECKLIST

You may like to use the below checklist to mark off all the activities in the lead up to the program

WHEN	WHAT	STATUS
At least 8 wks prior	Engage the school, host and confirm date for the program	
7 wks prior	Engage a buddy for the program (optional)	
4 wks prior	Work with host company on program project and build one page scoping document. Ensure they are aware a key person from management in the business should be available mid-afternoon on Day 1 of the program to present it to the students and answer initial questions. The project scope is usually kept a secret from the students until delivered officially by the host at the end of their training day. This is to ensure the student's aren't tempted to go into "solution mode" initially without understanding the importance of using the tools to identify ideas to their challenge.	
3 wks prior	Prompt school for students name, contact info, and work experience forms. Ensure the school have communicated details to students such as start time for Day 1, where students are to meet, How students are getting to and from the host.	
3 wks prior	Send student work experience forms to the host to be signed	
2 wks prior	Send back signed work experience forms to the school	
2 wks prior	Familiarise yourself with the Advisor Presentation for Day 1 PowerPoint (if using), and re-watch Advisor tip videos and resources through Mindshop Online	
1 wk prior	Print out all resources for the week (downloadable within Mindshop Online) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A printed copy of the Student Workbook for EACH student</li> <li>• One team leader checklist (to hand to appointed team leader)</li> <li>• Copies of the 1 page scoping document with the issue (not to go to students until AFTER the host has presented the issue)</li> <li>• A certificate for each student (For post presentation on Day 5)</li> </ul>	
1 wk prior	Re-confirm all the details with the host and confirm a time for the final presentation on the Friday and the capacity the room will hold. They could organise some basic catering?	
1 wk prior	Re-confirm all the details with the school and pass on the time for the final presentation on the Friday and if there will be the capacity to have parents / teachers attend.	
1 wk prior	Download the social media permission form from Mindshop Online, add in your own contact details and on Day 1, give a copy to all students to return.	

## PROGRAM FACILITATION GUIDE

Earlier in this information pack you'll find an example 5 day program roadmap. Below are some more detailed facilitation tips you may like to take on board for each day:

### MONDAY

#### TRAINING PORTION OF THE DAY:

- Start the day with some icebreakers – get to know the team
- Remind them they are consultants for the week, not students
- Start with the end in mind – vividly describe the presentation and impact on stakeholders
- Mindmapping the week ahead is a good lead into the tools
- Apply each tool to an issue relevant to the school or team to build engagement
- Today the Team Leader is selected by the team AFTER they complete the team style audit. If multiple people want the Leadership position, do a secret ballot. Ensure you provide the Team Leader with the Team Leader Checklist document.
- Encourage students to invite their parents to the presentation on Friday

#### RECEIVING THEIR ISSUE FROM THE HOST:

- The project scope is usually kept a secret from the students until delivered officially by the host at the end of their training day. This is to ensure the student's aren't tempted to go into "solution mode" initially without understanding the importance of using the tools to identify ideas to their challenge.
- Ensure the team are preparing their NOW and WHERE questions in advance. The team will immediately want to jump to the HOW – stop this!
- The host should explain the problem, background issues and answer questions (including copies of 1 page scoping document)
- Emphasise the importance of this opportunity to ask questions

#### AFTER RECEIVING THEIR ISSUE FROM THE HOST

- Reinforce individual responsibilities and those of the team leader
- Facilitate team action plan for the Tuesday
- Give your contact details to team and ensure you have theirs too

### TUESDAY / WEDNESDAY / THURSDAY

- Check on the team and their plan for the day each morning, what are the goals by the end of day?
- Are activities being split fairly between all team members?
- Challenge and question the team but they ultimately make the decision
- Ensure the team know they need to complete the PowerPoint and Report by COB Thursday so Friday is purely focused on rehearsals / refinement. Get them to send you WIP each day for accountability.

### FRIDAY

- Your role is to coach the team on their presentation skills and get them to do 2 – 3 rehearsals
- Encourage students to present without using any notes
- Reinforce that a solution is good but an implementable action plan is critical