





# What's it REALLY Like...

Matching Learning with Jobs  
[wirl.nellen.org.au](http://wirl.nellen.org.au)

## WIRL's Underpinning Protocols

The Workforce Development Project (and WIRL) grew out of a model trialled and developed by Mansfield Secondary College from 2009-2015. Regional Development Victoria funded the project to explore the ways that businesses could support local schools and in return how schools could support the growth of a local skilled workforce. The reciprocity of the relationships developed throughout the project is essential to its success.

What are the key elements of this reciprocity?

- 
**Goodwill:** created by the participating schools and businesses as each school's local community becomes engaged in the schools' students and their individual aspirations.
- 
**Respect:** develops when each partner understands and acknowledges the strengths, and limitations, of each partners' situation.
- 
**Sustainability:** created when clear and efficient communication ensures each partner has all the information they need, is encouraged to determine the best possible school-to-industry experience, and can say no, without risking the relationship.
- 
**Trust:** develops over time and a particular aspect of this element is intent of the visit, the way it is approached and managed. In discussion with the original project team, the participating WIRL businesses have agreed to host groups of Year 9 students in their workplaces. That is all, just a visit. The hope is, and the history of the project shows, that work experience, structured work placements, SBATs, and even casual employment can be a result for young people after the school-to-industry visit. These are, however, by-products of the introduction, and they can be expediated when the teacher takes the time to get to know the businesses needs.

If you don't have time to do this, please contact NE Tracks and NELLEN as they are always available to follow up with specific businesses through their SWL program connections. And teachers can access this program independent of WIRL, if a student expresses a particular interest in a specific pathway but needs that extra support to start that discussion contact the team via the website and phone contacts listed in this package.

