

Mock Interviews

A step-by-step guide to help teachers run successful mock interviews using volunteers from the world of work.

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INTRODUCTION

About the Guide

This is one of a series of easy-to-follow guides to help teachers prepare and run Inspiring the Future (ITF) activities at their school. They include suggestions for designing and running an activity, tips for inviting volunteers and encouraging them to accept requests and in some instances, sample activity tools and templates are provided for teachers to use or modify as needed.

About the Inspiring the Future Campaign

Inspiring the Future (ITF) Australia is a national campaign to give every school student the opportunity to be inspired and motivated by volunteers from a wide range of occupations and industries at all levels. Workplace volunteers sign up on the ITF online platform where they create a personal profile including school regions they are willing to travel to on invitation. Teachers sign up online for free to search for and invite registered volunteers into their school to share their career story or help in other ways. ITF challenges gender stereotyping, broadens students' career horizons and helps to illustrate the relevance of their classroom studies to workplace applications. The more connections that school students have with people from the workplace, the better equipped they are to make informed decisions about their future study and career options and to gain meaningful employment. ITF expands the number of those connections, especially for students with limited role models, living in families experiencing intergenerational unemployment and other types of entrenched social disadvantage.

Who we are

The Inspiring the Future Australia campaign is run by School Industry Partnership (SIP), an Australian not-for-profit organisation whose ultimate aim is to inspire young people to reach their full potential. The UK based Education & Employers charity licenses SIP to roll out ITF across Australia. SIP currently works with local delivery partners, NASSSA in Adelaide and AusSIP in Western Sydney. We're always looking for additional champions, recruiters, organisers, or other individuals who can help roll out ITF in their local region or help out behind the scenes! If you or your organisation has an interest in supporting or enhancing ITF we'd really love to hear from you.



Child Protection Requirements

Student safety is paramount, so we ask that all volunteers agree to comply with any Child Protection requirements in their State or as asked by the school. This most commonly entails showing photo ID, filling out a simple form or getting a free volunteer working with children check. You can learn more about the requirements in your state at our FAQ page. ITF volunteers must be supervised by a teacher at all times while on your school premises.



Get involved as a teacher

Sign up as a teacher on the secure online platform www.inspiringthefuture.org.au to connect with volunteers from a range of sectors, professions and experience who have indicated their willingness to visit schools in your region. Volunteers have signed up to share their knowledge, experience and enthusiasm about their jobs and experiences with your students.

You can invite them via the ITF platform come to your school to broaden your students' awareness of career options, engage their interest in the practical applications of their classroom learning and to generally enable them to make informed study and career decisions.

Although volunteers have indicated their willingness to take part in specific ITF activities, you are free to request their assistance with any other activity relevant to your students' learning needs. When you are inviting volunteers to take part in an activity at your school, it's advisable to provide them with at least three weeks' notice and to invite at least double the number of people you need. Volunteers often have busy schedules and may not always be available when you need them.

Easy Steps for Mock Interviews

Planning your activity

1. Select a group of students who would benefit from mock interviews.
2. Log on to Inspiring the Future and invite volunteers who have selected 'mock interviews' as an activity, giving details on the date, time and venue, along with what you would like them to do and/or bring. (see sample template at Appendix C following)
3. Follow up one week before the event to re-confirm.
4. Send volunteers examples of questions they might want to ask the students. Let them know how you plan to run the activity, what resources you will provide them with (such as interview recording sheets) and about the importance of providing constructive feedback to students. (see "Running the Activity" and Appendix B)

Tip: Volunteers are busy people and are more likely to accept your invitation if they have the option to take part in a 1-2 hour session rather than for a half or a whole day.

Preparing students for the activity

1. Prepare students by asking them to create a resume and/or think about their transferable skills, any work experience and what career they might like in the future.
2. You might want to have students cut out a position advertisement for a job that matches their goals and then give a copy to the volunteer to tailor questions to match.
3. Provide students with interview tips so they know what to expect, how to dress & behave and can prepare their answers to anticipated questions. (See sample tips for students at Appendix D).

Running the activity

1. Do a brief orientation for volunteers prior to the start of the session.
2. Allow 10-15 minutes per pupil for mock interviews and ensure your volunteers have the chance to give constructive feedback to them individually.

Suggest they might say something like “Let’s draw the curtain on the role play and reflect on how it went”. “How did you feel during the interview?” “What questions were challenging for you?” “How could you improve your performance for a real interview?” “I think you did well when.....” “My suggestion for improvement is.....” “Keep up the great work...I hope you now feel more confident”.

3. If time allows after the students have completed their interviews, ask one of the volunteers to provide an overall brief reflection on the standard of the students’ performance and provide them with encouragement to continue improving their interview techniques.



4. Perhaps a student could thank the volunteers on behalf of their classmates.
5. Provide a small gift to each volunteer as a token of your appreciation on behalf of the students

Activity follow-up

Let us know how it went – send us any pictures, videos and feedback to online@inspiringthefuture.org.au so we can help to showcase and celebrate your success. You can also tag us on Twitter @ITF_Australia and Facebook @InspiringtheFutureAU.

Mock Interview Resources

Appendix A: Suggested interview questions

Volunteers will undoubtedly have some questions in mind themselves but teachers can help prepare students in advance with practice runs. The following questions could be provided to volunteers as an attachment with your invitation or follow-up letter or you could provide them to volunteers on their arrival. (Suggest they select ones they prefer from this list or add others)

Sample Questions

- Tell me why you applied for the position?
- Why are you interested in this type of work?
- What qualifications do you have for this job ?
- How has your education prepared you for work?
- Do you intend to do any future study ?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?
- Have you held a part-time/casual job? If so where?
- Describe a time you have:
 - worked in a team
 - managed conflicting priorities
 - done something difficult
 - solved a problem
 - come up with a new idea
 - responded quickly and efficiently to a task
- What would you look for in a job?
- Do you work well with others as part of a team? Can you give an example?
- Why do you think we should employ you as opposed to another person?

Appendix B: Sample interview recording tools

SAMPLE 1 Adjust as needed

Student's Name.....

1. Was the student prepared with a Job Interview Portfolio?

2. Did the student have a Resume ? Was it well presented ?

3. Was the student suitably dressed for a Job Interview ? Comment

4. Was the student well prepared for a Job Interview ? Comment

5. Can the student improve on the way they presented themselves for the Mock Job Interview today ? Comment

Interviewer:

SAMPLE 2: Adjust as needed

Student's Name

Job Area Applied for

Category	Details	Rating 1-5	Comments
Personal Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dress• Grooming		
Communication Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expresses thoughts clearly• Positive body language• Listens to questions & answers appropriately		
Interest in job	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of profession• Shows enthusiasm towards the job		

Total	/15
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Rating:

Progressing: 0-5 Satisfactory: 6-10 Excellent: 11 – 15

Would you recommend the applicant for employment? Yes No

General Comments and Suggestions for improvement:

.....

.....

.....

Interviewer:.....

Appendix C: Sample ITF volunteer invite templates

SAMPLE 1:

Dear/Hi _____

Our school is looking for about 8-10 volunteers to help with a mock interview activity for our Year__ students on (Date)_____ at (Address)_____ and we hope that you or your colleague might be available to assist. Your support and advice will greatly help the students to increase their confidence and ability to perform well in an interview setting with people they don't know. The interviews will take place between (Time) _____and (Time)_____.

Or please select one or more re the following session blocks you can help with (9:30-11:30)(12-1:30pm). Your constructive feedback on each person's performance would be greatly appreciated by them and by us.

I have attached examples of possible questions you could ask the students and you are welcome to use other questions if you wish. (Use the attach button and see sample questions at Appendix B)

Please contact me on (Tel #)_____ if you have any questions or click on the appropriate button below this message to respond. I look forward to your reply and assistance in this way if possible.

Kind regards

SAMPLE 2:

Dear/Hi _____

We're running Mock Interviews for year 10 students to provide them with the opportunity of experiencing employment interviews for the first time or honing their skills. We appreciate how busy people are in industry and do appreciate the generosity of you have shown by participating in the Inspiring the Future campaign.

If you agree to come to our school, you will find that the students have engaged in an application writing program and will also be prepared for the interview that you will be conducting.

Each interviewer will have the opportunity to interview 5-6 students between 11 am and 12.40pm and please remain for lunch afterwards if possible.

Thank you for considering the career development of our students at _____ High School. Please contact me on (Tel #)_____ if you have any questions or click on the appropriate button below this message to respond. I look forward to your reply and assistance

Kind Regards

Appendix D: Sample tips for students

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW

1. Rehearse your answers to anticipated questions or types of questions (see following)
2. Make sure you are on time and not late for your interview
3. Remove any non-religious head covering or ear-plugs
4. Turn your mobile to silent

DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Shake hands firmly with the interviewer (both males and females) and introduce yourself
2. Sit down only when invited to do so. Maintain a composed posture during the interview.
3. Be aware of nervous mannerisms (leg fidgeting, playing with your hair, etc) and try to avoid them.
4. Smile as this will relax you.
5. Maintain eye contact with the interviewer/s.
6. Speak clearly – try not to mumble or to speak too quickly.
7. Listen carefully to what the interviewer asks and answer clearly and thoughtfully.
8. If you do not understand a question, ask the interviewer to repeat or explain the question. You can request time to think about your answer
9. Have your resume in front of you and refer to it if a question relates to something in your resume.
10. Have a couple of questions prepared to ask when the formal interview is over (see following)
11. When the interview is over, thank the interviewer/s for his/her/their time.

APPROPRIATE ANSWERS TO ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS:

Tell me about yourself or what you can bring to this job?

(mention interests and experiences, past work history, skills you gained, education and training, positive attributes)

How did you hear about the job?

(friend, relative, paper, internet etc.)

Why are you interested in joining our company?

(talk about why you applied for the job BUT don't mention money first. Include facts about the company discovered through your research)

Have you ever done this kind of work before?

(never answer "no" as no two jobs are the same and you wouldn't have applied for the job without some experience. Tell the interviewer about your past experience, education and training, unpaid work, willingness to learn on the job)

Why do you think you can do well at this job?

(this is where your research is essential, talk about the company and your suitability to the job)

What are your long-term goals?

(employer wants to see commitment and willingness to learn on the job)

What are your main strengths or best qualities? (try to relate to employability skills and personal attributes)

What are your weaknesses or weakest qualities?

(don't avoid the question as no one is perfect. Try to turn it into an advantage eg. I'm a perfectionist, I don't like to be distracted, I thrive on challenges)

What have you learnt from recent work experiences?

(try to relate to the job you are going for)

What could you do to improve our operations?

(refer to your research into the company)

What are your greatest accomplishments to date?

(these may not necessarily only relate to work but to sport, hobbies, family)

Describe a difficult situation you have had to deal with?

(this is testing your problem solving skills. If you can't think of a situation you could say that you would find out all the information, consult with others, work out a plan of action)

Who has exercised the greatest influence on you? Why?

(tests your values)

Why did you leave your previous job?

(this can be a difficult question so answer honestly but in a positive way if possible eg. Looking for more responsibility and greater challenges, it was a part time job, I needed more hours. If you left under difficult circumstances don't lie but respond positively e.g. The job wasn't what I expected, needed something more challenging, there were good things about my last job but this job seems to have more to offer). Never complain about people in your previous jobs because the interviewer may think you will do that if they hire you.

APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS YOU MAY LIKE TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER/S:

(Avoid asking up front about salary & if you do, ask what award they use for the position)

1. What does the company consider are the most important duties of this position?
2. What do you expect me to accomplish in the first 1, 3, 6 months?
3. Do you offer any training?
4. What are the promotional opportunities?
5. What would an average day in this position involve?
6. Is a uniform provided? When will the successful applicant be expected to start?
7. Would I be working by myself or with other people?
8. Who does the person in this job report to?

Appendix E: Sample Plan for whole year group

Year 10 Mock Interviews

Tuesday, 2nd October 2018

Time Organisation

Interviewers to interview 12 students by lunchtime, as there are 156 students in Year 10.

Interview 1: 8:50 – 9:05am

Interview 2: 9:05 – 9:20am

Interview 3: 9:20- 9:35am

Interview 4: 9:35 – 9:50am

Interview 5: 9:50am- 10:05am

Morning Tea 10:10 - 10:30am

Interview 6: 10:30 – 10:45am

Interview 7: 10:45 - 11:00am

Interview 8: 11:15 – 11:30am

Interview 9: 11:30 - 11:45am

Interview 10: 11:45am – 12:00pm

Interview 11: 12:00pm – 12:15pm

Interview 12: 12:15pm – 12:30pm

Lunch 12:30 - 1:10pm

Appendix F: Sample Plan for Mock Interviews & Speed Career Networking Sessions for 35 students

Each student has a 20min. interview (including reflection) and has speed career conversations with industry volunteers when not being interviewed.

Volunteers can opt to do one or both morning sessions. Some may like to do interviews for one session and speed career networking for one session

		Mock Interviews for 35 X Year 9 students with 5 volunteers					Speed Career Networking for 35 students
		Vol. 1	Vol. 2	Vol. 3	Vol. 4	Vol. 5	5 Industry volunteers
		Context for Interviews & Speed Career Networking					
Session 1 20 student interviews	8.30						30 students at any one time for 75 mins. 5 tables of 6 students 5 X 15 mins conversations
	8:45						
	9.05						
	9.25						
	9.45						
10.05		Recess- Morning tea for Volunteers					
		Vol. 1	Vol. 2	Vol. 3	Vol. 4	Vol. 5	4 Industry volunteers
Session 2 15 student interviews	10.30						30 students at any one time for 60 mins
	10.50						4 tables of 7-8 students
	11.10						4 X 15 min conversations
11.30		Whole group reflection					
12.00		Lunch & networking for volunteers					

This guide has been prepared by



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