

Work Skill Australia

Finalists Handbook



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'All the questions I needed answering when I was preparing for the National Competition, I find covered in this handbook'. **John Patterson**

This handbook was written using the detailed advice given to us by previous Work Skill Australia finalists, judges, trainers and committee members. It brings together their collective wisdom about what enhances effective performance in Work Skill Australia National Competitions. **This package is to help you prepare for your National Competition. Read the text, do the exercises, don't judge it by its size but by its value. Don't put it in the cupboard, go out and do it, be a winner!**

The Regional Competitor, Congratulations! You are one of a special group of young people selected to join the CLIP program. By your performances so far you have already demonstrated that you have the skills to achieve at a superior level. But let's pause for a moment. Can you imagine a sportsperson competing at a national or international event without a formal training program to help them reach their goals? **Of course not!**

Well, you will soon be a National Competitor. This program has been developed from the past experiences of Work Skill champions. The handbook may look a bit frightening at first. But it has been designed to be handled in small chunks with the help of a personal trainer. Good luck as you improve your performance even further. **Ron Wright**

Life is all about meeting new challenges and gaining experience as you go. If your instincts indicate to you a certain direction, do everything you can to reach your full potential in whatever it may be. If you are going to be a lift operator, be the best lift operator. Don't waste a second of your life. Be your best at all things at all times.

Peter Brock
Motor Racing Champion



Section One: Handbook

3	Introduction
	Preparing for the National Finals
9	Selecting your personal trainer
13	Working as a team
17	Getting a clear picture of what happens at The National Finals
23	What makes a top performer?
30	Practising the skills that count
56	Doing past WSA projects
58	Final planning
	After the Finals
62	Improving your workplace performance
64	Conclusion

Section Two: Exercises

	Performance Enhancement Exercises
66	Using a diary
69	Identifying key actions for results
71	Working for results
73	Seeking excellence
75	Building self esteem
79	Supporting the ideas of others
81	Helping others in the WSA Team and your workplace
83	Mental training for confidence building
87	Using the telephone effectively
95	Writing
102	Negotiating
109	You are your organisation
112	Resources and further reading

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What is CLIP?

CLIP is a Continuous Learning Improvement Program developed by Work Skill Australia (WSA) for winners of Regional Work Skill Australia Finals.

It aims to help you prepare for the WSA National Finals and also to help you develop key skills that will assist you to succeed in your chosen career.

Points to keep in mind are that:

If you work through this handbook and get involved in the other CLIP Activities planned by your CLIP Co-ordinator you will:

- go to the National WSA Finals confident and prepared
- develop some of the key attitudes and ways of thinking that will help you in your whole career

You are now involved with a team of people who can provide you with practical and convenient help. These people, who make up your Regional CLIP Support Team, are:

- previous WSA National Finalists
- your fellow Finalists this time round
- your Regional WSA Committee
- your personal WSA trainer
- your employer
- your family
- TAFE

and most importantly

- Your CLIP Co-ordinator - who will help you work with these people and use the CLIP support materials effectively

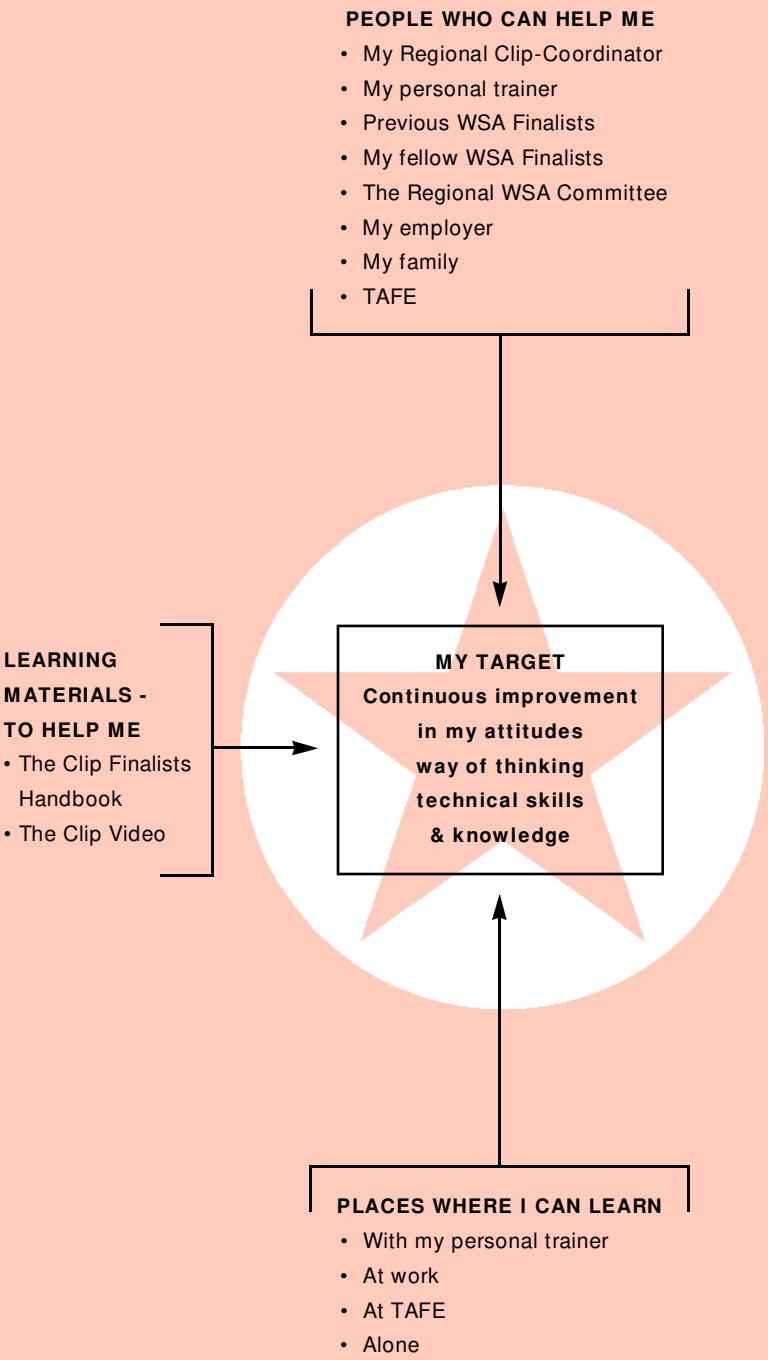
With the help of previous WSA finalists, trainers, judges and employers from around Australia we have developed some materials you can use to help make your preparation for the National Finals effective. These materials consist of:

- **This Handbook**
- **The CLIP Video**

You will be helped to use these materials in regional meetings, in sessions with your personal trainer, at work, and in doing exercises by yourself.

How the CLIP system works is outlined in the diagram on the next page.

Continuous Learning Improvement Cycle



About this handbook

If you have a quick look through the rest of this handbook you will see that it gets you to do a set of very specific exercises. It also tells you what previous WSA finalists, judges and other people involved in CLIP say really makes the difference when you get to the event.

Every exercise tackles a performance hot spot - something which, if you do it well, will help build up your chances of doing your best on the day of the finals. Every exercise in the handbook is there because someone who succeeded at the National Finals did it and found it helped them.

Some of the exercises you can do alone, many you can do with a personal trainer, some are best suited to regional workshops with other participants and some can be done at work.

Using this handbook

Your CLIP Co-ordinator is the person who will make sure that you get set up properly to work with all of the people that make up your regional CLIP team, to assist you to find your personal trainer and also to use this handbook.

Once you find your personal trainer you might go through the handbook with him/her. Remember that you can always use your personal trainer first if you are stuck on any of the exercises.

The exercises don't have to be done exactly in the order we've put them in. Do them in the order that makes sense to you. Also some of the exercises - eg working with your fellow finalists to plan a regional get-together, might be used a few times or many times.

'There is a strong correlation between the disciplines associated with sport and work. To know when to make the correct move or the ability to adapt to a situation stems from patience and concentration. Apply yourself to both and you will be successful'.

Steve Waugh

Australian Cricketer

What's in this handbook

Look at the Table of Contents at the start of the Handbook. You will see that we have divided the handbook up into the following “digestible chunks”.

Preparing for the National Finals

- selecting your personal trainer
- working as a team
- getting clear what happens at the National Finals
- what makes a top performer?
- practising the skills that count
- doing past WSA projects
- final planning

After the finals

- improving your workplace performance

Performance Enhancement Exercises

There are twelve optional exercises for extending your skills:

- 1 Using a diary
- 2 Identifying key actions for results
- 3 Working for results
- 4 Seeking excellence
- 5 Building self esteem
- 6 Supporting the ideas of others
- 7 Helping others in the WSA Team and your workplace
- 8 Mental training for confidence building
- 9 Using the telephone effectively
- 10 Writing
- 11 Negotiating
- 12 You are your organisation
- 13 Resources and further reading

The CLIP video

This handbook is accompanied by a 20 minute video tape. In it you will meet some previous National Finalists and other people who have been involved in helping people prepare for the event over the years.

They are some of the people who helped develop your handbook and the exercises in it. The video also shows people preparing for the National Finals and shows what happens at the Finals.

If you want to get an overall feel for what will happen at the National Finals, a first step might be to view this tape.

Your CLIP co-ordinator

Across Australia there are 27 Work Skill Regions. Each Region has a Committee and a CLIP Co-ordinator. Your CLIP Co-ordinator is the person to call if you need any help or general advice as you prepare for the Finals. Of course there will be many other people to help you but your CLIP Co-ordinator is the person who is your general support person.

We suggest you record your CLIP Co-ordinator's contact details here as well as in your address book:

My CLIP Co-ordinator:

Name

Phone (w)

(h)

Fax

Contact Address

Other details

The WSA advice number

If you can't get an answer to a question which is bothering you about any aspect of the CLIP Process from your personal trainer or CLIP Co-ordinator, then call Melissa or Judy on this number 02 267 9222

The important thing is don't stay confused.
If it's unclear ask someone who knows.

Other Work Skill contacts

Name	Name
Phone	Phone
Fax	Fax
Contact Address	Contact Address
Other details	Other details
Name	Name
Phone	Phone
Fax	Fax
Contact Address	Contact Address
Other details	Other details

A black and white photograph showing a large, dense crowd of people, likely at a sporting event. The crowd is filling the frame, with many individuals visible, though some are out of focus. The text "Preparing for the National Finals" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Preparing for the National Finals

Selecting your personal trainer

You might already have a trainer. If so take some time to discuss the following information with him/her.

In this Section:

You will be given a series of practical suggestions on how to ensure that the person you pick as your trainer is most likely to meet your needs.

'No one understood what it was like to compete in the National Finals. I would have liked to be in contact with someone who understood.'

**Previous WSA
National Finalist**

'During the National Finals the system crashed at lunch time. I stared at the monitor for half an hour then went for a walk. Someone could have helped me to be prepared for something like this - to help me cope.'

**Previous
WSA National
Finalist**

Why this section is important:

The many previous finalists we met all said that, if you can get a personal trainer who has a special combination of characteristics which we outline later in this Section, the more likely you are to be properly prepared for the National Finals.

Before you begin:

1 You might contact your CLIP Co-ordinator to discuss the possibilities

2 You could view the CLIP Video Tape.

This section is of relevance to

You

What to do:

It is very important that you first get clear what previous National Finalists say makes for a good personal trainer. Their advice is listed below.

You then need to use your contacts to see if there is anyone around who is available, very interested in helping and fits the profile of what you want.

In many WSA Regions the Regional Committee may already have someone in mind. This may be a TAFE teacher, a previous finalist, an experienced judge or someone who has been actively involved in WSA for some time. Remember that you are now part of the WSA support system and people are there and willing to help you.

What to look for in a personal trainer

Previous finalists have repeatedly said that the best personal trainer has the following profile:

The Successful WSA Personal Trainer:

Attitude

- is dedicated
- is willing to give their time
- is reliable, prompt - if they say they will do it, they do it
- is available and genuinely interested
- seeks to improve the way you do things not to completely change them
- is willing to look for and bring in other points of view and sources of help
- is willing to listen to your ideas
- helps you face errors positively - doesn't seek to put you down
- is respectful of you
- doesn't step in and do it all for you
- wants you to be independent
- is not overly serious - some humour is needed at times
- has your respect

Way of Thinking

- can locate and appropriately use relevant resources - people, previous jobs etc
- can guide positively
- can develop individual learning projects
- is realistic about what you can do
- responsive to your background abilities, needs and experience
- focuses on the job at hand
- can give clear, frank, supportive feedback on gaps in skills
- knows when to step in and when to step out
- looks to your mental preparation as well as to the skill needs
- is organised and systematic
- has their role in perspective - as one part of a team of supporters

With this in mind, list some people you think might be suitable to approach. Contact them and if you can't locate someone who is available then contact your CLIP Co-ordinator.

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Contact details for your personal trainer

My Personal Trainer:

Name

Phone

Fax

Contact Address

Other details

Working together effectively

Below are some tips on how you both might make sure your work together is useful, practical and productive. When you first meet with your trainer discuss these tips with each other.

As the competitor

- Come to each meeting prepared
- Seek frank and constructive criticism from your trainer - don't give the impression that you will be hurt if everything said is not full of praise - remember we learn by finding out from our mistakes, not being told where we are already succeeding
- Don't put your trainer into the position of having to always lead you by the hand and tell you what you should do
- Don't make your personal trainer feel that what s/he suggests must be "right" - instead see the meeting as an opportunity to get an alternative, confidential point of view on what might work best, or what might be needed to hone your skills
- Accept that, ultimately, only you can decide what is best for you
- Make sure you concentrate on developing all of your competencies - your attitudes and way of thinking (how you prepare, analyse, handle problems) as well as your technical skills and knowledge. These are discussed on pages 30 - 55.

As the personal trainer

- Come to each meeting prepared
- Avoid any atmosphere of criticism - the aim is to be enhancing, frank and constructive
- Listen, identify and note your competitor's areas of strength, see if you can help to focus his/her thinking, identify gaps in performance for himself/herself and work out the best way to improve performance in these
- Avoid the temptation to step in and "do it properly"
- Make sure it is clear that you are not there to tell the competitor the one correct way to move forward, only to work in partnership to work out what might be the most important and productive way to do things
- Always seek to coach the competitor on how to plan, analyse, prepare mentally, self-assess, use time efficiently, keep things in perspective and follow-up on your meetings
- Acknowledge that there may be a time for you to push and a time to pull back.
- Keep some record of achievement - discuss this progress so your competitor can see that there are pay-offs for his or her efforts
- Constantly be on the look-out for other resources (people and things) which you can see would be of immediate relevance to his/her current training needs.

Try to get in the habit of working out, at the end of each training session what exactly you will be doing between now and your next meeting - Your Action Plan. To do this work through questions like the following:

Between now and my next meeting my goal is to

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To tackle this goal what I will now do is

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The resources I will use are

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I will know if my plan is working if

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The time for my next meeting with my personal trainer is

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In this section: You will be assisted to contribute to a Team Project to develop the team spirit and support which previous National WSA Finalists have found to be so helpful.

Who will help you do this?: Your CLIP Co-ordinator will be the person who will help you develop this team spirit through a Team Project.

Why bother working as a team? We have been repeatedly told by previous National Finalists that, if you can work in a Regional Team:

- You will be better prepared for the National Finals
- You won't feel alone
- You will build up a strong group of fellow finalists who will support you.

This section is of relevance to

You

All of the members of your Regional CLIP Team

Getting help from previous and present finalists.

A very practical source of help is obviously the previous finalists in your region. They have already been there, they know what happens at the National Finals. They know what was most effective in their preparation and what was a waste of time.

Your CLIP Co-ordinator will have arranged for you to meet with some of these previous finalists at regional gatherings. Have ready a list of questions you've been asking yourself so you can get the practical inside advice of those who have been there.

It is also very useful to be able to discuss how you are finding the whole process of preparing for the National Finals with the people in other categories who will also be there with you.

Getting help from your employer & workmates

Another key regional supporter can be your employer. They can help you plan your work commitments to fit in with your training, reschedule holidays or organise some release for training. They may have equipment or people at work that are exactly what you need to sharpen your skills.

Your CLIP Co-ordinator will hopefully contact your employer not long after you have won the Regional Finals to discuss CLIP.

You might have to win the support of some people at your workplace. In some cases workmates might not understand what you are doing, others may be very supportive. Some employers may not realise what a great benefit having a National Finalist can be for their company's reputation and competitive advantage.

If you have to negotiate with your employer for release or support, it is a very good idea to first discuss how you will handle it with your personal trainer or CLIP Co-ordinator. This skill of negotiating effectively is a very useful one to practise. It's something you will have to learn if you want to set up your own company or progress in your present one.

Getting help from your family

We have been repeatedly told by previous National Finalists that family support and understanding is of tremendous help.

A starting point is to see if one of your key family members can get along to the Regional Group Meetings. They will then be able to meet members of other families and discuss their role.

Getting help from the regional WSA committee & CLIP Co-ordinator

These people have given their time voluntarily to support you through Work Skill Australia. They want to assist and are committed to help you in any way they can manage.

So don't be at all worried about calling them. Probably the first person to call would be the CLIP Co-ordinator. This is why it is so important to record your co-ordinator's contact details at the front of this handbook.

Other important sources of help

There are many other sources of help. One key source for many people is TAFE and many former finalists had TAFE teachers as their personal trainers.

Working as a team: The first regional meeting

Your CLIP Co-ordinator will be helping to bring all of the above people together.

After your win at the Regional Finals you will be invited by the CLIP Co-ordinator to get together with previous and present finalists, their families and employers, trainers and Work Skill Committee Members.

At this get-together you will have the opportunity to discuss the CLIP System, how to use this handbook, see the CLIP Video and have a chance to discuss any immediate concerns with these people.

This is the first step in the vitally important process of building your regional team.

Contributing to a Team Project

Later group activities

There are many options here for Team Projects. You could all decide to:

- Run regular meetings
- Simply have a barbecue
- Organise a "trial" competition
- Invite along keynote speakers to talk about things like sports psychology
- Run some small group workshops on skills development
- Do some fund raising for your trip to the National Finals
- Promote your Regional Team and how they will be representing the region nationally

Please don't leave the CLIP Co-ordinator to do all the work in making these gatherings a success. We would like you to work actively, with the coaching of the CLIP Co-ordinator, to help plan, organise and implement your own group activities.

Here is a list of some of the tasks you could take on:

- Making sure that what is planned is what people want
- Finding resources
- Checking equipment is in place and working
- Booking and confirming the location
- Making sure the location is open and everything is set up as required
- Inviting key people and confirming they are available
- Writing letters to these people
- Ordering the food
- Preparing any paperwork
- Working out the total cost and helping make sure bills are paid
- Getting other community members involved
- Making sure everyone knows:
 - What is to happen
 - Where it will happen
 - Who is to do it
 - When it is to happen
- Making sure that everything is running smoothly on the day - solving any unexpected glitches
- Following up - writing thank you notes, making sure any agreed action is done

For each event there will be a unique check list of what has to be done. The one above is only a start but hopefully it gives you a good basis upon which to build.

Performance Enhancement Exercises

You can extend your skills in working in a team and organising regional gatherings by completing the following performance enhancement exercises in the back section of your handbook:

- 1** Using a diary
- 9** Using the telephone effectively
- 10** Writing
- 11** Negotiating

In this Section: You will be given a series of practical suggestions on how: ■ to find out what happens ■ to compare what you find out with what previous WSA finalists, judges and trainers told us ■ to figure out what to do with this knowledge.

Why this section is important: Previous finalists say that if you want to do well on the day of the Finals, the more you know about what happens, the more you know about what counts. The more you know about what might go wrong the better. So don't leave anything to chance if you can.

This section is of relevance to

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	You
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your personal trainer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your family
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your employer

Ask some previous finalists what happens

Finding previous finalists

You should meet some previous WSA National Finalists at your first Regional Meeting. If you are having any trouble locating a previous finalist contact your CLIP Co-ordinator.

What to ask

When you get together with a previous finalist we suggest you ask at least the following four questions. Ask whatever else you want to know about too, but make sure you cover the questions below:

What happens?

What’s the key to success?

Where do people go wrong?

What did they get out of their participation?

‘Throughout my sporting career, unfortunately I have not found that idealistic shortcut to success - in fact, as I have progressed I have had to work harder to stay at the top. I enjoy what I do, never stopping to learn more and more about my craft. Enhancing my skills with the right attitude and persistence, trying to be as competitive as I can in anything I do. I believe the harder you work, the more success you attain provided you have the talent’.

Discuss what they say with your personal trainer

Get together with your personal trainer and discuss what you think were the most important things you found out - about the above four questions or anything else you were confused about.

Mal Meninga

Australian Rugby League
Captain

What to look for in the video

We suggest you repeat the same process as you used when you talked with previous finalists. As you view the video look for what the people say or what it shows about the following four questions or anything else you were unclear on:

- What happens?**
- What’s the key to success?**
- Where do people go wrong?**
- What did they get out of their participation?**

Compare this with what you found when talking to previous National Finalists

Are there some key points that keep coming up about these four questions? What are they?

What happens?

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What’s the key to success?

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Where do people go wrong?

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What did they get out of their participation?

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Work Skill Australia overview of what happens at the National Finals

Compare what you have discovered with what we were told by previous finalists, judges and trainers.

What happens?

- The general set up is similar to a Regional Final. But the National Final is a three day (8 hours per day) competition not a one day one like the Regional Final.
- Your workstation will be drawn out of a hat. You will be shown to it. If there is machinery involved, you will have time to familiarise yourself with it.
- You get the Project and Marking Scale. You can keep the Marking Scale for only one hour during familiarisation so you have to read it very carefully. Jot down your own notes of how you'll do the job and where the marks are allocated.
- If you are confused you can ask a judge for advice. Some things they can help with, others they can't.
- If your machinery breaks down, you get time out until it is fixed. If you need to go to the toilet you also don't get a time penalty but you need the judge's permission.
- Expect to have spectators. But you aren't allowed to talk to them or to your personal trainer - only to the judges.
- You have an hour to familiarise yourself with the surroundings, equipment, materials, Project and Marking Scale. Plan to use the time wisely.
- You stay with competitors from other regions.

What's the key to success?

The key to success is not just being excellent at your technical skills and knowledge. The key to success lies also:

- in your attitude
- how smartly you can think about the job
- how organised you are
- how well you plan your work and pace yourself
- how well you analyse and understand the Marking Scale
- how you handle unexpected problems

Many of the exercises in this handbook are intended to help you develop these skills.

Where do people go wrong?

This is what past competitors said prevents competitors putting in their best performance.

- 1 They don't read the Marking Scale thoroughly - they don't work out where the majority of marks are to be given. As a result, they can spend a lot of time on something that's not worth many marks. They mess up on the "basics".
- 2 They expect everything to go smoothly or the way they had pictured. When it doesn't, they "spit the dummy". The one thing to expect is that things won't go the way you expect.
- 3 They don't think through how they will do the job. Instead, they rush in only to find they've missed something or they make a silly mistake.
- 4 They aren't organised - they bring tools they won't use, they don't set out their workstation in an organised way.
- 5 They don't plan out how they will do the job and pace themselves - they run out of time or finish too early.
- 6 If they finish early, they don't use their spare time wisely, such as going back over key areas where most of the marks will be allocated.
- 7 They aren't "match fit" - they aren't prepared psychologically: mentally as well as technically.
- 8 In some areas, especially in manual trades, they don't make sure they are physically fit.
- 9 They don't "suss out" what is going to happen and train towards that goal.
- 10 They don't review their job plan each night.

You can learn from these mistakes.

List out what you now know about the Work Skill Australia National Finals

What is going to happen?

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What is going to make the difference for you?

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Where do people often go wrong?

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Notice how closely these things relate to what makes the difference between an excellent and average worker in your workplace.

Discuss with your trainer, family and employer how you might use this knowledge to help your performance at the National Finals

Discuss what you are going to do with this knowledge. As a result, where should you put your time and focus in preparation? **Return to this Section occasionally and reread what you have written.**

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In this Section You will be introduced to champions who come from sport. You will be asked to work out what they all have in common and figure out how to apply this to yourself as a WSA National Finalist.

Why bother looking at this? From Section 3 you will have discovered that what makes the difference on the day of the National Finals is not just having

highly developed technical skills and knowledge. Everyone there has these. Being able to plan your job and draw on your combined skills is what really makes the difference. This edge has to do with your mental attitude – how you handle the pressure of competition, what you do when things go wrong, how you feel about yourself and so on. The way of thinking and the attitudes that you will need to do well at the WSA National Finals are exactly the same as those that elite sports people possess or that the best young workers in different occupations have.

Before you begin

- 1. Locate the CLIP video because it has some relevant material in it.
- 2. Keep your eye out in the newspaper for the stories of champions who won through against the odds.
- 3. Talk with some workmates or WSA friends about what they think makes a champion.

This section is of relevance to

You
Your trainer
Your employer

Get a clear picture of what these mental skills and attitudes are. If you can develop them over the course of preparing for the National Finals you are going to get a double pay-off:

- You will give yourself the best chance of winning at the National Work Skill Australia Finals
- You will have developed exactly what is needed for you to succeed in your career.

Below are some exercises which will help you figure out for yourself what the key mental skills and attitudes are. After you have done them compare what you found with what the previous WSA National Finalists, judges, trainers and committee members said (page 28).

What do Champions have in common?

Below are some brief interviews with sports champions. Read each champion's story and jot down on a piece of paper:

- what key attitudes do they have in common?
- what ways of thinking do they have in common?

Tracey Wickham, Olympic Swimmer

'They used to call me "Tiger" and say that I was an animal in a race. I don't know about that, but I do know that you do have to be switched on and don't have time for any garbage or nonsense - with anybody. You just have to make the race all that matters in the whole world. I was a different person out of the water. I laughed and joked and had great times with all my mates, but not when I was swimming. I didn't get angry so much as all agitated. It was, "Leave me alone, I have a job to do. Autographs later. Get out of my way" There was one girl I used to swim against. She'd stand up there on the blocks beside me and I'd be 100 per cent serious and blocking everything out and here she'd be, this pretty blonde thing, winking at the boys and yapping away to me, saying things like, "Gee, Tracey, I like your hair." I'd think, "No wonder you never do any good, Your mind's all over the place. You're in the wrong place kid. Go and do ballet or something."

I'd start preparing months before a big race. I'd study my rivals and always planned to force them to swim the race my way, I always set the pace.

My big thing was to race to the front, get one or two body lengths ahead and make sure I stayed there. If they surged I would surge too and keep that distance between us.'

Peter Sterling, International Footballer

‘I always prepare myself mentally for a rugby league match after training is finished on Thursday night. I lie in bed before I go to sleep and I imagine myself doing things in a game correctly and at speed. I visualise myself coping and succeeding. The opponents in my mind are the actual guys we’ll be facing on the weekend. My Parramatta team-mate Eric Grothe swears by transcendental meditation to prepare his mind for a game.

It’s important, too, to read and understand the team’s tactics. I put a lot of thought into every match and do not go out on the Friday or Saturday night before a game. There will be plenty of times to go out after my career is over.

Making sacrifices like this so you can be the fittest you can be at 3 o’clock on Sunday afternoon is another form of mental toughness. We get a tip sheet on the opposition before each game. The coaching staff will have worked out the strengths and weaknesses of the blokes in the other team. This is a good thing to have in your head, to know who stands up under pressure, who directs the play, who does the kicking and with which foot.’

What do you think these two champions have in common?

What key attitudes do they have in common?

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What ways of thinking do they have in common?

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View the CLIP Video

What do the previous finalists in the CLIP video say makes the difference on the day?

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What are the key attitudes they say make the difference?

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How do successful finalists think through what to do? How do they approach the job?

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Review your own general performance at the Regional Finals

What do you think most contributed to your win at the Regional Finals? Think about where you did well and where you could have done better. Think of your attitude and mental skills. If you have been able to get a report on your performance refer to this also.

How does this compare with what you felt about the two champions and what you heard in the CLIP Video?

What is similar?

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What is different?

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Compare what you think with what previous finalists told us makes the difference

Previous WSA Finalists have this to say about what makes the difference between the winner and someone with the same technical skill levels who doesn't win.

The Successful Work Skill Australia National Finalist

To be a successful Work Skill Australia National Finalist you must first possess a high level of technical skill and knowledge in your trade/area of work. But this alone will not ensure success. You must also work towards developing the following attitudes and ways of thinking.

Attitude

You need to be a person who:

- is persistent
- doesn't spit the dummy when things go wrong
- wants to win not just to have a good time
- feels prepared
- doesn't go like a bull at a gate; who considers what to do
- is confident but not overconfident
- is willing to admit weaknesses and errors
- is self forgiving but also accepts responsibility for your own actions rather than blaming others
- can control nerves, but accepts that nerves are normal feelings
- can forget a mistake and move on
- is willing to make sacrifices
- balances work, study, leisure
- has the drive to do well and does a good job
- is reasonably assertive
- can cooperate; can give and accept help from others
- is willing to learn from errors and sees this as a key to successful performance

Way of thinking

You need to be a person who:

- can self diagnose and work out areas of your performance that need further development
- can accurately read, comprehend and interpret what is needed; can identify where the marks are and where the effort is needed
- knows where to put effort in preparation and what is a waste of time
- doesn't get buried in useless detail
- uses breaks in competition to review performance and plan ahead
- is self directed but knows when to ask for help
- is a forward planner - thinks ahead and can picture what is going to happen
- identifies and solves unexpected problems quickly when they arise
- is resourceful - can work out, on the spot, how to handle a situation when things don't go as predicted
- can focus up close and block out outside diversions when necessary
- is organised - eg gets all tools set out
- makes the time to think through what to do
- is able to focus on the job at hand
- is self reflective and critical but not self-blaming
- can work out the key point and, when necessary, communicate this clearly
- can identify things you can't change

You can be confident that, if you develop these attitudes and ways of thinking, you will not only give yourself a much better chance at the National Finals but you will also be developing skills that will be of direct help in your performance at work and in your career.

We asked a whole range of employers what makes the difference between the best worker and a weaker one. They said the same qualities as we have already summarised.

Using what you have learnt so far

You should now be clearer about:

- What will happen on the days of the WSA National Finals
- What will really make the difference if you want to do your very best

You should now talk with your personal trainer about what you think you have to work on in:

- Your technical skills
- Your knowledge
- Your mental attitude
- How you plan what to do

What do you feel you are already good at doing?

.....

.....

.....

What do you feel might be some of your weak spots?

.....

.....

Performance Enhancement Exercises

You can do further work on developing your attitude and ways of thinking by completing the following performance enhancement exercises in the back section of your handbook:

- 1 Using a diary
- 2 Identifying key actions for results
- 3 Working for results
- 4 Seeking excellence
- 5 Building self esteem

In this Section: You will be given a series of practical exercises that are aimed at developing the key thinking skills and attitudes identified as being most important if you are to do well at the National Work Skill Australia Finals and in your subsequent career. Suggestions on how to hone your technical skills are also given.

Why bother looking at these skills?

If you are able to do all of the things below effectively and consistently, you will be well on your way to doing your best at the National Finals. You will also be preparing yourself to do well in your chosen career.

It is best to practise them as much as possible. Get your personal trainer and other support people to help you to check you are doing them well.

Before you begin:
You should read over what you have discovered in doing the exercises on pages 12, 19 and 22. This will give the exercises you do in this Section a personal focus.

This section is of relevance to

You
Your personal trainer

Previous WSA National Finalists, judges and trainers have stressed that your planning skills are the key to successful preparation for the National Finals. You need to be able to plan on a big scale, such as planning out what you will do over the months between the Regional and National Finals and then plan down to a small scale, such as planning what you will do each day or how to do a particular job.

It is most important to think and plan ahead. You have to make sure you manage all your commitments and don't waste time.

Planning ahead

To help you do this, we suggest that you fill out the personal planner below. Photocopy it if you can because you will probably have to play around with it for a while to get it right. If you can't get to a photocopier work on the master copy using a pencil and an eraser!

You could start to work on it by yourself. However, you will probably need to check things through. Make sure you haven't missed anything by discussing it with your family, employer and maybe a previous WSA finalist.

As you can see from the planning sheet you need to consider all of your commitments:

- work
- family
- leisure and sport
- religious
- holidays
- study
- preparing for the WSA finals
(also see Checklist on page 33)
- date of the WSA finals

Your task is to put them all down on the personal planner. Then look at the overall pattern of the coming months.

Can you handle all this - really?? If something has to go, what might it be? If you need to reschedule holidays, leisure or other commitments talk with your personal trainer about how you could best negotiate this with the person concerned.

When you have a draft, get together with your trainer and discuss how you will handle your training timetable.

Personal Planner

Fill in your commitments

Month 1	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 2	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 3	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 5	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 6	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 7	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5
Month 8	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4&5

WSA National Final Checklist

This is a checklist of things you may need to do to prepare specifically for the WSA National Finals. Add them into your Personal Planner.

Competitor's Action Sheet

[illegible]

Exercise

Tool list

Develop a list of tools to take to the National Finals.

Do you need to make a plan to get these tools? Add your plans to your Personal Planner.

List: Whom you might contact to find out

Exercise

Planning your time to achieve goals

Previous finalists said that not using time effectively is always a problem. It is most important that everything you do gives a real pay-off for the effort and time you invest in it.

Read the following ideas for time management and practice applying them by doing the Action Plan exercises.

Discuss these Action Plan exercises with your trainer. As you continue to prepare for the National Finals periodically return to the 7 time management tips below. Ask yourself if you are putting them into practice.

Tips for effective time management

- 1 Set goals in the long, medium and short terms.
- 2 Prioritise work in the light of set goals.
- 3 Write daily lists including daily priorities. Revise at the end of each day.
- 4 Concentrate on the high priority items.
- 5 Aim for excellence rather than perfection.
- 6 Schedule time to allow adequate breaks.
- 7 Practise the 'salami technique'. Slice up large jobs into manageable sections (see page 41).

Exercise

Planning your time to achieve goals

Action Plan

Select two ideas for using your time well. Note down how you can apply them in your preparation for the National Finals.

Idea 1:

How I can apply it:

Idea 2:

How I can apply it:

Discuss your action plans with your personal trainer. Do this on a regular basis.

Performance Enhancement Exercises

You can extend these important planning skills by completing the following performance enhancement exercises in the back section of this handbook.:

- 2 Identifying key actions for results
- 3 Working for results
- 4 Seeking excellence
- 11 Negotiating

Just about every successful National Finalist and judge we spoke with told us that many finalists fail to do their best because they haven't analysed the Project properly and planned their work.

To analyse a WSA Project properly you need to:

- think about exactly what is to be done in this job
- break the job into small sections
- work out the order in which you should do the job
- look very carefully at the marking scale - to figure out where most of the marks are allocated
- be very clear on what the judges will be looking for in order to allocate high marks
- use this to develop your job plan

You also need to keep a close eye on the time.

This means you must:

- adjust your speed and precision according to how much time you have left
- go back over the aspects of the job which are worth most marks if you finish early

Analyse a past WSA Project by yourself

- you will be provided with the last National Project (where applicable).
- in this task you don't have to do the job itself - just think through how you will do it, work out what is important.
- you should do the task by yourself and your personal trainer should do the same. When you have finished you can get together and compare notes.
- when you sit down with a WSA Project read it carefully.

As you go along jot down answers to questions like the following:

- what has to be done?
- how long should each section take?
- what is going to be my plan of action?
- what order should I do this job in?
- how will I set out my workbench?
- how will I use my materials?
- my technical knowledge
- can I picture how the job is going to look when I'm finished?
- where are most of the marks going to be allocated?
- what are the judges going to look for to give me maximum marks?
- where are the traps?
- how will I know I'm on track?

Compare what you think with your personal trainer

Once you have finished your project analysis get together with your personal trainer and compare what each of you thought about the above questions.

- Where did you come up with the same answers?
- Where were your answers different?
- What would you do differently next time you analyse a project?

Repeat the process

- The more you can practise the above process the better you will get.
- Get your personal trainer to do the task.
- Get previous finalists to do the task and tell you about their approach.

Some general ways you can self-assess

What you have been doing here is a form of assessment. You try the task, compare what you come up with someone who is very experienced in the area and then think about how you would do the task better next time. This is an ideal form of self assessment.

You can do the same process when you actually do part or all of a previous WSA project. Our suggestions on how to do this sort of self assessment are outlined on pages 51 - 55.

You can also start to assess your attitude, how you feel and how to best handle and use these feelings.

“To succeed you have to be willing and able to learn from your mistakes – to learn from your mistakes you need to be good at self assessment.”

Keep a journal of your progress

We suggest you keep a WSA journal. See Performance Enhancement Exercise N° 1: Using a diary.

- Write down anything that helps you prepare for the National Finals or contributes to WSA team events.
- Write down especially what you felt worked well or didn't.
- Assess how you went on a job or skill with your personal trainer.
- Enter what you achieved and what you still have to achieve in your journal.

Use the following four areas as a checklist:

- My attitude
- My way of thinking
- My technical skills
- My technical knowledge

Simply note down where you think you still need to improve and where you are developing well. An example of a diary entry might be:

Monday 15 October

To do

- Phone Jack about idea for guest speaker
- Check meeting with Chris

My 2 achievements today:

- 1 More confident about my speed & accuracy
- 2 Solved problem with job by planning with trainer.

Alex has been really helpful I'm feeling more confident about handling pressure. Still need to find out more about how to stay calm when things go wrong.

Every once and a while read over your journal and review your progress. Discuss any blocks to your progress with your personal trainer or other WSA support people.

Setting goals

Self assessment is about setting goals. Goals are personal targets to be achieved. You continuously assess your performance to identify gaps - areas that need improvement or action. These gaps will help you identify some important CLIP goals. Also you need to work out what must be done to make sure you get to the National Finals to secure the support you may need and so on. These can also become CLIP goals.

Goals should first be broken down into small achievable chunks of work which you can achieve in a short time, for example:

GOAL: to put in your personal best performance in the National Finals.

This may be your overall goal, but where do you start to break it into achievable chunks?

Achievable goals:

- 1 Review your regional performance and see where you lost marks
- 2 Identify a trainer
- 3 Explain the Nationals to your supervisor/boss
- 4 Decide how much time you can put into training
- 5 Organise a place to train
- 6 Find out if there are former national competitors prepared to help you
- 7 Arrange time off for the National Finals
- 8 List your performance goals
- 9 List skills you need to improve

(You keep adding achievable goals each week)

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Working out your priority goals

In order to make sure you plan your time well it is useful to put your goals into some sort of priority order. Here you work out which goals are going to have the most pay-offs and which ones should be tackled only if you have spare time.

List below the goals you've chosen which are most important, least important and which come in between.

Most important goals

.....

.....

Middle important goals

.....

.....

Least important goals

.....

.....

Now discuss your goals with your trainer and explain why you've made your choice of the most important ones.

Plan steps to achieve your goals

It is vital to convert goals into a plan of action. Here you list all the steps you have to do to achieve the smaller task. In our example, what steps would you take to achieve the first task:
1. Review your regional performance? What steps would you add to the list?

Steps in reviewing your regional performance

- Find computer feedback sheet
- Contact trainer to talk it through
- List your strengths and weaknesses
- Discuss how you can work on your weak areas
- Set aside a time, place and activities to do
- Arrange for your trainer to check over the job with you
- Plan your next activity
- Talk with one of your regional judges about your performance.

When you've done this compare your answers with a partner and see if there is anything else you can add to your list. Don't worry at this stage about getting them in the right order.

Exercise

Listing the tasks for one of your goals

Select one of the priority goals you've set for yourself.

My goal is:

.....

.....

.....

List the tasks you have to do to achieve your goal:

.....

.....

.....

List the resources (people, materials) you will use to help you to do these tasks well:

.....

.....

.....

Write down what will convince you that you have achieved your goal successfully:

.....

.....

.....

Performance Enhancement Exercises

You can extend your skills in setting and achieving your goals by also completing the following performance enhancement exercises in the back section of your handbook:

- 1 Using a diary
- 2 Identifying key actions for results
- 3 Working for results

Developing a positive attitude

Sorting out your reasons for being in WSA

Previous WSA Finalists say this is a very important factor in their success. If you go to the National Finals simply to have a good time, to have fun, then your chances of doing your best will be decreased.

You have to want to do well. You have to be willing to persevere, make sacrifices, focus your efforts. Doing well has to mean a lot to you. Those who have won have pictured themselves putting on the green jacket and representing Australia at the Skill Olympics.

So it's important to sit down by yourself and figure out why you are in the National Competition, what you want to achieve. You have to be really honest with yourself.

To persevere, to stick with the training, and to cope with the sacrifice, you are going to have to see if you've got the determination to do well.

After you've thought about your reasons, discuss your thoughts with your personal trainer. It might also help to talk to some previous National Finalists about their reasons for getting into WSA and what motivated them. Listen to what they say on the CLIP video.

Prepare for the unexpected

Just about every previous WSA finalist we spoke to said that you must be prepared to cope with things not going exactly the way you'd like at the National Finals.

They also said that the more you practise handling the unexpected, especially things that don't go well, the better you will perform. It's the ones who "spit the dummy" that don't do as well.

Those who do well accept that things won't go smoothly. When something goes wrong they figure out if it's something within their control that can be changed or something beyond their control that isn't their fault. The ones that do well don't let unexpected glitches throw them. They deal with them calmly and get on with trying to figure out a way around them. They realise that: **Problems are tunnels to pass through, not brick walls to stop you dead in your tracks.**

Really effective finalists figure out a way of making a problem into an opportunity. Take, for example, a competitor whose machinery broke down. He used the 3 hours down time to revise his planning and to relax by walking around and thinking positively. He used the time to focus his mental attitude on achieving his best performance.

There are no magic formulas for handling the unexpected at the National Finals. One thing that can be guaranteed is that you **will** have to handle the unexpected. Doing this effectively will help your chances of putting in your top performance.

One way to prepare yourself to deal with the unexpected is to go through some “what if” exercises.

Exercise

“What if?”

Here you try to list out all of the things that might go wrong before or on the day of the National Finals. You then discuss what you would do if they happened. Forewarned is forearmed.

It is not so much that any of the “what ifs” you identify will definitely happen. It’s just that going through this sort of exercise gets you used to thinking about the unexpected. It also gets you more comfortable with handling it when that little surprise does pop up.

Think about the following (alone or with your personal trainer).

What would you do at the National WSA Finals if:

1 You suddenly found you were running out of time? I would:

.....

.....

.....

2 The machinery you were working on broke down and it was going to be some time before it was going to be fixed? I would:

.....

.....

.....

3 You found you were missing a tool? I would:

.....

.....

.....

4 You looked around and you saw all the other competitors had bigger and better tool kits? I would:

.....

.....

.....

5 You found that the machinery you were to work on was unfamiliar or you were faced with unfamiliar materials or fittings? I would:

.....

.....

.....

6 You find you have finished early? I would:

.....

.....

.....

7 You feel so nervous you can't think clearly? I would:

.....

.....

.....

8 You get sick just before the competition - like a splitting headache? I would:

.....

.....

.....

9 After the first day of the competition things are not going well? I would:

.....

.....

.....

10 You look around you and everyone seems to be moving ahead more quickly? I would:

.....

.....

11 You read the project sheet and there's a part you can't understand? I would:

.....

.....

12 You couldn't find the venue? I would:

.....

.....

13 The other person's job looks different from yours? I would:

.....

.....

14 You lose your plane ticket? I would:

.....

.....

15 You suddenly realise you've made a mistake? I would:

.....

.....

16 You can't fix something? I would:

.....

.....

These “what ifs” weren’t made up! Every one of them happened to at least one previous National Finalist.

- Work out your own “what ifs”.
- To do this you could ask some previous finalists, ask your personal trainer, judges, your CLIP Co-ordinator to tell you things they have experienced or seen others face in the National Finals.
- Ask them also what was done to handle these unexpected problems successfully.

Is it OK to feel nervous on the day?

Every one of our previous finalists said they felt nervous. What they also said was that they knew this was inevitable, that everyone around you will be feeling the same. They said that they had learnt to recognise and accept competition nerves **and** to harness them in a positive way.

They suggested that there are a number of ways to tackle these “test flutters” in a healthy way:

- have a routine for getting started - a checklist taped to the inside of your tool kit
- check out the venue - see how it is set up
- know you have prepared yourself thoroughly
- have already experienced the same conditions, similar jobs as many times as possible

All of the exercises in this handbook are intended to help you feel as prepared and as calm as possible when you enter the competition hall.

Performance Enhancement Exercises

You can do further work on developing a positive attitude by completing the following performance enhancement exercises in the back section of your handbook:

- 5 Building self esteem
- 8 Mental training for confidence building

This is what first comes to mind when people talk about training. You do need to be technically excellent but this alone won't make you the top performer.

We suggest that you practise technical skills and check your knowledge using the following method. It will make your practice much more relevant.

Work out your technical skill & knowledge gaps

You do need to make sure your technical skills and knowledge are up to scratch. There are a number of ways to do this. Make sure you practise your skills with a focus and a purpose, to an agreed plan - to make sure you have the technical skills and knowledge you will need in the Work Skill Australia competition.

Analyse a project

One way to do this is to go through a past WSA project - list out all of the skills and knowledge you'd need to do the job. Then check that you have these (either by doing them or by saying to yourself - "Yes I've done this hundreds of times and I always get the right results").

Analyse your regional computer print out

If possible talk about your performance with one of the regional judges as well. Find out more about where and why you lost marks.

Do past jobs and assess the outcome

Another way comes from doing part or all of a previous WSA project and then, with your trainer, working out what parts you didn't do well and what skills and knowledge you'd have to practise to do better.

In general

The general idea is to practise with a very clear focus and purpose, to an agreed plan:

- Don't practise randomly - focus on past jobs and especially on skill and knowledge areas where you didn't perform as well as you would have liked.
- Use your personal trainer to help identify these gaps.
- Remember that although these technical skills and knowledge are the prerequisite for successful performance, without a well developed attitude and way of thinking your chances of doing your best will be limited.
- Make sure you have all the basic skills as fine tuned as you can get them.

Putting it all together

So far in this Section on **Practising the skills that count** you have been developing your:

- ability to plan and manage your time
- ability to analyse a past project
- self assessment skills and ability to set, prioritise and achieve goals
- attitudes
- ability to handle the unexpected
- technical skills and knowledge

To put it all together, some exercises are given below which will reinforce these essential skills. These exercises can be done by yourself and discussed with your trainer to get valuable feedback on your progress.

Improving my performance

What useful exercises can I do? View the CLIP video again to hear what previous finalists and judges said about improving performance.

Here is what some previous finalists said to us:

‘I made mistakes by rushing and not concentrating on sections to be done in the right order. It was hard to visualise the job - what goes where, when - if I had been able to plan more effectively I could have worked out quicker ways of achieving the job.’

‘I definitely got flustered - what to do first? I was told to take notice of the Marking Scale but I hadn’t seen one before. At times I was under-confident and at other times I was overconfident. I think that too much confidence is a bad thing. My job planning skills were sketchy, it was my speed that got me there in the end.’

‘I started to panic when I couldn’t complete the job on time.’

‘It’s important to know how to fix a particular mistake; but it’s more important to know how to solve problems.’

Exercise

Self assessment of areas for improvement

'The best performers were not only highly proficient technically. They were organised and had strategies for handling the unexpected. They could perform under pressure and were committed to doing their best.'

Work Skill Australia Judge

Self Assessment

Where do you see your skills, attitude and motivation compared to where you want to be? Use the list below to help you to set your goals. We suggest you photocopy it and repeatedly use it to map your progress over time. Your first target for improvement should be in Column 3 (A lot of improvement needed).

Your Trainer

Complete your self assessment before you meet your trainer.

This gives your trainer a clearer idea of who you are as a person and what you are setting out to achieve.

Areas for Improvement	Room for Improvement		
	1 Under control	2 Some improvement needed	3 A lot of improvement needed
Technical Skills			
Range of technical skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific technical skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attitude			
Self esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Persistence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to listen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to admit and face weaknesses and errors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to make sacrifices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to think before rushing in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pressure			
Controlling nerves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working under competition conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dealing with mistakes under pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to block out distractions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Areas for Improvement	Room for Improvement		
	Under control	Some improvement needed	A lot of improvement needed
Planning Skills			
Planning the whole job/thinking ahead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning parts of the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading a Marking Scale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjusting plans if needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organising equipment and materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to sort out what is most important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self Assessment skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem Solving Skills			
Handling the unexpected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem solving strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resisting distractions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting organised in non-technical areas			
Tool kit preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sending tool kit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organising finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrangements at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other areas			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List below your high priority areas for improvement (Column 3).
Write down what action you can take to improve these areas.

High priority areas for improvement	Action

Your Trainer

- Arrange a meeting with your trainer and find out what your trainer thinks about your performance goals and the resources you need.
- Be prepared to revise your performance goals in the light of this discussion.
- Some competitors have used a diary to record their goals and details of performance improvement. (See page 40)

Exercise

Doing short learning projects

You and your trainer can:

- 1 Identify gaps, areas needing improvement in your skills, knowledge, attitudes or way of thinking using self assessment.
- 2 Identify the skills to be tested at the Nationals in the skill lists being sent out later this year.
- 3 Look at skills tested in previous WSA competitions.

Once gaps are identified, you and your trainer can plan a specific learning project to overcome these gaps: more practice; acquiring new techniques; using different tools; changing timing; seeking out further knowledge; becoming more confident; handling mistakes calmly.

Additional Skills

Ask your trainer to identify any additional skills that might be needed to perform the job at a standard of excellence. Use these additional skills as a basis for a specific learning project.

Doing Specific Short Learning Projects

We suggest you plan each learning project as follows:

Between now and my next meeting my goal is to

.....

To tackle this goal what I will now do is

.....

The resources I will use are

.....

I will know if my plan is working if

.....

The time for my next meeting with
my personal trainer is

.....

Ongoing Training

When you come to doing a skills training session by yourself or with your personal trainer consider using the following approach.

Training Session Plan: Sample

Goal: By the end of this training session I will be able to prepare a job plan accurately and confidently.

Date Monday 10 September **Time** 4.00–4.30 pm

Improvement Ideas

- 1 Get a clear overview of the job
- 2 Draw a diagram of all parts of the job
- 3 Clarify queries with Supervisor/Trainer
- 4 Supervisor/Trainer makes suggestions for planning the job
- 5 Write down a step by step plan including timing
- 6 Ask Supervisor/Trainer for feedback on my plan
- 7 Revise plan
- 8 Practise another job plan
- 9 Evaluate my ability to prepare a job plan
- 10 Review goals

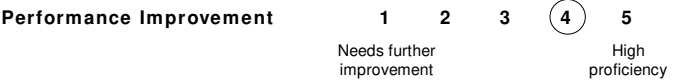
Assessing my performance

Self: I still feel that I need to prepare more job plans. I'm not confident enough to be sure that I have included everything in the plan. I need further practice on timing too. Next training session: Wednesday 4.15 - 4.45 p.m.

Other: The job was planned according to all specifications. You don't seem to be confident about your timing and your sequencing. Further practice on planning different jobs should increase your confidence. **Jo Suli (Trainer)**

Improving my performance

Check sequencing and timing. Practise another job plan next training session.



Training Session Plan

Goal: By the end of this training session I will be able

Date Time

Improvement Ideas

Assessing my performance

Self:

Other:

Improving my performance

Performance Improvement	1	2	3	4	5
	Needs further improvement				High proficiency

Exercise

Why bother doing this? The ideal form of preparation is to go through a National Final - here you discover what it is like, you get to put all that you have learnt together and, hopefully, you put in your best performance.

The next best thing is to trial what a National Final is like using a past project. Previously successful National Finalists said

that this was one of the most useful forms of preparation. They all said that you should try it. Some said they would be happy to work alongside you as pacesetters.

In this way you can get to look at how you operate under the actual pressures of competition, how you handle the unexpected, how you manage any “what ifs” that come up, how well your planning skills and analysing skills are working and so on.

You can also use this to identify gaps in your performance which you can then go back and work on further with your personal trainer. **What you are doing here is very similar to what elite sportspeople do in their training.**

“Not being prepared is preparing to fail”
Iain Murray
International Yachtsman

How to organise your trial “final”

There are at least two options here:

- 1. You work on your own or with your personal trainer using the facilities of TAFE **or**
- 2. Your Regional Team can organise something grander as a special project when you would all come together at a venue, probably at a TAFE College, and attempt projects in your different categories.

How to learn from your trial “final”

Here it is essential that you do the previous project under exactly the same conditions as you will be experiencing at the real Final.

To learn from the experience you need to assess both your process (how well you feel you went about the job) and your product (what came out at the end). You then need to work out what you are not doing well and practise this with your personal trainer.

This section is of relevance to

You
Your personal trainer

To assess your process

Here you take as your checklist all of the following (each has been already dealt with in previous exercises in this handbook):

- How well you **analysed** the project brief
- How well you **planned** the job
- How well you **managed** your time
- How you **handled** your nerves
- What **unexpected problems** arose and how you handled them
- How you **assessed** how well you were going at various stages and what you did as a result

To act on your assessment

Now you should be able to identify:

- What worked well
- What aspects I now need to work on further

To assess your product

- You need to get the judges' marking scale and procedure and apply this to your project.
- Ideally you should do this by yourself (so you can learn to self assess) and then compare your assessment with someone who acts as judge (your personal trainer and/or someone else).

To act on your assessment

You should now be able to identify:

- What you did well during the project
- What you now need to go back with your personal trainer to work on further.

The final step

The final step is to practise the things you were unhappy with specifically using your personal trainer to help you set these up and to assess how you are going. Set times in which to complete tasks and keep focused.

Repeat the process if you can

Note: WSA projects change in each competition so treat past projects as a guideline only. Be prepared for the unexpected.

In this section: You will be given a series of practical suggestions on how to get your final preparation for the National Finals done.

Before you begin:
You should quickly read through the handbook.

Why bother with final planning? As the National Finals approach it is essential that you put all of your detailed preparation together in a simple manner. You don't want to set off for the National Finals trying to remember things. Don't try to keep it all in your head - write it down in the form of a "To do" list.

This section is of relevance to

You

Here are some of the things previous finalists have identified as important and you might forget:

The final preparation checklist

Refer back to the WSA National Final Checklist on page 33.

How am I going to get there?

Name of Carrier (Plane/ Train/Bus/Car/Other):

Check in Time:

Departure Time:

Address for departure:

Flight/Service Number:

Got my tickets:

What am I going to take:

Clothes:

Toiletries:

Tools/Equipment:

Tickets:

Money:

Any WSA letters/documents:

Where am I staying when I get there?

Address:

Contact(s) name:

Phone:

Fax:

Room:

Fellow finalists who will be with me:

Where/When will I be Competing?

Address:

Building:

Room:

Phone:

Who to contact when I get there:

Date:

Time I'm due there:

Will I be going early to check out the location:

How I'm going to handle it when I first get into the Competition venue?

Have I got a routine I've practised for setting up my work area?

Am I clear on how I am going to analyse the project briefing sheet?

Have I got a technique for getting started if I feel nervous?

Have I got a way of making sure I pace my performance and don't run out of time?

What is going to be the best way to handle each evening of the competition?

Have I worked out how to do this?

Will I be talking about how I am going with someone? Who?

Do I have a plan for relaxing and getting a good night's sleep?

How am I going to get back after the competition?

Name of Carrier (Plane/Train/Bus/Car/Other):

Check in Time:

Departure Time:

Address for departure:

Flight/Service Number:

Got my tickets:



After the finals

Using what you've learnt at work

In this Section: You are asked to look at what you have learnt throughout the whole WSA process and especially to think about how it can be used back in your workplace and in building a successful career for yourself.

Before you begin: Read through the whole handbook, your personal WSA Journal and ask yourself:

- How am I different now?
- What key things have I learnt that are of general use?

Why bother looking at this?

As we went around Australia talking to previous WSA National Finalists, judges, trainers and committee members, it was clear how very closely what they said matched what we had heard employers saying impressed them about their very best young workers.

So at this stage of the WSA process we want to get you to think how what you have learnt in your preparation for the National Finals is actually going to be of benefit to you (and your fellow workers) back in the workplace.

We also want you to work out how these attitudes and way of thinking that are essential to do doing well in a WSA competition are the ones that will ensure your success in your chosen career.

Using what you have learnt back in the workplace
Interview Your Employer and Workmates

To prove to yourself that what we say is true - that the attitudes and ways of thinking we have been trying to help you develop in CLIP are exactly what will make for success in the workplace - we would like you to do a small exercise with one or two workmates or your employer. The exercise is simple.

Ask them to think of the best young worker they've ever worked with and one who wasn't so good. Then ask them to say what was it that the best young worker had or did that the other was lacking.

Simply write down what they say and then compare what they say with the Successful WSA National Finalist Profile on page 28. We would predict that what your workmates say will be pretty similar to what is listed in this summary. Is it?

This section is of relevance to

You
Your personal trainer
Your family
Your employer

Because most of the exercises in the handbook specifically tackle the attitudes and ways of thinking listed in the summary on page 28, you will now, hopefully, be able to see how useful it will be to you at work.

Show the Successful WSA National Finalist Profile but discuss in terms of “Best Worker” with your Employer and see if they agree.

**Interview some previous National Finalists
or Skill Olympians:**

- Ask them to identify anything that they learnt out of their experience with WSA or the Skill Olympics which has helped them in their careers.
- Work out how to apply what you have learnt back at work.

Discuss the following questions with your personal trainer or supervisor at work:

- How can I use the planning skills I've developed in CLIP back at work or to make progress in my career?
- How can I use the analysing skills I've developed in CLIP back at work or to make progress in my career?
- How can I use the self assessment skills I've developed in CLIP back at work or to make progress in my career?
- How can I use attitude I've developed in CLIP back at work or to make progress in my career?
- In the light of my experience with CLIP what do I now want to do with my career?

Performance Enhancement Exercises

You can directly apply what you have learnt to the workplace by completing the following performance enhancement exercises in the back section of your handbook:

- 6** Supporting the ideas of others
- 7** Helping others in the WSA Team and in your workplace
- 12** You are your organisation

Conclusion

Hopefully you have learnt many things as you prepared for the National Finals. We trust that you are now: ■ committed to concentrating on developing your attitude and way of thinking as well as your technical skills and knowledge ■ much wiser about what makes for a top workplace performer and will use this in your own career ■ more aware of yourself - your strengths, weaknesses, how you operate under pressure, how well you can work with others ■ clearer on how important being able to develop a team spirit is and how it can help enhance everyone's individual performance ■ more aware of where you might take yourself in your career

As you can see, the National Work Skill Australia Finals was not the end of your journey - Instead it was the start!

Good luck - we hope you have a successful, productive and enjoyable career and that you contribute to Australia's Workplace Performance in a memorable way.