

## Giving Australian Youth Relevant Skills – Meeting Employers’ Expectations

<b>Title</b>	Giving Australian Youth Relevant Skills – Meeting Employers’ Expectations
<b>Coverage</b>	Australia
<b>Organization/enterprise</b>	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)
<b>Topic</b>	School-business partnership
<b>Target group and outreach</b>	School leavers and employers
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>ACCI and its members formed the Business and Industry School to Work Alliance with the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP).</p> <p>The initiative aims to engage employers with the education sector through a partnership approach in order to find mutually beneficial ways to equip young Australians with business and other skills they might need to fully participate in the world of work.</p> <p>A survey was carried out to gather data that could be used by ACCI and other stakeholders to help formulate a strategic approach towards the partnership between industry and the education sector.</p>
<b>Key features</b>	<p>(1) Recognizes the importance of school-business linkages to provide students with relevant industry skills</p> <p>(2) Recognizes the importance of on-the-job training for acquisition of skills</p> <p>(3) Identifies enterprise education as an area for partnerships across a range of organizations</p>
<b>Strategy and approach</b>	<p>The survey results were published in 2003. Survey methodology involved contacting over 400 employers with a series of questions on three main areas: Vocational education and training in schools, enterprise education and business community partnerships. In addition, six questions were asked about employer attitudes towards young people and what positive benefits young people could bring to the workplace.</p> <p>Of those surveyed, 65 per cent were offering work experience opportunities to school students, and of those who did not, 76 per cent thought doing so was a good idea. The term “work experience” in the survey was used in its broad sense. It ranged from formal work placement offered by enterprises and resulting in official certification to informal work experience offered to a student who might be a family friend.</p>
<b>Partners</b>	ACCI formed the Business and Industry School to Work Alliance (BISWA) jointly with the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP).
<b>Major achievements</b>	<p>The four main findings of the survey are as follow:</p> <p>Firstly, it seems that certain skills are practical and best learned through demonstration and repetition, that is by practical experience and on-the-job training.</p> <p>Secondly, employers want to see a benefit from their involvement in youth training, either directly through having access to labour supply or indirectly through providing future employees with relevant skills. In a nutshell, employers need to be able to see a business advantage in becoming</p>

	<p>involved in training young people.</p> <p>Thirdly, activities such as Young Achievement Australia, Australian Business Week, Business Education Week, the Australian Network of Practice Firms, Worldskills Australia and E-Week have shown strong support to students and employers who are involved in school-to-work programmes.</p> <p>Finally, the average employer is likely to respond to requests from the education sector for involvement in their partnership activities, whether these are informal work experience, a school visit to the workplace or providing a talk about career options within the industry.</p>
<b>Additional information</b>	ACCI. 2003. <i>Giving Australian Youth Relevant Skills – Meeting Employers’ Expectations</i> . 7 pages (PDF)
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Source: Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry