

Step-by-step guide to volunteering at an Inspiring the Future Career Discussion Group event



inspiring the **future**
Aotearoa

How Career Discussion Groups work

A Career Discussion Group involves groups of students rotating around role models, spending time with each, hearing about their job and asking questions.

Career Discussion Group events allow student to find out deep information about careers, sectors and pathways. The smaller group setting encourages all students to engage in conversations and ask questions they might be shy to ask in a large group.

They may have a theme to help link school learning to jobs. For example, schools can choose a subject, industry, educational pathway, or another topic.

Or they may simply aim to broaden horizons and/or challenge stereotypes.



What you need to know about being a role model

Before the event

- Check the event invitation online. It includes important details about the event, eg, your arrival time, the age of the students, if there's anything they want you to talk about specifically. Contact the event organiser if you need more details.
- Prepare a quick explanation of your job (1 minute), which you will be asked for at the start.
- Prepare some things to talk to the students about, such as:
 - a day in the life of your job
 - what your organisation and industry does
 - what inspired you to do your job
 - your career and educational pathway – how you got to where you are
 - useful skills and subjects
 - challenges you have faced
 - if the Career Discussion Group has a theme, how your job relates to the theme
 - anything else the organiser has briefed you on, or anything you think might be interesting to the students.

TIP: When preparing, think about both your own story and information about your job and industry **(use the career ideas on Tahatū Career Navigator to help).**

- Students can ask any questions they like, but to prepare, look at the questions students might ask, at the end of this guide.
- Prepare a final piece of advice, which you will be asked for at the end.
- Bring along a “prop” or uniform — something tangible to enhance your talk, eg,
 - something you use at work, eg, a tool
 - an example of your work, or
 - a photo of you doing your mahi; or
 - wear what you would usually wear to work.

Examples of props to represent jobs or sectors

SECTOR	PROP
Finance	Credit cards, money, piggy bank
Engineering and manufacturing	Toolbox
Environment and agriculture	Plants
Hospitality and events management	Apron
Information technology	Computer hardware
Law	Gavel
Marketing, advertising and public relations	Products, storyboards, media release in a publication
Social services	Teddy bear
Transport and logistics	Toy train/car/ aeroplane

TIP: We get a lot of feedback on how important props are at events. If you're stuck on what to bring, ask other role models in the **Inspiring the Future Aotearoa Role Model LinkedIn group**.

The main event

Follow the arrival instructions and time the organiser gives you.

Introduction

- The event host will ask you and other role models to introduce yourselves and tell students your job title, with a quick explanation of what you do.

Activity

- You will join a group of students, where you talk to them about your job and answer questions.
- After about 10 minutes, the event host will ask you or the students to rotate (you get a new group of students to talk to).
- This will repeat for as many Career Discussion Groups as there is time for.
- At the end of the event, the host will ask role models to share a final piece of advice with all students.

Tips

Sometimes you might get a quiet group of student during the discussion groups. Here are some tips to get the kōrero going.

- Ask students to introduce themselves and tell you their favourite [school subject/hobby/something related to your job].
- Ask them what career pathways they are interested in.
- Ask students what school subjects and/or hobbies/interests they enjoy.
- Prepare some statements about your job, for students to guess which are true and which are false.
- Bring an interactive prop or demonstrate something you are currently working on.

TIP: Look up the average pay for your job before the event to answer pay-related questions. **Tahatū Career Navigator** has pay data for over 800 careers.

Questions students might ask

- What are you responsible for in your job?
- What does a typical day/week look like for you?
- Where do people in this role typically work (eg, office, worksite)?
- What does your organisation do?

- What is your favourite thing and most challenging thing about your role?
- How did you get into this job/career?
- What do you value that aligns with your work? (**How to work out your values**)
- How does your job align with the rest of your life? (For example, does it allow you to pursue other interests, or spend time with your family/friends?)
- What are the pathways (education/training/experience) into this job? Do you need a qualification?
- What technical skills are important for this job?
- What employability skills (soft skills) are important for this job? (**What are employability skills?**)
- What subjects at school are helpful for this job?
- What does the job market for this industry look like in the future?
- What can I do now to prepare me for this kind of career?
- Do you have any career or learning-related advice for me at my age?

Advice and support

For advice and support from other role models, join the **Inspiring the Future Aotearoa Role Models LinkedIn group**.

Or contact the team behind Inspiring the Future at the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

Email: inspiringthefuture@tec.govt.nz

Phone: 0800 601 301



**Tertiary Education
Commission**

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