

Generation gap covered

BRIDGING the gap between employers and Gen Y apprentices was the focus of a seminar held in Tamworth this week.

The seminar was developed after research revealed the completion rate of apprentices in some trade and technical areas had dropped to as low as 45 per cent, and averaged about 50 per cent.

Presenters of the "Knowing me, knowing you" seminar, the Australian Business Limited (ABL) Apprenticeships Centre, said the statistics were unsatisfactory, considering the investment and commitment that went into training apprentices.

General manager of the ABL Apprenticeships Centre, Andrew Williams, told *The Leader* more than 50 apprentices, trainees and their employers had been invited to the seminar, which focused primarily on the different way employers and their Gen Y employees communicated.

"Managing the relationship between Gen-



MENTORING: From left, Tamworth Regional Council HR manager Lauren Whitten, trainee Luke Ayres, ABL Apprenticeships general manager Andrew Williams, local apprentices co-ordinator Libbi Redden and TRC trainee Ellyse Kennedy at the seminar on Wednesday. Photo: **Geoff O'Neill** 250511GOF02

eration Y apprentices and their managers is one of the areas of interest from employers," Mr Williams said.

"It is one of the most important factors in making sure apprentices are engaged and motivated."

Mr Williams said by helping employers and apprentices understand that the differences between their generations were

exactly that, they hoped to help create better understanding and relationships.

"Our basic message today is: different isn't wrong, it's just different," Mr Williams said.

Practical tips and tools covering topics including communication, stress and shutting out distractions were also a focus of the seminar.

Olympian talks stress

OLYMPIC basketball silver-medallist Natalie Porter talked to the local apprentices about stress.

She was one of three guest speakers at the "Knowing me, knowing you" seminar on Wednesday.

She was accompanied to Tamworth by Australian Olympic sports psychologist Gavin Freeman and psychologist Danielle Buckley.

Miss Porter encouraged Gen Y apprentices to maintain focus, and taught them a number of ways of working through tough situations and shutting out distractions.

As part of her presentation, Miss Porter allowed apprentices to look closely at her silver medal, and spoke about the importance of working to achieve a goal.