

Guest Speaking

A step-by-step guide to help teachers run guest speaking activities using volunteers from the world of work.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

About the Guide	3
About the Inspiring the Future Campaign	3
Who are we	3
Child Protection Requirements	4
Get involved as a teacher	4

HOW-TO: CAREER INSIGHT TALKS

Purpose of Career Insight Talks	5
Seven Easy steps for using Guest Speakers	5
What do Volunteers talk about?	6
Tips for making the visit a success	6
Tips for helping volunteers engage young people	6
Other guests - your MP and local media	6

HINTS AND TIPS FOR GUEST SPEAKERS

Before	7
When planning your talk/presentation:	7
On the day	8
After	8

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.

How-To: Career Insight Talks

Purpose of Career Insight Talks

Career insight talks give pupils insights into a career by having a professional talk them about their own career and education pathway, as well as about the job they do. They could be speaking in an assembly, in a careers class, or to a small group of students interested in particular careers. ITF volunteers must always be under supervision of a teacher while in a school and among students and have appropriate child protection clearances as required by schools.

Some schools integrate talks into subject lessons (for example, they invite a doctor to talk in a biology class, or a journalist in an English lesson). See the ITF Subject Teacher Guide we have prepared, for more details.

Seven Easy Steps for Career Insight Talks

- Decide on a date and time for your talk, as well as the setup. For example, is it a talk in an assembly to 300 pupils or a talk to a class of 30? Is it during school hours, at lunchtime or after school?
- Log on to Inspiring the Future to search for and invite a volunteer (or volunteers) of your choice, giving details on the date, time and venue, along with what you would like them to do when they visit. Volunteers tend to need 4 – 6 weeks' notice.
- Follow up one week before the event to re-confirm.
- Prepare pupils with some questions ready to kick-start the Q&A.
- Have someone greet the volunteer and ensure they are comfortable before introducing them to the class. Remember that they have given up their time for free.
- Encourage students to ask questions and engage with the volunteer.

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.

What do volunteers talk about?

Volunteers giving a Career Insight Talks to young people in a school or college are encouraged to address the following:

- What they do. They might talk through 'an average day' at work.
- What education route they took. E.g. University, TAFE, Apprenticeship.
- What advice would they give young people hoping to get into their field.
- What I wish someone had told me when I was aged 14 or 16.



Tips for making the visit a success

- Ensure the volunteer arrives with time to prepare; remember they are often coming during work hours so timing is important to them.
- Let everyone know that the visit is happening and what to expect in the session. Ensure someone is on hand to meet them.
- Organise car parking if required.
- Ensure there are some questions ready to kick-start the Q&A.
- Let your volunteer know how the visit went. Through feedback they can develop their communication and presentation style.

Tips for helping volunteers engage young people

Some schools try to make it a little more interactive. You could:

- Ask volunteers to bring props that represent their job
- Start the session with a 'guess my job' activity to help get pupils thinking about skills and career pathways.
- Suggest that volunteers prepare some statements about their job for pupils to guess which are 'true' and which are 'false'.

Many volunteers will happily run workshops or more interactive sessions with just a little help from schools, so talk to them about any ideas you have to make it more exciting and insightful for your students.



Other Guests - Your MP and Local Media

If you are hosting quite a big event, extend the invitation to other people as guests. Some schools use this opportunity to invite their local MP to attend. If your MP attends it's a chance to get your local media interested if you decide this is an event you want to showcase to the community.

Hints and Tips for Guest Speakers

(Teachers may want to share this information with volunteers they invite)

Standing in front of individuals or groups of young people can be daunting if you are not used to it. However, like many of our biggest fears of the unknown, the reality is rarely as bad as we imagined it.

Here are some tips so that you, the school and the students get the most out of your visit.

Before

- Respond to the teachers in a timely manner to assist with their planning. Do not ignore their message. If you are unable to attend, let them know!
- If possible, try to secure a 'backup volunteer' from work in the event that you've agreed but can no longer attend so as not to leave the school in the lurch.

When planning your talk/presentation

Do not try to do too much – less is often more. With younger audiences it is particularly important to identify a couple of key messages and concentrate on conveying these in a variety of different ways as powerfully as you can.

Ensure that your language is understandable by students - introduce jargon and technical terms alongside other more accessible phrases or visual clues; chunk your explanations into smaller steps. Always consult the teacher before the visit about how much they may already know.

Plan to be interactive – This is the only way to truly engage your audience. Plan lots of questions; plan opportunities to bring student volunteers up to help you; even plan to get the audience to raise their hands to have collective votes on issues.

Be aware that **students are just as interested in you as a person** as they are in your job. Plan to share personal stories; explain why you are so passionate about your job; let your personality “leak out”.

Check timings and **rehearse**.

On the day

Be understanding – schools are very busy places can often seem chaotic. Be patient with teachers as you will be one of many people competing for their attention on the day. Adhere to timings and be aware that there could be things going on in the same room directly before and after your input.

When presenting and/or answering questions, be candid, open, honest and frank (give your opinion too!).

Use visual aids and props from work. Something as simple as a printed email can engage students as they are 'real-world' examples of work.

Avoid putting your audience on the spot, teenagers in particular are self-conscious and many fear failure in front of a group. Ask open questions and allow those who are willing, to respond.

Avoid irrelevance and waffle – leave room for interaction every 3-5 minutes

Avoid any inappropriate language or content.

Avoid trying to be cool –this may seem obvious – just share your interests with students in a conversational and relaxed manner.

Communicate with enthusiasm and conviction –It may seem unnatural to you, but it will read completely normally to the audience.

Do not show your fear – Remember that the audience almost always wants you to succeed – your insecurities will just make them uncomfortable too. Adopt confident body language and slow your delivery down.

Monitor your audience carefully and let their interests, reactions and questions shape your presentation/talk as it develops over time.

Ensure that **you are never alone in a room** with the students. This is a legal requirement as our volunteers do not always have to undertake statutory child protection checks.

Remember a **teacher is there** to manage behaviour issues– you have nothing to fear!

After

Seek feedback on your presentation/subject talk so you know how to improve.

Complete the online feedback form that Inspiring the Future emails to you a few days after the activity.

This guide has been prepared by



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