

REDUCING FINANCIAL STRESS, UNLOCKING WORKFORCE PERFORMANCE



How Huntly Joinery Window Systems strengthened confidence at work and at home

Huntly Joinery Window Systems has built its reputation on precision, craftsmanship, and reliability, delivering high-quality joinery solutions across New Zealand. Like many manufacturing environments, success depends not just on technical skill, but on clear communication, strong processes, and a workforce that is confident, engaged, and focused.

Recognising this, Huntly Joinery Window Systems partnered with Aspire2 Workplace Communication to deliver a tailored programme designed to strengthen communication, problem-solving, and financial capability across its team.

What emerged was something more powerful than a skills programme alone. It became a catalyst for confidence, both inside and outside the workplace.

The Challenge: When Pressure Sits Outside the Workplace

Huntly Joinery Window Systems identified several familiar operational challenges. Employees were not always escalating issues early, were sometimes unclear on processes, and lacked confidence to ask questions or confirm understanding.

Alongside this, there was a clear recognition that financial literacy was an important capability for the team. Understanding payslips, KiwiSaver, and budgeting had already been identified as part of the programme's scope, reflecting the reality that financial wellbeing plays a role in overall performance.

What became more evident throughout the programme, however, was the extent to which financial pressure was influencing day-to-day work. For many employees, uncertainty around money was not contained to life outside of work. It was affecting focus, decision-making, and confidence on the job.

As one learner reflected:

"It's taught me the dangers of overspending... it gave me a summary of how much money I spend in a month. It was pretty crazy."

Rather than being a supporting topic, financial literacy emerged as a powerful lever for change. As employees gained clarity and control over their personal finances, there was a noticeable shift in confidence, engagement, and contribution at work.

This reinforced a simple but important truth. You cannot separate what is happening at home from how people show up at work. Addressing both, in a practical and relevant way, is where the real impact is created.

Programme Focus: Building Capability That Carries Across Life

The programme was designed around core communication, literacy, and problem-solving skills, with a strong emphasis

on financial literacy as a practical and immediate lever for change. Key focus areas included:

- Communicating clearly and confidently across teams
- Reading, understanding, and completing workplace documentation
- Developing problem-solving and continuous improvement thinking
- Understanding payslips, KiwiSaver, and budgeting
- Building wellbeing, self-awareness, and resilience

This aligned directly with Huntly Joinery Window Systems business needs to improve communication, process adherence, and team effectiveness while also addressing the underlying pressures that influence performance.

The Shift: Confidence with Money, Confidence at Work

One of the most significant outcomes of the programme was the shift in how employees understood and managed their finances.

Learners developed practical budgeting skills, gained clarity on their payslips, and began making more informed financial decisions.

"I have learned the correct and right management of my financial arrangement... budgeting my personal needs."

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"I have learned how KiwiSaver works... learning how to manage my income, prioritising needs then wants."

"I've learnt how to use the Sorted.org app... this has helped me choose the correct fund for my home and my retirement."

These were not abstract gains. They translated directly into reduced stress, clearer thinking, and stronger engagement at work.

As one participant put it simply:

"Everything has a cost... it taught me to make better financial decisions."

This is where the impact became most visible. When financial uncertainty reduced, confidence increased. When confidence increased, communication improved. And when communication improved, performance followed.

The Broader Impact: Stronger Communication, Better Decisions

While financial literacy was a standout theme, it sat within a broader shift in capability across the team.

- **More confident communication**

Employees became more willing to speak up, ask questions, and contribute ideas.

"I've learnt to speak up and say what I think is right and listen."

- **Improved teamwork and internal service**

There was a noticeable lift in how teams worked together and supported each other.

"I'm speaking more clearly and having more patience... listening more."

- **Stronger problem-solving capability**

Learners adopted structured approaches to identifying and solving issues.

"I look to understanding the problem first... before jumping in and fixing."

- **Greater self-awareness and wellbeing**

Participants also reported to an improved mindset, motivation, and personal confidence.

"I know my worth and am happy about who I am."

One learner even shared a tangible life outcome:

"I made an offer on a new piece of land."

These outcomes reinforce a key principle. Skills do not sit in isolation. When people grow in one area of life, it carries into others.

A Lasting Shift: Capability That Stays

Perhaps the most valuable outcome is what remains beyond the programme itself.

A cohort of employees who are more confident, more self-aware, and more willing to step forward. A shared language around communication and problem-solving. And a stronger foundation for continuous improvement.

As the tutor reflected, the programme opened new lines of communication and built stronger connections across the team.

At Huntly Joinery Window Systems, the impact is clear.

When you invest in practical skills that matter to people's real lives, you do more than improve performance. You build confidence, reduce pressure, and create a workforce that is better equipped to contribute, both at work and beyond it.

Key business impacts:

✓ More confident and effective communication

✓ Stronger problem-solving capability

✓ Improved internal teamwork

✓ Greater financial confidence

✓ A shift in mindset

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