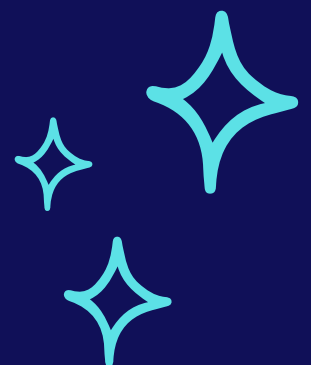




ASPIRE

Coaching Toolkit



This Toolkit belongs to

Introduction

Welcome to the ASPIRE Coaching Toolkit.

As an Employment Coach (EC), the way you interact with job seekers (JS) has a powerful effect. You are the connectors (the glue) that link people with opportunities, services and hope. That's a powerful role.

This Toolkit is designed to support you in your role. It brings together the key ideas and practices from the ASPIRE training and turns them into practical, ready-to-use tools for your day-to-day work with job seekers.

We recognise the challenge of balancing service requirements with the real, human needs of the people you support. This Toolkit aims to help you put a more person-centred approach into practice - making every interaction an opportunity to improve job seeker motivation and progress to their goals.

This Toolkit is part of the *Building Agency and Trust* pilot, built on years of research and co-designed with ECs and job seekers across Australia. By using it within this pilot, you're not only building your own practice, you're contributing to shaping the future of employment services.

What's in the Toolkit

Page 5. Foundations of the ASPIRE model (the WHY)

Page 8. ASPIRE behaviours (the WHAT)

Page 16. Holistic Framework: A conversation guide to support the 'whole person', not just their job search (the HOW)

Page 22. Intention & Action Plan: Templates for self-reflection & intentions on putting behaviours into action (the HOW)

Page 27. Structuring Appointments using ASPIRE: Support to structure behaviours in appointments (the WHEN)

Page 29. Reflection Rubric: A quick tool to help you reflect on how you're showing up and reflect on progress in your practice

Page 34. Peer Support: A worksheet to support embedding ASPIRE into your practice by sharing & reflecting with peers





How to use



During training

Complete activities to build your practice

Flat Textured Corporate
Stand Up Meeting

In appointments

Structure your Appointments with ASPIRE and apply the Holistic Framework to guide conversations and apply your Action Plan



After appointments

Use the *Reflection Rubric* to self-assess and refine your approach



Weekly reflection

Use the *Intention Plan* and *Peer Support* regularly to reflect and build skills together



As a reference

Keep the *ASPIRE Behaviours* handy as a quick guide to hold yourself accountable



Foundations

Why the training
matters

THE WHY



Foundations

Why this training?

The ASPIRE behaviours taught in training are grounded in decades of research and adapted to your work context.

They are directly linked to improving:

- Quality of motivation
- Wellbeing
- Progress on goals for the people you support.

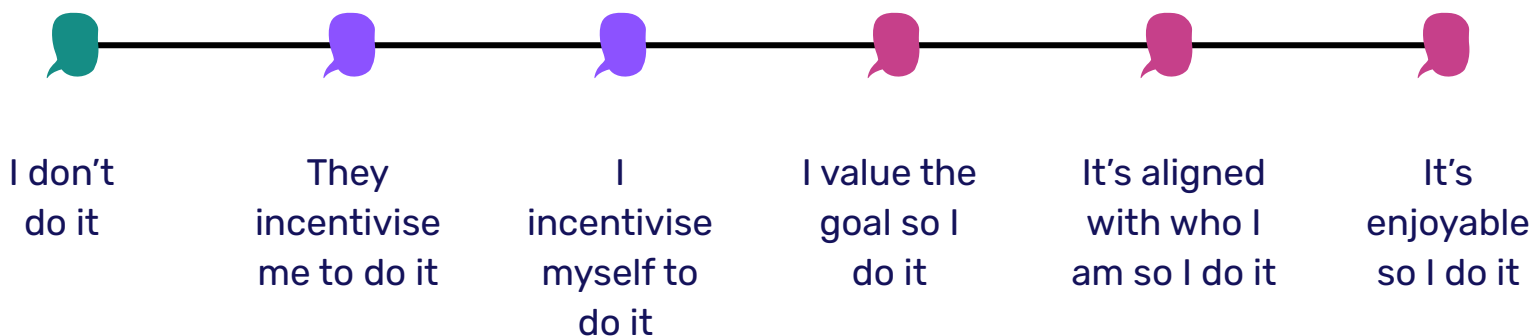
Motivation is on a scale

Motivation isn't one-size-fits-all. It depends on context, situation, and support. Think of motivation on a scale:

Low quality

Controlled

High Quality



Linked to disengagement, burnout and reduced activities

Linked to increased sustained effort, engagement and wellbeing



Foundations

The three needs that drive motivation

High quality motivation thrives when these psychological needs are supported:



Autonomy

feeling choice
& control in
decisions



Competence

feeling capable
through structure,
guidance & feedback



Relatedness

feeling understood,
respected, and
connected

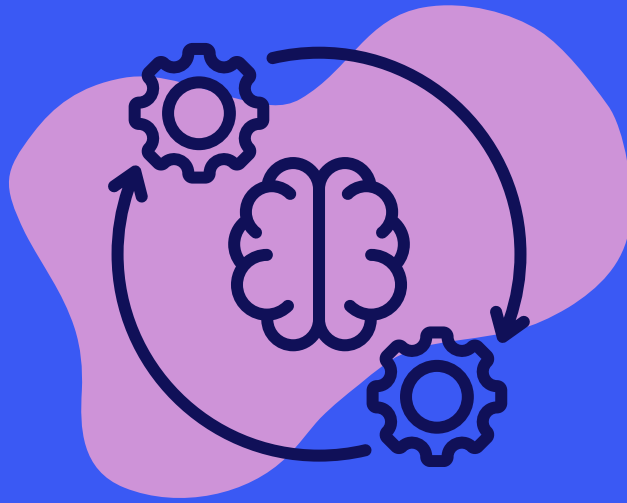
When these needs are met, people engage and progress. If not met, motivation can suffer even if they comply in the short term.

ASPIRE behaviours

This training introduces six behaviours:

- Each behaviour is designed to support the three psychological needs
- The intent is to take the job seeker's perspective and adopt a truly person-centred approach
- Evidence shows these behaviours improve motivation, job-search quality and re-employment outcomes.

Every conversation is a chance to use ASPIRE to move each interaction towards high quality motivation on the scale.



ASPIRE

Behaviours

THE WHAT



ASPIRE

Align with what matters to JS

Connect support to the job seeker's personal interests, goals, and needs.

- Acknowledge holistic needs (not just job search).
- Show how each step is relevant and meaningful.

Structure guidance & feedback

Create clear, mutual expectations and provide timely feedback.

- Keep guidance practical and confidence-building.
- Link feedback directly to their goals.

Provide real choices

Offer genuine, simple options that let job seekers decide.

- Encourage them to express preferences.
- Make choices meaningful enough to foster ownership.

Invite participation

Use language that feels collaborative, not directive.

- Phrase requests so it's easy for them to say "yes."
- Show willingness to co-create their journey.

Relay the 'why'

Always explain the purpose behind requests or activities.

- Link each task to a reasonable "why."
- Show how it connects to their values or future goals.

Express understanding

Give space for job seekers to share openly.

- Validate their feelings and experiences, even the negative ones.
- Show empathy before moving to next steps.

Structure guidance & feedback

Quotes from jobseekers!

“Adapt my CV to the job, not just tell me to redo it.”
“Role-play interviews so I feel prepared.”
“Check in with my goals every 3–6 months so I know I’m on track.”

Use this space to jot down strategies you want to try in future sessions.



A series of horizontal blue lines for writing, with a faint watermark of a speech bubble containing three stars and a thumbs-up icon on the right side.



The Holistic Framework

THE HOW

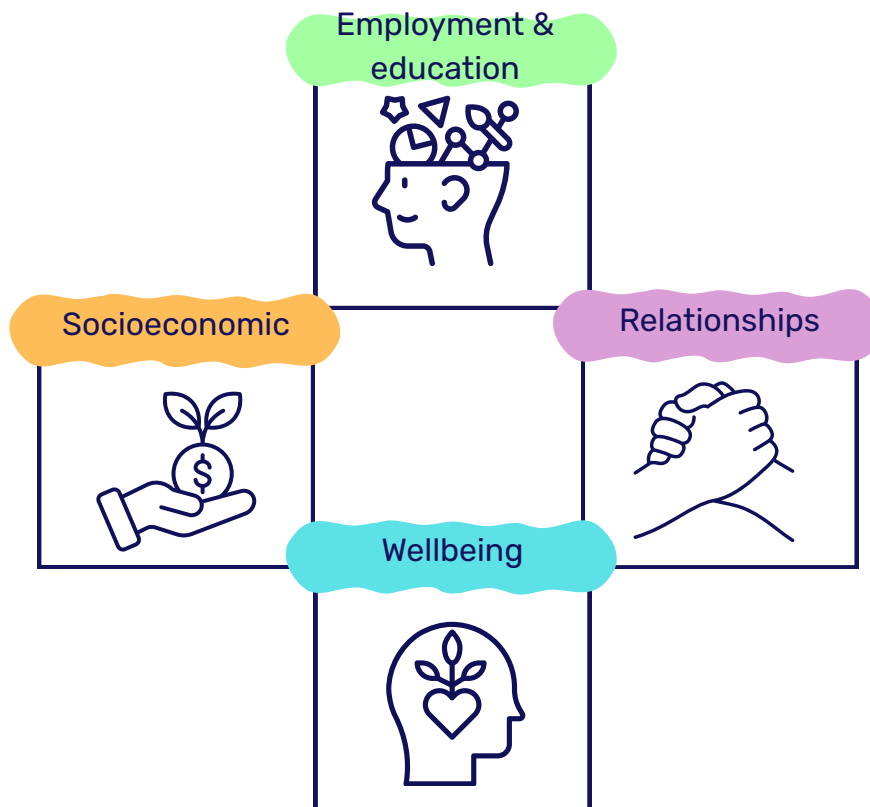
Holistic Framework

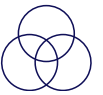
Seeing the whole person, not just the job seeker

Job seekers told us:

*I wish my EC had **acknowledged my circumstances outside of work**. It would have built trust and made communication easier. If they had done that, I think the options and support they offered would have been more suitable for me*

This section is designed to help you support your client in all the areas of their life that relate to their employment journey. Every job seeker brings with them strengths, ambitions, and challenges across different parts of life.





Employment & education

Job seekers want career support that feels personal, ambitious and real

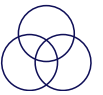
This is how you can motivate job seekers:

- Ask: *"What are you most interested in?"*
- Take ambitions seriously – then help map the steps
- Tailor support to their strengths, interests and barriers
- Provide practical support (clothes for interviews, travel vouchers, training)
- Show belief: *"I can see you've got skills in..."*

What skills do you want to build on, and where would you like those skills to take you? We can map out where you are now and where you'd like to be.

What are your aspirations? Let's explore some options together. We can try this and see how it feels to you. How does this process feel so far?





Socioeconomic factors

Everyday needs (like food, travel, or safe housing) if not met can make a job search harder

This is how you can motivate job seekers:

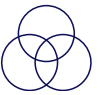
- Ask gently: *"Is there anything outside of work making things harder right now?"*
- Share practical resources (bulletin of food banks, free clothes, vouchers)
- Adapt check-ins: offer choice on combined/separate vocational vs. non-vocational calls
- Keep assessments strength-based, not deficit-focused

I want to look at you as a whole person, not just the employment side of things. Some topics can feel uncomfortable to talk about, and that's okay, you can share only what you feel comfortable sharing.

If petrol, uniforms, or anything else is getting in the way, you can ask me directly. That's what these supports are for!



Wellbeing



Job seekers appreciate when ECs recognise wellbeing and offer support at a level that feels comfortable for them

This is how you can motivate job seekers:

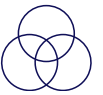
- Ask: *"How do you want me to support you with wellbeing?"*
- Acknowledge stress: a job search can impact mental health
- Respect boundaries – they don't have to share
- Offer options: talk here, or referral elsewhere
- Link to services (mental health, housing, language)
- Protect privacy – avoid oversharing in open-plan spaces

When you think about your wellbeing, what helps you feel resourced: physically, mentally, or through your community? How can we make sure your job search adds to that instead of taking away from it?

Some jobs can support wellbeing, while others can make it harder. How do you want me to factor your wellbeing into the kinds of work or training we look at together?



Relationships



Trust and connection are the foundation of progress

This is how you can motivate job seekers:

- Be approachable: open body language, warm tone of voice
- Relay the reason: always explain why you're asking
- Build trust gradually: start light, go deeper over time
- Validate feelings: *"It makes sense you'd feel discouraged"*
- Respect confidentiality
- Stay professional but human – friendly, not intrusive

Who or what in your life helps you feel supported right now? Would you like me to connect you with any local services or community groups that could add to that support?

Are there community events, groups, or services you'd like to know more about? I can share what's happening locally if that would be useful.





Intention & Action Plan

THE HOW



Action Plan

The purpose of this plan is to consider how to apply ASPIRE behaviours, considering how to overcome barriers.

What behaviour(s) will I practice first?

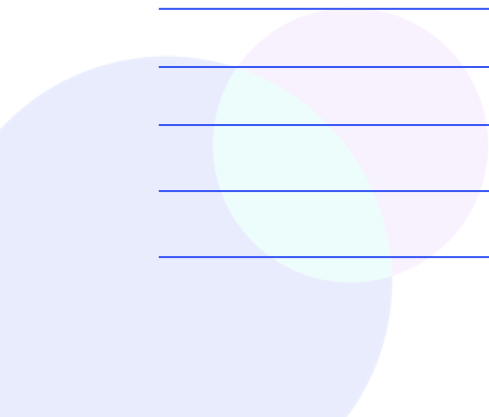


What barriers do I expect in practice?



Steps I will take to overcome barriers (small, specific things I will try in my sessions)







Structuring Appointments with ASPIRE

THE WHEN

Structuring appointments

This template is a guide, not a script. Use it to bring the six ASPIRE behaviours into every stage of your appointments.

Think of it as a menu you can draw from to support autonomy, competence, and relatedness in your job seekers.

- 1 **Start with connection**
 - Greet warmly, check in on their week
 - Acknowledge their effort or progress
- 2 **Set the agenda together**
 - Ask what they want to focus on
 - Support autonomy by framing tasks as opportunities
- 3 **Explore & reflect**
 - *“What’s important to you right now?”*
 - Perspective-taking
- 4 **Build competence**
 - Break down goals into achievable steps
 - Inform with feedback and encouragement
- 5 **Plan & problem solve together**
 - Brainstorm barriers and supports 
 - Resolve collaboratively
 - Provide a task for the job seeker when doing admin

Use the Holistic Framework
- 6 **Close with care & commitment**
 - Summarise progress and mutual next steps
 - *“Was today’s conversation useful for you?”*



Reflection Rubric



Reflection rubric

The rubrics are designed to help you reflect on your practice using ASPIRE behaviours. They are not about achieving a perfect score, they are about noticing where you are now and identifying small adjustments that will help you move toward a more motivating style.

1. Rubric with examples

- Use this first rubric to understand what each level looks like in practice.
- Each behaviour (Align, Structure, Provide, Invite, Relay, Express) is described at three levels:
 - 1 – Not yet
 - 2 – Developing
 - 3 – Strong practice
- Read through the examples and notice which descriptions feel most like you right now.

2. Blank Rubric – Training

- During training, use this blank version to self-assess your current practice.
- Write down your own examples and add notes if there are specific things you want to try differently.

3. Blank Rubric – On the job

- Use this version later (e.g. after training or the follow-up session) to reflect on your progress.
- Compare it with your training rubric to see where you've shifted.
- Use your reflections to set new goals in your *Intention* → *Action Plan*.

Example



ASPIRE Practice	Not yet	Developing	Strong practice
A – Align with what matters	I focused on compliance tasks without exploring the person’s own interests.	I asked about interests/goals but didn’t fully connect them to opportunities.	I explored their dream job/values and tailored options to align with what matters to them.
S – Structure guidance & feedback	I gave instructions without explaining next steps or checking understanding.	I broke tasks into smaller steps but didn’t always explain why or how it builds skills.	I co-designed steps with the job seeker, explained the purpose of each, and gave feedback that built confidence.
P – Provide real choices	I told the job seeker what to do with little or no choice.	I offered some options but leaned toward one preferred choice.	I provided meaningful options (e.g. call format, support type) and let the job seeker decide.
I – Invite participation	I led the conversation without checking how the job seeker wanted to be involved.	I asked for input but didn’t always act on it.	I actively encouraged participation, co-created the plan, and adjusted based on their input.
R – Relay the ‘why’	I asked questions or set tasks without explaining why.	I gave reasons but mostly focused on compliance (“because it’s required”).	I explained the why in a way that connected to the job seeker’s goals, values, or opportunities.
E – Express understanding	I moved past emotions or challenges without acknowledging them.	I acknowledged feelings but quickly redirected to tasks.	I listened with empathy, named the feeling (“It sounds like you’re discouraged”), and validated it before moving forward.

Training



ASPIRE Practice	Not yet	Developing	Strong practice
A – Align with what matters			
S – Structure guidance & feedback			
P – Provide real choices			
I – Invite participation			
R – Relay the ‘why’			
E – Express understanding			

On the job



ASPIRE Practice	Not yet	Developing	Strong practice
A – Align with what matters			
S – Structure guidance & feedback			
P – Provide real choices			
I – Invite participation			
R – Relay the ‘why’			
E – Express understanding			



Peer Support

