ABCN
Business Partnering with Education

Sustainability in School/Business Partnerships - Experience of ABCN

About ABCN

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- Not-for-profit that **brings business and schools together** to address educational disadvantage

- We connect volunteers from our member companies with students from low SES backgrounds to provide workplace-based or online mentoring programs

- Our programs **develop students' confidence, skills and aspirations,** vital for thriving in the workplace of the future

- Established in 2005, ABCN is a network of 44 leading companies and more than 200 partner schools in metro, regional and rural areas across Australia

- More than 200,000 students and 50,000 corporate volunteers have participated in our mentoring and other initiatives since inception

- Our vision is for all young Australians to **reach their potential in the future world of work**, regardless of socio-economic background

ABCN aligns strategically with our member companies delivering programs that support their CSR, community and employee development initiatives

As a result, we develop lasting relationships, with over 50% of our network being a member of ABCN for 10+ years

Our member companies collaborate for impact

OUR PROGRAMS CREATE SHARED VALUE BETWEEN STUDENTS, COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS

FOR STUDENTS

CREATES CONNECTIONS, CHANGES MINDSETS AND RAISES ASPIRATIONS

Builds aspirations and confidence

Develops careers knowledge and skills of the future

Creates professional connections

Increases engagement and resilience

FOR MENTORS

GIVING TO THE COMMUNITY WHILE BUILDING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Increases engagement and satisfaction

Develops mentoring, coaching and interpersonal skills

Improves situational adaptability

Builds effective communication skills and self awareness

FOR COMMUNITIES

CREATES GENERATIONAL CHANGE AND NEW ROLE MODELS

Builds greater support and connection

Provides positive role models

Lowers unemployment rates

Creates a flow-on effect to the next generation

FOR ORGANISATIONS

FULFILS SOCIAL PURPOSE GOALS IN A PRACTICAL WAY

Increases staff engagement and retention

Builds trust in the community

Promotes a more diverse and inclusive workplace

Attracts high quality staff

ABCN IMPACT

HOW WE MEASURE IMPACT

POST PROGRAM SURVEYS

- All students and mentors are surveyed after every program

- Robust data validity with >70% response rate

POST SCHOOL ANALYSIS

- Data sets on school completion rates, further education and employment

LONGITUDINAL RESULTS

- 10-year alumni interviews

- Mentor outcome analysis by our member companies

OUR IMPACT: STUDENTS

90%

OF GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS STUDENTS completed Year 12

compared with a **82%** national average and **68%** for disadvantaged students[1]

94%

OF FORMER GOALS STUDENTS

surveyed 10+ years after completing the program are fully engaged in education, training or work compared with **82%** for high SES students and **51%** for low SES students[1]

Over **50,000 students** mentored, **Over 200,000 students** reached, **Over 40,000 mentors** engaged since **inception**

OUR IMPACT: MENTORS

92%

said their mentoring/ coaching skills improved after the program

93%

GREW THEIR UNDERSTANDING

of other generations and cultures

100%

FELT PROUD

that their company is part of ABCN

[1] Educational opportunity in Australia 2020: Who succeeds and who misses out (Lamb at al.2020)
2020 data unless otherwise stated

ABCN programs are focused on the future world of work

ABCN's programs are fully facilitated workshops that focus on the future world of work. They are designed to promote interaction and connection between students and mentors. Through this approach, students develop key skills, increase their understanding of careers and workplaces, and raise their aspirations about what is possible and their understanding of pathways to get there.

Mentors also benefit through honing their coaching skills, stimulating their creativity and deepening their understanding of different generations and cultures.

ABCN programs provide accessible skilled volunteering opportunities for all employees:

- Fully structured and facilitated

- Digital or face-to-face

- Small group and 1:1 mentoring, up to 10 mentors and 20 students per program

- Range of levels of immersion, 1-6 sessions per program

- Full mentor briefing before each program

- ABCN provides Working with Children application guidance and completes verification checks

Our core programs at a glance

School Years	Program	Impact Area	About	Face-to-face program duration	Digital program duration
7-8	Innovate	STEM	Encourages the update of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths	5 x 1.5 hour sessions	4 x 1 hour sessions, plus briefing
9	GOALS	Enterprise and Employability	Encourages completion of Year 12 and further study	6 x 1.5 hour sessions	5 x 1 hour sessions, plus briefing
9-10	Future Thinkers	Innovation	Creative and innovative problem solving through design thinking	1 x 3 hour session	2 x 1.75 hour sessions, plus briefing
10	Entrepreneurs Unearthed	Enterprise and Employability	Develops entrepreneurial capabilities and creative skills (from 2022 onwards)	30 min launch 4 x 2.5 hour sessions	Face-to-face only
10 Equivalent	InterACT	Diversity and Employability	Employability skills for recently arrived migrants and refugees	6 x 1.5 hour sessions	Face-to-face only
10	Interview 2 Impress	Enterprise and Employability	Interactive interview skills workshop	1 x 3.5 hour session	1 x 1.5 hour, plus briefing
10-11	Empower	Enterprise and Employability	Adaptability, resilience, learning mindset, creativity and digital literacy	Digital only	1 x 2 hour session, plus briefing
11	Aspirations	Enterprise and Employability	Broadening awareness of post-school career pathways	5 x 2 hour sessions	4 x 1 hour sessions, plus briefing
11	Focus Focus 2	Diversity and Leadership	Encourages take-up of leadership roles by female students	3 x 2 hour sessions	3 x 1 hour sessions, plus briefing
9-12	My Career Rules	Careers	Students learn and ask questions about careers and specific industries	Digital only	1 x 1.5 hour, plus briefing
11, 12, 13	Accelerate	Leadership	Mentoring and financial scholarships over a 3 year period	12-15 hours per year	12-15 hours per year
Principal	Partners in Learning	Leadership	Business Leader & School Principal senior leader mentoring program	Quarterly meetings	Quarterly meetings

10 year case study – Christopher Stanley

Christopher is a former student of Lurnea High School and participated in GOALS in 2008. He went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Design from Western Sydney University and is now a graphic designer.

Christopher credits GOALS, and his mentor David, with changing the direction of his future 10 years ago. He says the program gave him the opportunity to experience what life was like for those in the corporate world, which gave him something to aspire to.

'I didn't know what professionalism looked like in the real world. The mentoring and the skills that I gained from the program influenced my approach since, whether applying for a casual job, going to university, or starting my career. And the fact that I was able to relate to people that I wouldn't have otherwise had contact with, made all the difference for me.'

GOALS gave me the exposure to opportunities that inspired me to do better. Be better. It changed my thinking about my future at the right time in my life.

Christopher Stanley

Our programs improve workplace engagement

Member Company Case Studies

PwC tracked 766 of their team who mentored in ABCN programs over the last few years and found:

PROMOTIONS - ABCN mentors were promoted at **2x** the firm average

CHURN - ABCN mentors had a **30%** lower attrition rate than the firm average

Optus tracked over 500 of their team who mentored in ABCN programs between 2016 and 2018 and found:

TENURE - ABCN mentors had an average tenure **1.5 to 2** years longer

CHURN - ABCN mentors had a **34%** lower voluntary attrition rate than the firm average

" Whilst students are gaining valuable experience and insights into the ever-changing world of work, PwC's volunteers are learning so much about leadership and the power of seeing the world from a very different perspective. It's a win-win. "

Luke Sayers, PwC Australia CEO (2012-2020)

Our programs improve workplace skills

ABCN member **Korn Ferry** identified 8 core competencies that are developed by mentors in ABCN programs. Many of our members have integrated ABCN programs into their formal development planning.

MENTOR COMPETENCIES

1 Demonstrates Self-awareness

2 Situational Adaptability

3 Interpersonal Savvy

4 Courage

5 Communicates Effectively

6 Being Resilient

7 Values Differences

8 Develops Talent

" I became more aware of the kind of person, and the kind of leader that I want to be, and how to achieve that - simply through mentoring a student. "

Matthew, GOALS mentor, Ventia

Principals tell us our programs work

As a college we have reached the point where **we will access every program that ABCN can offer us**. We have students at every year level involved. From our Year 7 students developing their interests in STEM, to our senior girls listening to the ways successful women manage their careers.

The reason we do this is because the programs work. The staff are professional. The communication is clear and timely. The mentors and facilitators are real people who choose to be involved. The adults enjoy the programs as much, if not more than the students, and students feel that. As we all know from our own children, young people have an inbuilt radar that senses insincerity.

And finally, while the programs are all targeted at disadvantaged schools it never feels like charity. **Students feel like real partners, and they 'sell' the program back at the College.**

Leonie White, Principal, Thomastown Secondary College

Unique elements of ABCN's sustainability

How we achieve it

- Membership model – Companies pay flat fee from AUD$20k to AUD$65k per annum for access to core programs. Scaling of fees beyond a certain level of engagement

- 1 year of notice to leave network – creates predictability of income

- Senior engagement – 1st program was co-mentoring program with CEO and School Principal

- Shared Value - Focus on development of mentors as well as mentees in capabilities for the future world of work

- Quality – Closely manage programs to achieve high quality

Benefits

- Network effect – can achieve more because work together

- Sustainability – Relatively predictable and diversified income, sustained engagement with schools

Challenges

- Complexity – working with this many businesses at once is difficult and can mean you feel you could do more with certain businesses if you focused on them more

- Branding – Less opportunity for companies to create brand value for their engagement with ABCN

- Scalability – Close management of programs means that may achieve less scale than we could – trying to find that balance between quality and scalability