

Middle School Employability Skills Curriculum



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Middle School Employability Skills Curriculum

This program will help participants understand the 20 primary employability skills needed to get a job and enjoy a successful career. Participants will learn how to improve these skills and apply them with their job interviewers, coworkers, managers, and customers.

Author



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Curriculum Structure

The *Middle School Employability Skills Curriculum* comprises the following lessons. Approximate lesson times are included.

Lesson	Title	Approximate Time
1	Communication	60-90 minutes
2	Problem Solving	60-90 minutes
3	Interpersonal Skills	60-90 minutes
4	Responsibility	60-90 minutes
5	Teamwork	60-90 minutes
6	Work Ethic	60-90 minutes
7	Listening	60-90 minutes
8	Respect	60-90 minutes
9	Critical Thinking	60-90 minutes
10	Time Management	60-90 minutes
11	Professionalism	60-90 minutes
12	Decision-Making and Goal Setting	60-90 minutes
13	Honesty and Integrity	60-90 minutes
14	Team Building	60-90 minutes
15	Conflict Resolution	60-90 minutes
16	Creativity	60-90 minutes
17	Motivation	60-90 minutes
18	Flexibility	60-90 minutes
19	Self-Confidence	60-90 minutes
20	Stress Management	60-90 minutes
	Total	20-30 hours

Lesson Structure

Each lesson begins with a Lesson Overview, Lesson Objectives, and a Lesson at a Glance table, which lists the lesson activities, materials required, suggested preparation steps, and approximate class time.

Lesson Sections

The actual lesson follows the overview, which will contain some of the sections described below. Most lessons are designed to be completed within 45-60 minutes.

FOCUS

Every lesson begins with a FOCUS activity intended to capture participants' attention. This may be in the form of a small or large class discussion, game, review of previous lesson information, or demonstration. During this activity, participants are introduced to the topic of the lesson.

LEARN

The LEARN activity in each lesson varies in its presentation mode. It may be a slide presentation, group activity, or demonstration.

REVIEW

The majority of lessons end with a REVIEW activity intended to briefly review the lesson's key messages or main points.

Lesson One – Communication

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about communication skills and their importance in the workplace. Participants will then practice their communication skills using the Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Learn about communication skills and their importance in the workplace
- Discover the different types of communication skills
- Explore ways to improve their communication skills

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Communication Introduction Scenario - Answer Key</i> • <i>Communication Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Communication Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Communication</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Communication</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Communication Quiz</i> • <i>Communication Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Communication Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Communication Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the <i>Communication</i> scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Communication Scenario</i> in their workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson One – Communication

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Communication Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of communication skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Communication Introduction Scenario - Answer Key*
- *Communication Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Communication Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Communication Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Communication Introduction Scenario

Makiyah and Jason are two coworkers at a local grocery store. They both work in the produce department and are responsible for ensuring the fruits and vegetables are fresh and well-stocked. One day, Makiyah noticed that some of the produce was starting to spoil and decided to speak to Jason about it.

“Hey Jason, have you noticed that some of the produce is starting to go bad?” Makiyah asked.

“No, I haven’t. Thanks for letting me know, Makiyah. We should probably check the shelves and remove anything that’s no longer fresh,” Jason replied.

“Great idea. I’ll take care of that while you restock the shelves with fresh produce,” Makiyah said.

“Sounds good. Thanks for bringing this to my attention,” Jason said, and they both went on to complete their tasks.

Makiyah and Jason’s communication skills were key to ensuring that the produce department continued to run smoothly. By communicating effectively, they were able to identify a problem and work together to solve it quickly.

REFLECT on the situation:

Why is it important to communicate effectively in the workplace?

What are some examples of effective communication skills between Makiyah and Jason?

Can you think of a time when you had to communicate with someone to solve a problem? How did it go?

After reading this story, how do you think you can improve your communication skills?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Communication Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Makiyah and Jason are two coworkers at a local grocery store. They both work in the produce department and are responsible for ensuring the fruits and vegetables are fresh and well-stocked. One day, Makiyah noticed that some of the produce was starting to spoil and decided to speak to Jason about it.

“Hey Jason, have you noticed that some of the produce is starting to go bad?” Makiyah asked.

“No, I haven’t. Thanks for letting me know, Makiyah. We should probably check the shelves and remove anything that’s no longer fresh,” Jason replied.

“Great idea. I’ll take care of that while you restock the shelves with fresh produce,” Makiyah said.

“Sounds good. Thanks for bringing this to my attention,” Jason said, and they both went on to complete their tasks.

Makiyah and Jason’s communication skills were key to ensuring that the produce department continued to run smoothly. By communicating effectively, they were able to identify a problem and work together to solve it quickly.

REFLECT on the situation:

Why is it important to communicate effectively in the workplace?

Communicating effectively in the workplace ensures that the workday runs smoothly and all tasks are completed. Effective communication also increases employee morale and productivity while building a positive working environment.

What are some examples of effective communication skills between Makiyah and Jason?

It was good that Makiyah recognized some of the produce was starting to spoil and spoke with Jason about it, rather than assuming he already knew. It was also respectful the way Jason spoke to Makiyah, thanking her for bringing it to his attention.

Think of a time when you had to communicate with someone to solve a problem? How did it go?

There is no incorrect answer as each participant will have a different story to tell.

After reading this story, how do you think you can improve your communication skills?

These answers will also vary depending on the participant.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson One – Communication

LEARN: Communication Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to the several types of communication skills needed in the workplace to communicate with their job interviewers, customers, coworkers, and managers.

Materials:

- *Communication* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Communication

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is communication.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Learn about communication skills and their importance in the workplace
- Discover several types of communication skills
- Explore ways to improve your communication skills

Slide 3: What Are Communication Skills?

Communication is defined as “the transmission of information.”

Communication skills are what you use when relaying and receiving information. This involves speaking, listening, empathizing, and observing.

While you use these skills in your everyday life, communicating clearly and effectively is an essential and valuable skill, first to get a job and then to use these skills in the workplace.

Slide 4: The Importance of Communication Skills in the Workplace

Employers constantly include communication as a top skill they look for in job postings.

Communication skills are important in the workplace to provide excellent customer service and communicate effectively with your managers and coworkers.

Effective communication skills help build and maintain relationships, achieve personal and professional goals, and resolve conflicts. Without communication, businesses would not survive.

Slide 5: Types of Communication Skills

While there are more types of communication skills than these, the following are what will generally help you succeed in the workplace.

- Verbal
- Nonverbal
- Active listening
- Written
- Visual

Slide 6: Verbal Communication

Verbal communication involves communicating by speaking. You should be sure to speak clearly, at the right tone for the environment, and to choose the correct words when speaking. If the environment is loud, you should speak in a louder tone, and if the environment is quiet, you should talk in a softer voice. Choosing the correct words when speaking involves using words that fit your workplace. You do not want to use slang words or words that others may not understand.

Communicate with a positive, friendly attitude, keep an open mind, and ask questions or repeat back what the person said to show you are listening.

Be respectful when verbally communicating with others by allowing them to speak without interrupting. The first place you can show you have excellent verbal communication skills is in your job interview. Whether the interview is in person, online, or by phone, this is the time to demonstrate you can speak clearly and confidently with the interviewer and that you have a friendly demeanor.

Slide 7: Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is achieved through facial expressions, eye contact, body language, posture, and gestures. You can learn a lot about a person by their nonverbal communication. For example, when a person has their arms crossed in front of them and a scowl on their face, they are most likely angry.

Use positive nonverbal communication by:

- Maintaining eye contact with others
- Smiling when appropriate
- Nodding your head to emphasize you are listening

Nonverbal communication is also noted by the interviewer during your job interview.

They will look to see that you maintain eye contact, smile at appropriate times, sit upright, and are not distracted by your cell phone or other device.

Instructor Note: The next slide is a short video on nonverbal communication during a job interview.

Slide 8: Video

Instructor Note: After the video, you can move on to the next slide unless participants have any questions. Video link for reference: https://youtu.be/C_nl9FIF5Yc

Slide 9: Active Listening

Active listening, also called mindful listening, requires you to pay close attention to the person you are communicating with.

Active listening builds trust with the person and includes verbal and nonverbal communication. As you listen, focus on the person and avoid distractions like cell phones.

After the person is done speaking, you can ask questions or re-phrase what they said to make sure you understood them correctly.

Active listening also plays a big part during a job interview. The interviewer will often ask you questions to see if you are paying attention. If you do not have good listening skills during your interview, the interviewer may question how attentive of an employee you might be.

Slide 10: Written Communication

Written communication can be as important as verbal communication in the workplace. It is important to write clearly and legibly to avoid confusion among your coworkers or supervisor, which can impact teamwork and productivity.

If you are in a customer service position, poor written communication skills can

damage the company's reputation and make you appear uneducated.

Written communication skills are also essential when writing your resume, cover letter, and job applications. If your spelling and grammar are poor, employers will pass you over for another candidate. It is especially important that you do not use abbreviations or slang that you might use with your friends. While that is fine within your friend circle, employers do not want employees who cannot form complete sentences or who do not use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

A well-written resume shows the employer that you are professional and have strong written communication skills.

Slide 11: Visual Communication

Visual communication refers to communication with the help of visual aids, such as:

- Presentation software (PowerPoint, Google Slides, Visme, Canva)
- Graphs and charts
- Whiteboards
- Drawings
- Electronic aids
- Posters

Visual communication is a creative tool used to get a message across in a powerful way. Sometimes, visual communication can be more powerful in relaying a message than verbal, nonverbal, or written communication. Visual communication can be so effective because the information can be processed by our brains 60,000 times faster than text.

Slide 12: How to Improve Your Communication Skills

1. Use a strong, confident speaking voice. You can also practice speaking in front of your friends and family, asking for their feedback.
2. Practice actively listening. Pay special attention to what the speaker is saying

and do not interrupt while they are talking.

3. Be aware of your nonverbal communication. Are your arms crossed or hanging loosely at your side? Do you roll your eyes when someone says something you do not agree with, or do you look directly into the speaker's eyes? Do you have a smile or a frown on your face when being spoken to? All these gestures and body language will be observed by the person you are communicating with.
 4. Think before you speak. Once you say something, you cannot take it back.
 5. Improve your grammar and spelling by using a tutor, taking English classes, reading books on spelling and grammar, or taking a writing course.
 6. Proofread before sending any written communication. There are free editing tools you can use to double-check your work before sending it.
 7. Take public speaking classes. There are paid and free courses that will help improve your public speaking skills.
 8. Enroll in a communication course designed to improve your workplace communication skills.
2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the workbook.

Activity 1: Write a Cover Letter

Using what they have learned about written communication, participants will create a cover letter using the template provided in the student workbook.

Students should write the cover letter as if they were applying for their dream job and

have the education and experience to apply for it! They will use the space in this template to compose their letter.

Activity 2: Prepare for a Job Interview

Participants learned about the importance of verbal communication in this lesson. They will participate in a mock interview. First, have them prepare by writing out answers to the interview questions in their student workbook. Then, assign groups of three. One will be the interviewer, one will be the interviewee, and the third participant will provide honest, constructive feedback on where participants could improve and where they did well in the interview. Each participant in the group will rotate through each position in this activity.

Activity 3: Nonverbal Communication Brainstorm Activity

Consider the many nonverbal ways in which people communicate. Have participants access this activity in their student workbook.

Participants will brainstorm and list all the different nonverbal ways they communicate thoughts and feelings, like crossed arms. As participants list each one, have them identify one way they think this nonverbal communication could be interpreted. For example, crossed arms could look disagreeable or not approachable.

If time permits, participants may act out one of their nonverbal communications listed in their worksheet and discuss impressions and impact on communication.

Lesson One – Communication

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Communication Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a communication scenario.

Materials:

1. Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
2. Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
3. *Communication Quiz*
4. *Communication Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Communication Quiz* to participants. Give them two to three minutes to work on it.

2. Have participant self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Communication scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. The instructor(s) can assess participants' communication skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Communication Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What is visual communication?
 - a. Communication in written form
 - b. Communication used with visual aids
 - c. Communication using body language
 - d. Communication using verbal cues
2. What two communication skills are used when actively listening to someone speak?
 - a. Patient education and compassion skills
 - b. Presentation and patient education skills
 - c. Written and nonverbal communication
 - d. Verbal and nonverbal communication
3. What is another term for active listening?
 - a. Mindful listening
 - b. Engaged listening
 - c. Critical listening
 - d. Intrigued listening
4. What type of communication is achieved through facial expressions and body language?
 - a. Visual
 - b. Verbal
 - c. Written
 - d. Nonverbal
5. How can you be respectful when verbally communicating with others?
 - a. Do not speak unless spoken to
 - b. Do not interrupt
 - c. Do not maintain eye contact
 - d. Do not smile

Communication Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What is visual communication?
 - a. Communication in written form
 - b. Communication used with visual aids**
 - c. Communication using body language
 - d. Communication using verbal cues

2. What two communication skills are used when actively listening to someone speak?
 - a. Patient education and compassion skills
 - b. Presentation and patient education skills
 - c. Written and nonverbal communication
 - d. Verbal and nonverbal communication**

3. What is another term for active listening?
 - a. Mindful listening**
 - b. Engaged listening
 - c. Critical listening
 - d. Intrigued listening

4. What type of communication is achieved through facial expressions and body language?
 - a. Visual
 - b. Verbal
 - c. Written
 - d. Nonverbal**

5. How can you be respectful when verbally communicating with others?
 - a. Do not speak unless spoken to
 - b. Do not interrupt**
 - c. Do not maintain eye contact
 - d. Do not smile

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Lesson Two – Problem Solving

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of problem solving and its importance in the workplace. Additionally, they will discover the role of teamwork in problem solving, and the process for solving problems. Participants will then practice their problem-solving skills using the Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define problem solving and its importance in the workplace
- Identify the skills needed to solve problems
- Discover the role of teamwork in problem solving
- Learn about the problem-solving process

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Problem Solving Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Problem Solving Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Problem Solving Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Problem Solving</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Problem Solving</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • <i>Problem-Solving Quiz</i> • <i>Problem-Solving Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Problem-Solving Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Problem-Solving Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Problem Solving scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Problem-Solving Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Two – Problem Solving

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Problem-Solving Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of problem-solving skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Problem Solving Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Problem Solving Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Skills Problem Solving Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Problem Solving Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* page available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Problem Solving Introduction Scenario

Liam and Ava work as baristas at a local coffee shop along with their supervisor. They are worried about the decrease in customers, which is affecting the shop's revenue and putting their jobs at risk. Lately, they have noticed a trend of customers not showing up for their orders, which has worsened over the past month.

At their recent meeting, their supervisor expressed concern and warned them about the possibility of downsizing the staff due to the monetary loss. When the last customer failed to show up, Liam and Ava began discussing ways to prevent further revenue loss and protect their jobs. They are concerned that, since they are the newest hires, they might be the first to be laid off if the situation does not improve.

REFLECT on the situation:

What are the challenges faced by the coffee shop and its employees due to the decrease in customers?

What ideas can Liam and Ava come up with to help them keep their jobs?

Do you think it is important for employees to collaborate and come up with solutions during challenging times in the workplace? Explain your answer.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Problem Solving Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Liam and Ava work as baristas at a local coffee shop along with their supervisor. They are worried about the decrease in customers, which is affecting the shop's revenue and putting their jobs at risk. Lately, they have noticed a trend of customers not showing up for their orders, which has worsened over the past month.

At their recent meeting, their supervisor expressed concern and warned them about the possibility of downsizing the staff due to the monetary loss. When the last customer failed to show up, Liam and Ava began discussing ways to prevent further revenue loss and protect their jobs. They are concerned that, since they are the newest hires, they might be the first to be laid off if the situation does not improve.

REFLECT on the situation:

What are the challenges faced by the coffee shop and its employees due to the decrease in customers?

Loss of revenue, staff cuts, risk of the business closing

What ideas can Liam and Ava come up with to help them keep their jobs?

They can suggest creating a marketing plan to attract new customers, having the customers pay for their order when the order is placed, increasing their social media presence to attract new customers, and offering a rewards program to current customers.

Do you think it is important for employees to collaborate and come up with solutions during challenging times in the workplace? Explain your answer.

This is a personal opinion question, so there is no wrong answer.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Two – Problem Solving

LEARN: Problem Solving Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to skills needed to solve problems in the workplace successfully.

Materials:

- *Problem Solving* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Problem Solving

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is problem solving.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define problem solving and its importance in the workplace
- Identify the skills needed to solve problems
- Discover the role of teamwork in problem solving
- Learn about the problem-solving process

Slide 3: What Is Problem Solving?

Problem solving is the act of defining a problem and determining the cause of the problem.

Once the problem is defined, problem solving involves identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution and implementing a solution.

Slide 4: Why Is Problem Solving Important in the Workplace?

Problem-solving skills are used in every type of profession. Some professions may allow time to solve a problem. However, in some work environments, problems may need to be solved very quickly.

Having the skills to identify a problem and respond quickly is highly sought out by employers.

Slide 5: Video

Instructor Note: Have participants watch this short (2:01) video on problem solving in the workplace. Be sure to point out that every industry has workplace problems that must be solved.

Unless there are questions after the video, you can move on to the next slide. Video link reference:

<https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/ket-workready-6/problem-solving/>

Slide 6: What Skills Are Needed to Solve Problems?

The skills needed to be good at problem solving include:

- Critical thinking
- Team building
- Creativity
- Brainstorming
- Analysis
- Active listening
- Communication

Slide 7: The Role of Teamwork in Problem Solving

In the workplace, there are many benefits to problem solving within a team. When working as a team, team members are encouraged to speak their minds as their opinions are valued.

Coming to a solution as a team builds stronger teams, increases confidence, and decreases stress, as there are others to help solve the problem.

When there is a problem the team must solve, they can combine intellects with others who may be highly trained or have more experience.

Slide 8: The Problem-Solving Process

1. Identify and define the problem
2. Analyze the problem
3. Develop solutions
4. Analyze and select one solution
5. Implement the solution
6. Evaluate the solution

In the workplace, many problems can be solved following this problem-solving process. However, some problems might require a faster solution, such as when a toilet overflows or someone has a medical emergency. In that case, these steps would not exactly be followed as a quicker resolution is needed. For the overflowing toilet example, you would identify and define the problem (overflowing toilet) and then jump to developing and implementing a solution (turn the valve at the base of the toilet off to stop the flow of water to the toilet). For the medical emergency example, you would identify that someone is having a medical emergency, and you would solve the problem by calling 911.

Slide 9: Step 1: Identify and Define the Problem

Before you can solve a problem, you must identify and define the problem. Once you identify the problem, you can go about solving it more easily and efficiently. For example, suppose you work as a server at a restaurant and are consistently having food returned to the kitchen because it is cold. You have identified and defined the problem – food is consistently cold. Now you must analyze the problem.

Even though it may not seem like it is a problem you need to address because you are not cooking the food, it could affect your tips because customers associate you with their food.

Slide 10: Step 2: Analyze the Problem

Determine how the problem developed and the impact of the problem. At this point, the problem is impacting the quality of your customers' food.

Then, speak with the chef or your manager to analyze why the food might be consistently cold and returned to the kitchen.

Perhaps the meat thermometer is broken, the microwave is not functioning properly, or the food is not being cooked long enough.

Slide 11: Step 3: Develop Solutions

Now is the time to brainstorm alone or with a team to develop all possible solutions. It is always better to brainstorm with a team as there will be a longer list of possible solutions with more input.

However, in a situation like this, it might only take one or two people to develop a solution. Some ideas that might be brainstormed for this scenario include evaluating the equipment used to heat food, calibrating thermometers to ensure they are functioning correctly, and checking the temperature of all food before it leaves the kitchen.

Slide 12: Step 4: Analyze and Select a Solution

After producing all possible solutions, choose one to implement. Suppose the restaurant decided their microwave was not functioning properly and concluded it was cheaper to cook over an open flame. In that case, they would start cooking over an open flame to regulate the temperature better.

Slide 13: Step 5: Implement the Solution

Create a plan of action to decide how you will implement your solution. Determine the steps you must take to move forward, then execute your plan of action.

Change in any business takes planning, patience, and persistence, as change does not happen overnight. However, in some situations, such as the scenario we have been referencing, change can happen immediately. All the manager needs to do is ask the chefs to remove the microwave from the kitchen and start using an open flame to cook the food.

Slide 14: Step 6: Evaluate the Solution Monitor and assess the results of your solution. Ask the following questions:

- Are you satisfied with the results?
- Did your solution resolve the problem?
- Did your solution create new problems?
- Are modifications needed to get better results?
- What did you learn?

If the solution did not resolve the problem or created new problems, you will need to go back and try another solution until you achieve the results you are looking for.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Six Steps to Problem Solving Group Project Scenario

Have participants think about the six steps of the problem-solving process they learned in the lecture. Using the steps, have participants solve this: You have a large

group project due next week, but one of your teammates is not contributing. How will you manage this problem?

Hint: Have participants come up with several solutions either alone or with a classmate and write them down so they can be presented to the class. Have participants go through the first four steps and select the one you feel would be the best solution.

Note: This activity could be done as an individual assignment and then participants can be put into small groups to share their solutions.

Activity 2: Six Step Problem-Solving Process Personal Example

Have participants think of a problem they have had at home or school. Participants will write a one-page report outlining the problem, the possible solutions they came up with, the solution they implemented, and the results.

If the results were not what they had hoped for, have participants describe why they think there was no resolution and try another solution. Participants should explain why the alternate solution may provide a positive outcome.

Activity 3: Developing Multiple Solutions Scenario

You just got your first part-time job at a local fast-food restaurant, and you are excited to start tomorrow. The problem is that you just found out your parents will not be able to take you. If you call and say you cannot make it on your first day, you might lose your job.

Have participants describe five or more ways they would solve this problem so they can make it to work on time.

Lesson Two – Problem Solving

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Problem-Solving Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a problem-solving scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Problem-Solving Quiz*
- *Problem-Solving Quiz* – Answer Key

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Problem-Solving Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Problem Solving scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' problem-solving skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Problem Solving Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of problem solving?
 - a. The art of being able to solve problems quickly
 - b. Analyzing a problem and its impact on business
 - c. The act of defining a problem and finding a solution
 - d. The act of blaming others for a problem
2. What should you do if your solution did not fix the problem?
 - a. Tell your manager you are not good at solving problems
 - b. Try another solution
 - c. Quit, since your idea did not work
 - d. Have someone else fix the problem
3. Why is it best to develop solutions by brainstorming with a team?
 - a. To develop more cost-effective solutions
 - b. To develop more creative solutions
 - c. To develop a longer list of solutions
 - d. To develop a shorter list of solutions
4. During the step in which you analyze solutions to a problem, how many solutions will be selected to implement?
 - a. 5
 - b. 1
 - c. 2
 - d. 3
5. What is the first step to problem solving?
 - a. Implement the solution
 - b. Develop solutions
 - c. Analyze the problem
 - d. Identify and define the problem

Problem Solving Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of problem solving?
 - a. The art of being able to solve problems quickly
 - b. Analyzing a problem and its impact on business
 - c. The act of defining a problem and finding a solution**
 - d. The act of blaming others for a problem
2. What should you do if your solution did not fix the problem?
 - a. Tell your manager you are not good at solving problems
 - b. Try another solution**
 - c. Quit, since your idea did not work
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3. Why is it best to develop solutions by brainstorming with a team?
 - a. To develop more cost-effective solutions
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 - d. To develop a shorter list of solutions
4. During the step in which you analyze solutions to a problem, how many solutions will be selected to implement?
 - a. 5
 - b. 1**
 - c. 2
 - d. 3
5. What is the first step to problem solving?
 - a. Implement the solution
 - b. Develop solutions
 - c. Analyze the problem
 - d. Identify and define the problem**

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Lesson Three – Interpersonal Skills

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of interpersonal skills and their importance in the workplace. Additionally, they will discover the different types of interpersonal skills, and ways to develop and improve those skills. Participants will then role-play using the Interpersonal Skills scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define interpersonal skills and their importance in the workplace
- Discover the different types of interpersonal skills
- Explore ways to develop and improve their interpersonal skills

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Interpersonal Skills</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Interpersonal Skills</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Interpersonal Skills Quiz</i> • <i>Interpersonal Skills Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Print the <i>Interpersonal Skills Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Interpersonal Skills Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 3. Have the Interpersonal Skills scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Interpersonal Skills Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Three – Interpersonal Skills

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Interpersonal Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help students develop an awareness of interpersonal skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario

As the new manager of a marketing team, Sarah was tasked with leading a group of diverse personalities. Among her team members was John, who tended to dominate conversations in meetings and put down others' ideas. Sarah recognized that John's behavior was hurting the team's productivity, so she decided to have a one-on-one conversation with him.

During their meeting, Sarah expressed her concerns about John's behavior and how it was impacting the team. She listened to John's perspective and acknowledged his contributions to the team but emphasized that the team's success relied on everyone's input. Sarah suggested that they work together to find ways to facilitate better communication and collaboration among the team.

Over time, Sarah's efforts paid off as John began to show more consideration for his coworkers and actively encouraged their participation in meetings. The team's overall performance improved, and they were able to achieve their targets more efficiently.

REFLECT on the situation:

Why did John's behavior have a negative impact on the team's productivity?

What interpersonal skills did Sarah use during her conversation with John?

Why was it important for Sarah to listen to John's perspective during their conversation?

How did Sarah's efforts to facilitate better communication and collaboration among the team members contribute to their success?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Interpersonal Skills Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

As the new manager of a marketing team, Sarah was tasked with leading a group of diverse personalities. Among her team members was John, who tended to dominate conversations in meetings and put down others' ideas. Sarah recognized that John's behavior was hurting the team's productivity, so she decided to have a one-on-one conversation with him.

During their meeting, Sarah expressed her concerns about John's behavior and how it was impacting the team. She listened to John's perspective and acknowledged his contributions to the team but emphasized that the team's success relied on everyone's input. Sarah suggested that they work together to find ways to facilitate better communication and collaboration among the team.

Over time, Sarah's efforts paid off as John began to show more consideration for his coworkers and actively encouraged their participation in meetings. The team's overall performance improved, and they were able to achieve their targets more efficiently.

REFLECT on the situation:

Why did John's behavior have a negative impact on the team's productivity?

When someone on the team does not listen to other team members, it lowers morale, and the rest of the team feels their ideas are not important. When morale is low, the team members do not want to contribute as much.

What interpersonal skills did Sarah use during her conversation with John?

Communication, emotional intelligence, teamwork, conflict resolution, and problem solving

Why was it important for Sarah to listen to John's perspective during their conversation?

It was important for Sarah to listen to John to show respect and an interest in what he had to say. He may have had some good ideas she would have missed if she had not listened to him.

How did Sarah's efforts to facilitate better communication and collaboration among the team members contribute to their success?

Sarah made John aware of the situation and he worked to improve communication and collaboration among team members. When the team feels acknowledged and included, they will be more productive and happier at work.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Three – Interpersonal Skills

LEARN: Interpersonal Skills Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to interpersonal skills and their importance in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Interpersonal Skills* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Interpersonal Skills

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is interpersonal skills.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define interpersonal skills and their importance in the workplace
- Discover the different types of interpersonal skills
- Explore ways to develop and improve your interpersonal skills

Slide 3: What Are Interpersonal Skills?

Also known as people skills or social skills, interpersonal skills are the skills you need to communicate and interact with people.

These skills are used every day when interacting with individuals or groups and are the foundation for success in your personal and professional life.

Studies have shown that people with excellent interpersonal skills have better relationships and more successful careers.

The good news is that even if you do not feel like you have good social skills, you can improve this skill by becoming more aware of what you need to improve and practicing your interpersonal skills to become better at interacting with others.

Slide 4: The Importance of Interpersonal Skills in the Workplace

Employers consistently include excellent interpersonal skills as a top skill they are looking for in job postings, as these skills are vital for the success of the company.

Interpersonal skills are essential in the workplace for collaborating well with coworkers, managers, customers, and clients.

These skills are also heavily looked at by interviewers when interviewing for a job.

Slide 5: Types of Interpersonal Skills

The types of interpersonal skills that will help you succeed in the workplace include:

- Communication
- Emotional intelligence
- Teamwork
- Conflict resolution
- Problem solving and decision-making

These skills will be covered in more depth in the following slides.

Slide 6: Communication Skills

While there are more types of communication skills than these, the following are what are generally thought of when talking about interpersonal skills:

- Verbal Communication: What you say and how you say it
- Nonverbal Communication: How you communicate without words, such as your body language, gestures, and facial expressions
- Active Listening: Being attentive to what the speaker is saying without outside distractions
- Negotiation, Persuasion, and Influence: Working with others to find a mutually agreeable outcome, called a win-win situation

Slide 7: Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, interpret, control, evaluate, and use emotions to communicate with others. It also includes using emotions to communicate with and relate to others effectively and constructively.

It is important that you can express and control your feelings, but equally important is your ability to understand, empathize with and respond to the emotions of others.

When you have empathy for others, it means you can understand and share the feelings of another person.

Slide 8: Teamwork

Another essential quality that is included in interpersonal skills is teamwork. While you may work well on your own, it is also vital to be able to work well in a group or on a team.

When working on a team, you must have excellent communication skills, be able to adapt to new situations, and put the team's goals above your own.

Slide 9: Conflict Resolution

Having conflict-resolution skills shows that you can work with others to resolve disagreements and conflict in a positive way.

When conflict is resolved in a healthy manner, it develops an understanding of the other person, builds trust, and strengthens relationships.

Conflict resolution can also take the form of **mediation**, in which you help others resolve a disagreement they may have.

Slide 10: Problem Solving and Decision-Making

In your personal life, you will always need to solve problems and make decisions. It is no different in the workplace.

However, in a professional environment, you will often work with others to identify, define, and solve problems, including making decisions about the best way to manage the problem.

Slide 11: How to Develop Interpersonal Skills

Everyone has been developing their interpersonal skills since childhood without even knowing. They become so natural that you take them for granted.

If you have developed good skills and habits as you are growing up, then that's wonderful. However, it is possible you have developed some bad habits and wonder why your communication and relationships with others are not that great.

Don't worry! These skills can be improved with a little work.

Slide 12: How to Improve Your Interpersonal Skills

1. Identify what needs improvement. The first step is to see what skill or skills need improvement. If you are unsure what interpersonal skills need improvement, ask friends and family. Just be sure not to get upset with their response.
2. Focus on basic communication skills. When talking, be aware of your words and who you are speaking with. You most likely talk with your friends differently than you talk with the adults in your life. Always be respectful to those you communicate with, which will help you when collaborating with managers, coworkers, and customers.
3. Practice actively listening. Speak less, listen more. There is a saying, “There is a reason you have two ears and one mouth and should listen twice as much as you talk.”
4. Improve advanced communication skills. If you are challenged with difficult conversations, discover what makes it hard to have those conversations and correct them.
5. Become more aware of your emotions. Various emotions can get in the way of communicating effectively. For example, when you are angry, it is best to cool down a bit before conversing with someone, especially if they are who you are angry with. Practice controlling your emotions by watching videos on controlling your emotions or emotional intelligence, using calming methods like deep breathing, or focusing on something positive.
6. Practice empathy. Actively listen, don’t judge people, be understanding, ask appropriate questions, and use body language that shows you are listening and care what the person is saying.
7. Use and practice your interpersonal skills with friends or family

8. Seek feedback. After practicing your interpersonal skills, seek feedback and implement it to improve.

Slide 13: Video

Instructor Note: Have participants watch this short (2:34) video on interpersonal skills in the workplace. After they finish the video, you can ask participants if they have any other ideas on how to improve interpersonal skills. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8vWVWNbk48>

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment

Participants will take an interpersonal skills self-assessment. They should answer each statement honestly, thinking about their likely behavior. They will use this information in Activity 2.

Activity 2: Interpersonal Skills Action Plan

Participants will review their self-assessment and choose one interpersonal skill to improve. It is recommended that participants choose one that they rarely or never do.

Have participants create an action plan, choosing one of the eight ways to improve their interpersonal skills from the lecture.

Activity 3: Journaling to Develop Emotional Intelligence

Journaling is a great way to help process feelings and emotions as well as develop emotional intelligence. Have participants take at least 15 minutes in a quiet space and have them write down whatever comes to their mind.

Have participants focus on their feelings in that exact moment, and why they feel that way. If participants felt journaling was productive, encourage them to try incorporating it into their daily routine to strengthen their emotional intelligence and empathy skills.

Activity 4: Plan to Practice

To develop interpersonal skills, it is best to practice interacting with individuals or groups of people you are not familiar with.

Some ways to do this are to join a new club, volunteer, or go into a business you may possibly be interested in working at and ask to talk to the manager.

Ask questions about the company and what they are looking for in an employee. The more you interact with others outside of your comfort zone, the better your interpersonal skills will become.

Have participants write down at least five clubs, volunteer opportunities, or businesses they would like to visit and interact with people they are not familiar with.

Lesson Three – Interpersonal Skills

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Interpersonal Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in an interpersonal skills scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Interpersonal Skills Quiz*
- *Interpersonal Skills Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Interpersonal Skills Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Interpersonal Skills scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' interpersonal skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Interpersonal Skills Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of interpersonal skills?
 - a. How you interpret what others are saying
 - b. The skill of analyzing a problem and its impact on those around you
 - c. How you communicate and interact with others
 - d. The act of feeling more comfortable being alone
2. What are interpersonal skills also known as?
 - a. Successful skills
 - b. Extrovert skills
 - c. Introvert skills
 - d. People skills
3. What is emotional intelligence?
 - a. The ability to sway someone's opinion by using your emotions in your favor
 - b. The ability to perceive, interpret, and control emotions to communicate with others
 - c. The ability to use anger to get your way in an argument
 - d. The ability to manipulate a situation in your favor by crying
4. What is the term used for helping others resolve a disagreement they may have?
 - a. Meditation
 - b. Mediation
 - c. Manipulation
 - d. Miscommunication
5. When do people start developing their interpersonal skills?
 - a. During the teenage years
 - b. In the womb
 - c. During childhood
 - d. In adulthood

Interpersonal Skills Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of interpersonal skills?
 - a. How you interpret what others are saying
 - b. The skill of analyzing a problem and its impact on those around you
 - c. How you communicate and interact with others**
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Lesson Four – Responsibility

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of responsibility and why being responsible is essential in the workplace. Participants will identify the key skills to be responsible in the workplace, recognize the differences between responsibility and accountability, and learn five tips to becoming a more responsible person. Participants will then role-play using the Responsibility scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Learn the definition of responsibility
- Understand why being responsible is important in the workplace
- Identify key skills to be responsible in the workplace
- Recognize the difference between responsibility and accountability
- Learn five tips to becoming a more responsible person

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Responsibility Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Responsibility Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Responsibility Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Responsibility</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare <i>Responsibility</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Responsibility Quiz</i> • <i>Responsibility Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Responsibility Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Responsibility Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Responsibility scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Responsibility Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Four – Responsibility

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Responsibility in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of being responsible in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Responsibility Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key
- *Responsibility Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Responsibility Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Responsibility Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Responsibility Introduction Scenario

Leona was always responsible as a young child. She got up before her parents, cleaned her room, got dressed, made breakfast, and always made it to school on time. She received good grades, completed assignments, and was elected class president in her senior year of high school. Later, in her culinary program, she takes the lead in group projects, is organized, and always shows up before her classmates.

Leona eventually landed her dream job in a busy high-end restaurant, working as a chef's assistant to gain experience. After two years, the lead chef approached Leona and said he recommended her for a first chef position as she demonstrated a strong work ethic, was responsible, and had excellent culinary skills.

Leona was humbled and honored to receive this recommendation, all because she was a responsible and hard-working employee.

REFLECT on the situation:

What are other indications that a person is responsible?

Do you think people are born responsible, or is it something that is learned?

In your opinion, what is the definition of responsibility?

Do you think Leona would have been offered a promotion if she was not a responsible individual?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Responsibility Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Leona was always responsible as a young child. She got up before her parents, cleaned her room, got dressed, made breakfast, and always made it to school on time. She received good grades, completed assignments, and was elected class president in her senior year of high school. Later, in her culinary program, she takes the lead in group projects, is organized, and always shows up before her classmates.

Leona eventually landed her dream job in a busy high-end restaurant, working as a chef's assistant to gain experience. After two years, the lead chef approached Leona and said he recommended her for a first chef position as she demonstrated a strong work ethic, was responsible, and had excellent culinary skills.

Leona was humbled and honored to receive this recommendation, all because she was a responsible and hard-working employee.

REFLECT on the situation:

What are other indications that a person is responsible?

People are responsible when they show up to work on time, are organized, clean up after themselves, do tasks without being asked, and take responsibility for their actions.

Do you think people are born responsible, or is it something that is learned?

I think the answer is both. I believe some people are inherently responsible, while others learn responsibility from their parents or caregivers. I also think people can become more responsible individuals by working on this skill.

In your opinion, what is the definition of responsibility?

I define responsibility as owning your mistakes, being responsible for your actions, being dependable and trustworthy, and caring for others.

Do you think Leona would have been offered a promotion if she was not a responsible individual?

No, I do not think Leona would have been offered a promotion if she were irresponsible. Supervisors want to promote individuals who demonstrate a strong work ethic and are responsible and dependable.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Four – Responsibility

LEARN: Responsibility Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to the responsibility skills required for success in the workplace. Additionally, participants will learn five tips to becoming a more responsible person.

Materials:

- *Responsibility* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Responsibility

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is responsibility.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Learn the definition of responsibility
- Understand why being responsible is important in the workplace
- Identify key skills to be responsible in the workplace
- Recognize the difference between responsibility and accountability
- Learn five tips to becoming a more responsible person

Slide 3: Definition of Responsibility

Responsibility is defined as being dependable, organized, and punctual (on time). Responsibility also includes being accountable for your actions and words. In other words, if you are a responsible person, you take ownership of what you do. For example, in the workplace, if someone is your responsibility, such as a passenger on an airplane, it is your job to take care of them as a pilot.

Another form of responsibility is being in a leadership position. In this position, you are responsible for yourself and your team, ensuring all goals are met.

Slide 4: Why Is Responsibility Important in the Workplace?

Employees must be responsible in the workplace for the following reasons:

- Keep working conditions safe. This photo is a great example. The person cleaning the floors was responsible and put out a caution sign, warning people that cleaning was in progress. If they did not put out the sign, someone could possibly slip and fall, injuring themselves. Keeping working conditions safe also protects the employer from potential lawsuits.
- Protect their employer (as mentioned above).
- Promote trust. If you demonstrate responsibility in the workplace, your coworkers and managers will trust you, giving you a greater chance of being successful in your career.
- Maintain high professional standards. You will have a better chance of being promoted into a leadership or managerial position when you maintain high standards for yourself.

- Increase productivity. When employees are responsible and do not need to be constantly watched, their productivity increases as they take pride in their work performance.

Slide 5: Key Skills to be Responsible in the Workplace

While being responsible is an employability skill, other key skills are needed to be responsible in the workplace:

- Critical Thinking: You must be able to analyze and evaluate an issue to develop a plan (coincides with problem solving).
- Problem Solving: Must be able to identify and solve problems alone or within a team.
- Leadership: Even if not in a leadership position, you step up and take charge when needed.
- Flexibility: You can be flexible in your working conditions and “go with the flow.”
- Time Management: To adequately do your tasks at work, you must manage your time well to complete your assignments.
- Communication: A skill that is needed to communicate what you need to complete your work.
- Self-Motivated: You do not need to be told what to do and take on responsibilities without being asked.
- Goal-Oriented: Employees who have goals tend to be more responsible as they understand that being responsible will help them achieve their goals.

Slide 6: The Difference Between Responsibility and Accountability
Responsibility refers to someone’s duty to finish a task, while accountability refers to what a person does after something has happened.

Accountability is what happens after a situation has occurred and how a person responds and takes ownership over the results of their actions.

On the other hand, if someone does not own up to their mistakes and blames others, that person is not being accountable for their actions.

Slide 7: Video

Instructor Note: Play this short (1:58) video on responsibility and accountability in the workplace. After watching the video, you can open the class for discussion or move on to the next slide, depending on your allotted time for the lesson.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42dLWo9v0HM>

Slide 8: 5 Tips to Become More Responsible

1. Clean up after yourself
2. Own up to your mistakes
3. Do things without being asked
4. Do not procrastinate
5. Be organized

These tips will be covered in greater detail in the following slides.

Slide 9: Tip 1: Clean Up After Yourself
Responsible people clean up any mess they have made so someone else does not have to do it. For example, if you ate lunch in the employee break room, you should clean up any mess you made, wash your dishes, and throw away your trash.

When your coworkers don’t have to clean up after you, it shows them you are responsible and respectful of the shared workspace.

Slide 10: Tip 2: Own Up to Your Mistakes
Everyone makes mistakes. But not everyone admits to their mistakes; they often blame others. To become more responsible and accountable for your actions, start owning up to your mistakes.

After admitting your mistake, decide how to fix it. Then, use that experience to learn from your mistakes, allowing you to grow and improve. While some managers or supervisors may initially be upset with the mistake you made, your honesty and accountability will help you go further in your career.

Slide 11: Tip 3: Do Things Without Being Asked

Responsibility includes seeing things that need to be done and taking care of them before being asked by a supervisor or manager, even if it is not one of your job responsibilities.

Suppose you work in an office and notice the printer paper is getting low. You add more paper so it will be ready for the next person, as that is what responsible people do.

Another example could be cleaning up someone else's mess even though you didn't make it.

Slide 12: Tip 4: Don't Procrastinate

When you procrastinate and delay doing tasks that need to be done, it shows that you are unmotivated.

Some employers will view procrastination as being lazy and irresponsible.

To be a successful and responsible employee, you must work hard and not waste time scrolling through your phone when there is work to be done. This also goes for your career goals. If you want to advance in your career, you need to stop procrastinating and put an effort into what it will take to advance. This might mean enrolling in higher education, reading books, or attending workshops or seminars.

Slide 13: Tip 5: Be Organized

Disorganized people are often referred to as irresponsible. When you cannot find an item you need at work, do not prioritize tasks, or forget to bring something crucial to work that you require for your job, it will reflect poorly on you.

Start by organizing your workday and ensuring you have everything you need. Make lists, if helpful, and be sure everything is in its place.

Employers take notice when an employee is organized and can find something quickly when asked for it. Also, having an organized workspace shows you are responsible and care about how others perceive you.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Time Management

Some people are considered irresponsible because they do not manage their time well. If you are considered irresponsible by employers, you will have trouble keeping a job.

To become effective at time management and show you are a responsible person, you must prioritize tasks in your day. Have participants write down everything they must accomplish in one day.

Participants should put a time on each task and readjust if they have something come up that needs to be done. When they practice managing their time and complete everything that is required of them each day, they will naturally become better at managing their time.

Activity 2: Responsibility on the Job

Have participants think of their dream job. For example, perhaps they want to work as a hair stylist, nurse, UPS driver, attorney, server at an upscale restaurant, social media influencer, medical assistant, or chef.

After deciding on their dream job, students should research what responsibilities are required in that role. They should make a list of what they would be responsible for, complete the brief self-check and then identify what areas need improvement before they enter the workforce.

Then, participants should make those improvements so they will be ready to fulfill their responsibilities when they finally get their dream job.

Activity 3: Responsibility Before and After

To be a responsible employee, you first need to be a responsible person at home and school. Participants should let their parents or guardian know that they would like to take on additional responsibilities at home.

Have participants ask what they can do to help around the house beyond what chores they might already have. Participants should start doing things at home without being asked, always cleaning up after themselves, and helping with their siblings if they have any.

If participants already have many responsibilities at home and they don't need to be asked to do things to help, good for them! If their parents allow, have them see if they can help a neighbor with anything.

OR

Do the same at school. Have participants ask a teacher if there is anything they can do to help them. If participants see something on the floor, they should pick it up, even if it is not theirs. If they see a classmate struggling with something, they should offer to help. If participants say they will do something for someone, they should do it.

The more you make being a responsible person a natural habit, the easier it will be for it to carry over into the workplace. Have participants identify one way they can take on more responsibility.

Have participants give a brief explanation of what happened when they took on more responsibility.

Lesson Four – Responsibility

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Responsibility Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a responsibility scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Responsibility Quiz*
- *Responsibility Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Responsibility Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Responsibility scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' responsibility skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Responsibility Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What does it mean to be punctual?
 - a. To be a good communicator
 - b. To be a good listener
 - c. To show up on time
 - d. To clean up after yourself
2. Which of the following is **not** a reason why responsibility is important in the workplace?
 - a. To be assigned the best shifts
 - b. To protect employers
 - c. To promote trust
 - d. To increase productivity
3. In the sense of being responsible, why is it **most** important that you clean up after yourself at work?
 - a. It shows your coworkers you are not a slob
 - b. To receive a better employee performance review
 - c. To eliminate the need to hire a cleaning service
 - d. It shows you are respectful of the shared workspace
4. What does it mean to procrastinate?
 - a. To do tasks as soon as possible
 - b. To ask others to do your work
 - c. To delay doing tasks
 - d. To offer to do other people's work when you are not busy
5. Choose the correct answer for the definition of responsibility.
 - a. Being introverted, intelligent, and analytical
 - b. Being confident, positive, and joyful
 - c. Being morally, ethically, and mentally intelligent
 - d. Being dependable, organized, and punctual

Responsibility Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What does it mean to be punctual?
 - a. To be a good communicator
 - b. To be a good listener
 - c. To show up on time**
 - d. To clean up after yourself
2. Which of the following is **not** a reason why responsibility is important in the workplace?
 - a. To be assigned the best shifts**
 - b. To protect employers
 - c. To promote trust
 - d. To increase productivity
3. In the sense of being responsible, why is it **most** important that you clean up after yourself at work?
 - a. It shows your coworkers you are not a slob
 - b. To receive a better employee performance review
 - c. To eliminate the need to hire a cleaning service
 - d. It shows you are respectful of the shared workspace**
4. What does it mean to procrastinate?
 - a. To do tasks as soon as possible
 - b. To ask others to do your work
 - c. To delay doing tasks**
 - d. To offer to do other people's work when you are not busy
5. Choose the correct answer for the definition of responsibility.
 - a. Being introverted, intelligent, and analytical
 - b. Being confident, positive, and joyful
 - c. Being morally, ethically, and mentally intelligent
 - d. Being dependable, organized, and punctual**

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1. Indeed Editorial Team. (2022, July 9). *A Detailed Guide on How to Take Responsibility at Work*. Retrieved from <https://hk.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-to-take-responsibility-at-work>
2. Todorovic, Djordje. (2022). *5 Tips on How to Be a More Responsible Person*. Retrieved from <https://www.lifehack.org/378031/5-tips-how-more-responsible-person>
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Lesson Five – Teamwork

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of teamwork and how it is essential in the workplace. Participants will learn the characteristics of successful teams, how to develop and improve teamwork skills, and how to be a team player in the workplace. Participants will then role-play using the Teamwork scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Define teamwork
- Understand why teamwork is a crucial employability skill
- Discover characteristics of successful teams
- Learn how to be a team player in the workplace
- Develop and improve teamwork skills

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Teamwork Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Teamwork Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Teamwork Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Teamwork</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare <i>Teamwork</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Teamwork Quiz</i> • <i>Teamwork Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Print the <i>Teamwork Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Teamwork Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 3. Have the Teamwork scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Teamwork Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Five – Teamwork

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Teamwork in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of the importance of teamwork in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Teamwork Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key
- *Teamwork Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Teamwork Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Teamwork Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Teamwork Introduction Scenario

It was a busy day at the office, and the team was working hard to meet their deadlines. One of the team members, Samantha, was struggling to complete her tasks on time due to a technical issue with her computer. Seeing her struggle, the rest of the team quickly jumped in to help her out. Allen offered to share his computer with Samantha so she could continue working on her tasks, while Emily and Mike helped troubleshoot the issue with her computer.

The team worked together to identify the problem and quickly found a solution. As they worked, they also provided emotional support to Samantha, reassuring her that they were all in this together and that they would help her meet the deadline. Thanks to the teamwork and collaboration of the team, they were able to complete their tasks on time and deliver high-quality work.

The experience brought the team closer together; they continued to work collaboratively and support one another in all their future projects.

REFLECT on the situation:

What would have happened if Samantha did not have the support of her team?

How did the team members demonstrate collaboration and teamwork in this scenario?

Why is it important for team members to support one another, not just in terms of technical issues, but also emotionally?

How can you apply the lessons learned from this scenario to your own team or group projects in school?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Teamwork Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

It was a busy day at the office, and the team was working hard to meet their deadlines. One of the team members, Samantha, was struggling to complete her tasks on time due to a technical issue with her computer. Seeing her struggle, the rest of the team quickly jumped in to help her out. Allen offered to share his computer with Samantha so she could continue working on her tasks, while Emily and Mike helped troubleshoot the issue with her computer.

The team worked together to identify the problem and quickly found a solution. As they worked, they also provided emotional support to Samantha, reassuring her that they were all in this together and that they would help her meet the deadline. Thanks to the teamwork and collaboration of the team, they were able to complete their tasks on time and deliver high-quality work.

The experience brought the team closer together; they continued to work collaboratively and support one another in all their future projects.

REFLECT on the situation:

What would have happened if Samantha did not have the support of her team?

She would most likely miss her work deadline.

How did the team members demonstrate collaboration and teamwork in this scenario?

They all came together to help Samantha with her technical issue, lend her another computer to use to finish her work, and offer emotional support.

Why is it important for team members to support one another, not just in terms of technical issues, but also emotionally?

Often, a team member will become upset or angry if something is not going their way. When emotional support is offered, it helps diffuse the situation and improve the team member's mood.

How can you apply the lessons learned from this scenario to your own team or group projects in school?

As this is a personal question, there is no right or wrong answer as long as the participants provide an answer.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Five – Teamwork

LEARN: Teamwork Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to the definition of teamwork and why it is essential in the workplace. Additionally, participants will learn about the characteristics of successful teams and how to develop and improve teamwork skills.

Materials:

- *Teamwork* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Teamwork

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is teamwork.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this lesson are to:

- Define teamwork
- Understand why teamwork is a crucial employability skill
- Discover characteristics of successful teams
- Learn how to be a team player in the workplace
- Develop and improve teamwork skills

Slide 3: What Is Teamwork?

Teamwork is defined as two or more people who interact independently with a common purpose, working together to achieve a measurable goal.

The collective effort of a team ensures a higher quality of work and offers a diversity of backgrounds, opinions, and perspectives.

When people work towards the same goal, members of the team encourage and support one another, increasing morale and productivity.

Slide 4: Why Teamwork Is a Crucial Employability Skill

Most jobs require some level of collaboration with others, whether it is working in a team to complete a project or communicating effectively with coworkers and clients.

A person who can work well with others and contribute positively to a team is highly valued in the workplace.

Additionally, teamwork promotes creativity and innovation because it brings together diverse perspectives and skill sets. When people work together, they can combine their strengths and overcome weaknesses, leading to more effective problem-solving and decision-making. Finally, being a good team player also means being reliable, accountable, and respectful of others, all of which are important qualities that employers look for in their employees.

Instructor Note: The next slide will be a short video on teamwork in the workplace.

Slide 5: Video

Instructor Note: After the video has ended, you can continue with the presentation unless there are any questions. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ah1WuFC6qgQ>

Slide 6: Characteristics of Successful Teams

Successful teams share common characteristics that contribute to their effectiveness and productivity. These include shared goals, clear communication, mutual trust and respect, diversity, and a focus on continuous improvement. Shared goals help to align everyone's efforts toward a common objective. Clear communication ensures that everyone is on the same page and understands their role within the team. Mutual respect fosters a positive and supportive environment, while trust ensures that team members rely on each other to deliver quality work.

Diversity is also important, as it brings different perspectives and ideas to the table. Additionally, a focus on continuous improvement ensures that the team is always striving to be better and to learn from their mistakes. These characteristics are essential for any team to succeed, whether in the workplace, sports, or any other collaborative endeavor.

Slide 7: How to Be a Team Player in the Workplace

- Be a shoulder to lean on. To be a team player, you must be willing to take time to support your team members. Just like helping a friend when they are going through a tough time, you must act the same when working on a team.
- Offer to help a coworker in need. A coworker may need help with a customer or a heavy workload, a shift covered, or you to come in early or stay late occasionally. Good team players will do what it takes to help their fellow team members.
- Be a good role model. If you want the team to be successful, you must be a good role model. That means not talking about others behind their backs, providing excellent customer service, having a positive attitude, and showing kindness and compassion to others.
- Get to know your team members. Just like forming friendships, you want to do the same with your team members. Get

to know their likes and dislikes, if they are married, have a partner, have children, and other interesting things people ask to get to know each other.

- Respect other team members. To earn respect in the workplace, you must show respect.
- Actively listen. Just like you should do with your customers and clients, you must actively listen to your coworkers. When you actively listen to what others say, it builds trust and shows respect to your team members.

Slide 8: Developing Teamwork Skills

To some, teamwork skills come naturally. Others may need to work on developing teamwork skills. Here are some examples to improve or develop teamwork skills:

- Review your strengths and weaknesses
- Develop a team mentality
- Be flexible
- Be a good communicator
- Show responsibility
- Be willing to help other team members

These will be covered in more depth on the following slides.

Slide 9: Review Your Strengths and Weaknesses

Reviewing your strengths and weaknesses can improve your teamwork skills in many ways. When reviewing your strengths and weaknesses, you will identify areas in which you excel and areas in which you need improvement.

Being aware of your own strengths and weaknesses can help you communicate more effectively with your team members. For example, if you know that you struggle with a particular task, you can ask for help from someone on the team who excels in that area.

This can help to build trust and collaboration within the team, as everyone is working together to achieve a common goal.

Additionally, identifying your strengths and weaknesses can help you to understand areas in which you can improve your skills. By working on these areas, you can become a more valuable member of the team and contribute more effectively to the group's success.

Slide 10: Develop a Team Mentality

Developing a team mentality is essential for improving teamwork skills because it helps you shift your focus from your individual success to the success of the whole team.

When team members work together towards a common goal, they are more likely to divide tasks, share responsibilities, and support each other. Doing so can leverage each other's strengths and compensate for each other's weaknesses, resulting in a more efficient and effective team. In addition, a team mentality fosters a sense of unity, trust, and accountability among team members, which leads to better communication, collaboration, and problem solving.

Ultimately, developing a team mentality can help you become a better team player and contribute to your team's success.

Slide 11: Be Flexible

Being flexible is a key factor in developing teamwork skills. When you are flexible, you are open to different ideas and perspectives as well as willing to adapt to changing situations.

This allows you to work effectively with others, even if their ideas or work styles are different from your own. By being flexible, you can help to create a positive and productive team environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

You can also learn from your teammates, expand your knowledge and skills, and contribute to the team's success. Being flexible is not only important for developing your teamwork skills but also for your personal growth.

Slide 12: Be a Good Communicator

When you communicate well with your team members, you can clearly convey your ideas and thoughts, which can help ensure everyone is on the same page.

Effective communication also involves active listening, which means that you are paying attention to what others are saying and asking questions to clarify any confusion. By doing so, you can build trust with your team members and create an environment that promotes collaboration and cooperation. Ultimately, being a good communicator can help you foster stronger relationships with your colleagues, which can lead to improved teamwork skills and better outcomes for the team as a whole.

Slide 13: Show Responsibility

Showing responsibility can significantly improve your teamwork skills in several ways. First, it helps you develop a sense of accountability for your actions and decisions, which allows you to take ownership of your tasks and work towards achieving the common goal of the team.

When you take responsibility for your work, it sets a positive example for your teammates, who will likely follow suit, thus fostering a culture of responsibility and accountability within the team.

Additionally, showing responsibility encourages proactive problem solving and decision-making, which can help overcome obstacles and challenges that the team may face.

Being responsible also helps you become more reliable, trustworthy, and dependable, which can improve your relationships with your colleagues and increase their confidence in you.

This can lead to better communication and collaboration, ultimately encouraging higher productivity and success for the team.

Slide 14: Be Willing to Help Other Team Members

Being willing to help other team members can improve your teamwork skills by fostering a collaborative and cooperative work environment, which is conducive to working towards shared goals. Helping others can help you develop empathy and understanding towards your coworkers, as you get to know them better and learn about their strengths and weaknesses. This can also improve communication and trust, which are essential components of effective teamwork.

Additionally, helping others can provide opportunities for you to learn new skills and knowledge, as well as gain new perspectives on the project or task at hand.

Slide 15: More Ways to Develop Teamwork Skills

- Let others help you. Shows that you welcome help from your team and are open to their ideas and input.
- Don't blame others. Take accountability for your actions, building trust among the team.
- Respect your coworkers. They will not respect you unless there is mutual respect.
- Appreciate diversity and different work styles. Be open to other ideas, opinions, and input. Your way is not always the only way to do something.
- Be reliable. Do what you say you are going to do, and do not come up with excuses as to why something wasn't done. Also, show up on time.
- Maintain optimism. Having a positive attitude will rub off on other team members and increase employee morale.
- Ask for feedback from coworkers. If you want to develop and improve your teamwork skills, you can ask your coworkers. When asked, your coworkers will offer the most honest feedback. However, you must show you are trying to improve. Don't get defensive if constructive criticism is offered.

- Keep other team members motivated. When you help others stay motivated, it increases morale and productivity.

Slide 16: How to Improve Teamwork Skills

- Volunteer. When you volunteer, you typically work with one or more people depending on the volunteer opportunity. You will have to interact and work with others, which involves teamwork.
- Join a club. Many clubs can be found in middle schools, high schools, and the community. Joining a club involves working with others to achieve a common goal.
- Enroll in a leadership course. Leadership courses not only teach leadership and public speaking skills but also how to be a motivator and inspire a team.
- Join a sports team. Many people are first introduced to teamwork when joining a sports team. You learn to work as a team, help others on the team, be a good sport, and encourage and motivate others.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.
3. Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Fist to Five

Have participants work as a team to have everyone brainstorm solutions to a problem, then go through them one by one with participants holding up a fist or a number of fingers up to five.

A fist means they're not on board and five fingers up means they think it is a great idea. Then, have everyone state their case as to why they chose the fingers they did.

In the end, the team must choose a solution to the problem that everyone agrees on with five fingers. The first step is to read the problem scenario and write a solution to the problem. This is the solution they will share with their group.

Activity 2: Team Survival Scenario

Read the following scenario and have participants follow the instructions.

Your club earned a trip to the moon as a reward for exceeding your fundraising goals. You all get aboard the rocket, Lucky Lunar, for a trip to the moon. You encounter some mechanical issues on the landing. Now you are stranded on the moon. You must work together to survive and return to Earth.

Your task is to choose the 10 most useful items to help you survive on the moon. First, write a list of 10 items that you would individually like to have on hand to survive on the moon.

Next, work with your team to create a master list of items to choose from. Then, collaborate with your team to come up with the five most important items you feel would help the group survive on the moon for the next two to four weeks.

Rate the final list of five, with one being the most important item through five being the least important item on the list.

Activity 3: Teamwork Reflection

Have participants reflect on a past group project or team experience and write what they learned about teamwork. They should be honest and reflective in their writing.

Have participants identify ways they showed teamwork in the situation and areas for growth and improvement.

Lesson Five – Teamwork

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Teamwork Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a teamwork scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Teamwork Quiz*
- *Teamwork Quiz* – Answer Key

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Teamwork Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Teamwork scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. The instructor(s) can assess participants' teamwork skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Teamwork Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** a great way to develop teamwork skills?
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Join a sports team
 - c. Enroll in a leadership course
 - d. Play video games by yourself
2. Why is being flexible important when working in a team environment?
 - a. It shows you are an active person
 - b. It shows you are open to different ideas
 - c. It shows you put your work first
 - d. It shows you have great ideas
3. Teamwork is defined as how many people working together to achieve a measurable goal?
 - a. Three or more
 - b. Two or more
 - c. Four or more
 - d. Seven or more
4. What does it mean to develop a team mentality?
 - a. You shift your focus from your individual success to the success of the team
 - b. You think about your team when you are away from work
 - c. You invite your team over on your days off
 - d. You focus more on your individual success than that of your team
5. How does teamwork promote creativity and innovation?
 - a. It allows team members to have more of a voice than if they worked alone
 - b. It allows team members to not have to work so hard
 - c. It only attracts creative individuals
 - d. It brings together diverse perspectives and skill sets

Teamwork Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** a great way to develop teamwork skills?
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Join a sports team
 - c. Enroll in a leadership course
 - d. Play video games by yourself**
2. Why is being flexible important when working in a team environment?
 - a. It shows you are an active person
 - b. It shows you are open to different ideas**
 - c. It shows you put your work first
 - d. It shows you have great ideas
3. Teamwork is defined as how many people working together to achieve a measurable goal?
 - a. Three or more
 - b. Two or more**
 - c. Four or more
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 - c. You invite your team over on your days off
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5. How does teamwork promote creativity and innovation?
 - a. It allows team members to have more of a voice than if they worked alone
 - b. It allows team members to not have to work so hard
 - c. It only attracts creative individuals
 - d. It brings together diverse perspectives and skill sets**

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Lesson Six – Work Ethic

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of work ethic and why it is an essential skill to have in the workplace. Participants will also discover the top characteristics associated with a strong work ethic and how to develop this skill. Participants will then role-play using the Work Ethic scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Understand the meaning of work ethic
- Learn why this skill is essential in the workplace
- Discover the top characteristics associated with a strong work ethic
- Learn how to develop a strong work ethic

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Work Ethic Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Work Ethic Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Work Ethic Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Work Ethic</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Work Ethic</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Work Ethic Quiz</i> • <i>Work Ethic Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Work Ethic Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Work Ethic Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Work Ethic scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Work Ethic Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Six – Work Ethic

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Work Ethic Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of work ethic skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Work Ethic Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key
- *Work Ethic Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Work Ethic Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Work Ethic Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Work Ethic Introduction Scenario

Marcus has been fascinated with welding ever since he saw his grandfather fix a broken fence with a welder. However, he knew that his single mom, who worked two jobs to support him and his younger sister, could not afford to send him to welding school or college. Despite these financial challenges, Marcus was determined to pursue his passion.

At the age of 14, Marcus started mowing lawns for his neighbors and doing odd jobs, like fixing broken bicycles and skateboards, to earn money. By the time he turned 16, Marcus had saved enough to buy a small welding kit and started practicing in his backyard. He would often take on welding projects for his neighbors and friends, and his reputation as a skilled welder grew quickly.

Marcus had no social life as he worked non-stop to achieve his goals. After graduating from high school, Marcus had earned enough money to enroll in a welding school and eventually started his own welding business. All those years of hard work and dedication paid off, and Marcus became a successful welder, just like his grandfather.

REFLECT on the situation:

What characteristics does Marcus possess that display his strong work ethic?

Do you think Marcus' mother was wrong to allow him to start working at 14?

Can a strong work ethic be learned, or is it something a person is born with?

Do you believe a person's work ethic "rubs off" on other people they associate with?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Employability Skills Work Ethic Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Marcus has been fascinated with welding ever since he saw his grandfather fix a broken fence with a welder. However, he knew that his single mom, who worked two jobs to support him and his younger sister, could not afford to send him to welding school or college. Despite these financial challenges, Marcus was determined to pursue his passion.

At the age of 14, Marcus started mowing lawns for his neighbors and doing odd jobs, like fixing broken bicycles and skateboards, to earn money. By the time he turned 16, Marcus had saved enough to buy a small welding kit and started practicing in his backyard. He would often take on welding projects for his neighbors and friends, and his reputation as a skilled welder grew quickly.

Marcus had no social life as he worked non-stop to achieve his goals. After graduating from high school, Marcus had earned enough money to enroll in a welding school and eventually started his own welding business. All those years of hard work and dedication paid off, and Marcus became a successful welder, just like his grandfather.

REFLECT on the situation:

What characteristics does Marcus possess that display his strong work ethic?

Hard worker, focused, productive, honest, responsible, determined, and professional

Do you think Marcus' mother was wrong to allow him to start working at 14?

I think it is a personal choice for parents to allow what they want for their children. I believe Marcus sounds mature enough that neighbors trust him with their yards and belongings.

Can a strong work ethic be learned, or is it something a person is born with?

I believe most people are born with many characteristics that display a strong work ethic, but I also think that people are influenced by their caregivers and other loved ones. So, I believe learning and developing the skills that make up a strong work ethic is possible.

Do you believe a person's work ethic "rubs off" on other people they associate with?

Yes, I believe a person's work ethic could "rub off" on some people they associate with, but not all. Some of Marcus's friends may have been positively influenced by his work ethic.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Six – Work Ethic

LEARN: Work Ethic Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to the work ethic skills needed to succeed in the workplace and advice on developing a strong work ethic.

Materials:

- *Work Ethic* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Work Ethic

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is work ethic.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Understand the meaning of work ethic
- Learn why this skill is essential in the workplace
- Discover the top characteristics associated with a strong work ethic
- Study how to develop a strong work ethic

Slide 3: What Is Work Ethic?

Work ethic is a set of values based on hard work and discipline. It affects how you manage your responsibilities and how seriously you take your work.

A strong work ethic is an important characteristic that motivates a person to uphold high moral standards at work.

Possessing a good work ethic shows that you take your job seriously and that you behave responsibly in a professional environment.

Slide 4: Why Work Ethic is Essential in the Workplace

Employees with a strong work ethic are highly driven individuals and often far exceed their peers in achieving goals.

Employers look for employees with strong work ethics because they can be a positive influence on their coworkers, tend to be punctual and responsible, and are organized and dedicated to producing quality work.

Slide 5: Work Ethic Characteristics

- Hard worker
- Punctual
- Focused
- Productive
- Team player
- Honest
- Responsible
- Professional

The following slides will cover these characteristics in greater detail.

Slide 6: Hard Worker

Hard workers do not give up when faced with a challenging task or assignment. This type of person shows a strong work ethic in their persistence and determination to succeed.

Hard workers generally start working at a young age and are proud to work hard to achieve their goals. Next, we'll watch a short video of two young boys who are hard workers and demonstrate a strong work ethic at a young age. However, you are never too old to develop and improve your work ethic skills, which we will talk more about later in the presentation.

Slide 7: Video

Instructor Note: After the short video, ask participants questions pertaining to the video, such as what skills were used to demonstrate a strong work ethic?

Answers could include teamwork, determination, communication, and hard work. Then, you can move on to the next slide.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/SXjaaz-5VPg>

Slide 8: Punctual

Being punctual means you are always on time. Whether arriving on time to work, completing an assignment by its deadline, or showing up to a job interview early, it shows you are reliable and that you have respect for other people's time.

Punctuality also shows you care about your job and would like to keep it.

Slide 9: Focused

Focused employees are not easily distracted and are able to focus on their tasks or assignments. To be focused also means to have goals and a clear vision of what steps are needed to achieve them.

Another trait focused individuals possess is a high attention to detail and pride in the work they produce.

Slide 10: Productive

Employees with a strong work ethic have high productivity and stay busy completing tasks and working towards their goals.

Productive employees can multitask, are well organized, produce high-quality work, and are not intimidated by a large workload.

Productive employees often get more done in one shift than their peers with a poor work ethic.

Slide 11: Team Player

Being a team player is expected in most jobs, and those with a strong work ethic understand that a team only works when everyone does their part.

When a person is recognized as a team player, they have the reputation of getting along well with others, helping and receiving help when needed, giving credit where credit is due, and putting aside personal goals to benefit the team.

Slide 12: Honest

To be an honest person means many things. Honest people admit when they are wrong, do not blame others, always tell the truth, can be trusted, and apologize when they are wrong.

Honesty is one of the most desirable traits employers look for in their employees.

Slide 13: Responsible

Responsible employees are consistent, reliable, professional, respectful, and dependable. When they say they will do something, they do it. When they are scheduled for a shift, they show up. When they say they will cover a shift for you, they cover your shift.

Those with a strong work ethic are seen as responsible individuals by their peers.

Slide 14: Professional

Employees who are perceived as professional do the following:

- Dress appropriately, following the company's dress code and wearing clean, pressed clothes
- Avoid negative workplace gossip and maintain a positive attitude at work
- Have good hygiene, including a clean body, hair, and teeth
- Remain calm under pressure and do not lose their composure
- Do not abuse company time by taking personal phone calls, using the computer for personal things, or taking too long of a lunch break
- Follow the company's rules, policies, and procedures

Slide 15: How to Develop a Strong Work Ethic

- Always be reliable and on time. Reliability stands out with supervisors and is a highly desirable trait. When you say you will be somewhere at a specific time, be at least 10 to 15 minutes early. There is a saying, "If you are not early, you are late." Show respect to the person you are meeting by being respectful of their time. If you are reporting to work, report early. If you will be late to a meeting, appointment, or work, call or text that you will be late.
- Always be courteous and professional. You may not enjoy a particular customer or coworker, but you must maintain a professional attitude while at work.
- Take the initiative and do tasks without being asked. If you notice supplies are getting low, restock them. If you have a coworker who is swamped, offer to help ease the workload.
- Produce quality work and pay attention to detail. Take pride in everything you do.
- Cultivate self-discipline and set short- and long-term goals. Your goals could be to read more, sign up for a job-related course, take leadership classes, or learn

a new hobby. Whatever your goals, it takes discipline to achieve them.

- Be focused and persistent to achieve your goals and produce quality work.
- Eliminate distractions to make the most of your workday. Turn off cell phones, don't check emails on your computer every five minutes, and don't browse social media sites. When distractions are eliminated, your productivity will increase, and your supervisor will notice what a great job you are doing.

Slide 16: Video

Instructor Note: Play this short motivational video on work ethic. Then, you can ask participants what they got from the video before continuing on to the last slide.

Video link reference:

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/6l_U79b1V3g

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Work Ethic Strengths and Weaknesses

Have participants read the list of characteristics that describe good work ethic. They should choose the top 10 that they believe are their strengths.

Then, have participants select five characteristics that they believe may be weaknesses. They should write a journal entry in which they set goals to work towards improving their work ethic areas of weakness.

Activity 2: Work Ethic Work Scenario

Have participants create a workplace scenario in which the individuals in the scenario demonstrate each of the eight work ethic characteristics.

Activity 3: Dear Future Employer...

Have participants write a letter to their future employer, highlighting their work ethic. They should explain why they are a reliable and trustworthy employee and how they have demonstrated a good work ethic in their past experiences.

Lesson Six – Work Ethic

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Work Ethic Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a work ethic scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Communication Quiz*
- *Communication Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Work Ethic Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Work Ethic scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' work ethic skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Work Ethic Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following best defines work ethic?
 - a. A set of values based on hard work and discipline
 - b. The quality of being stubborn to get what you want
 - c. A set of morals and ethics that will help you advance your career
 - d. The quality of using available resources to complete assignments
2. Generally, at what age do hard workers with a strong work ethic start working?
 - a. They start working after they graduate from college
 - b. They start working when they are in their 30s
 - c. They start working when they graduate from high school
 - d. They start working at a young age
3. Which of the following would make you look unprofessional in the workplace?
 - a. You have good hygiene
 - b. You dress appropriately
 - c. You remain calm under pressure
 - d. You use company time for personal use
4. Which of the following is **not** typically a reason that employers look for employees with a strong work ethic?
 - a. Because they will make them a lot of money
 - b. Because they will be a positive influence on their coworkers
 - c. Because they tend to be punctual
 - d. Because they are organized and dedicated to producing quality work
5. What best defines a focused individual?
 - a. They are easily distracted
 - b. They have poor attention to detail
 - c. They are not easily distracted
 - d. They are not respectful of other people's time

Work Ethic Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following best defines work ethic?
 - a. **A set of values based on hard work and discipline**
 - b. The quality of being stubborn to get what you want
 - c. A set of morals and ethics that will help you advance your career
 - d. The quality of using available resources to complete assignments
2. Generally, at what age do hard workers with a strong work ethic start working?
 - a. They start working after they graduate from college
 - b. They start working when they are in their 30s
 - c. They start working when they graduate from high school
 - d. **They start working at a young age**
3. Which of the following would make you look unprofessional in the workplace?
 - a. You have good hygiene
 - b. You dress appropriately
 - c. You remain calm under pressure
 - d. **You use company time for personal use**
4. Which of the following is **not** typically a reason that employers look for employees with a strong work ethic?
 - a. **Because they will make them a lot of money**
 - b. Because they will be a positive influence on their coworkers
 - c. Because they tend to be punctual
 - d. Because they are organized and dedicated to producing quality work
5. What best defines a focused individual?
 - a. They are easily distracted
 - b. They have poor attention to detail
 - c. **They are not easily distracted**
 - d. They are not respectful of other people's time

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Lesson Seven – Listening

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the difference between passive and active listening and why active listening is an essential skill to have in the workplace. Participants will identify how to use active listening skills, recognize the benefits of being an active listener, and learn five tips to improve active listening skills. Participants will then role-play using the Listening scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Learn the difference between passive and active listening
- Understand why active listening skills are essential in the workplace
- Identify how to use active listening skills
- Recognize the benefits of being an active listener
- Discover five tips to improve active listening skills

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Listening Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Listening Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Have the answer key available for reference. 2. Print <i>Listening Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant).	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Listening</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Access student workbook activities. 2. Prepare the <i>Listening</i> slide presentation for viewing.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Listening Quiz</i> • <i>Listening Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Have the <i>Listening Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 2. Have the Listening scenario card available for display or reference. 3. Have participants access the <i>Listening Scenario</i> in their student workbook. 4. Print the <i>Listening Quiz</i> (one per participant).	20 minutes

Lesson Seven – Listening

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Listening Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of listening skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Listening Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Listening Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Listening Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Listening Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Listening Introduction Scenario

Kayla is a human resources manager, who works in a corporate office, helping employees with their work-related issues. One day, Kayla is approached by one of her employees, Jeremiah, who wants to talk to her about his work stresses. Jeremiah explains that he is going through a tough time in his personal life and finding it hard to focus on his work.

Jeremiah further elaborates that he is struggling to maintain a work-life balance and feels like he is going to burn out soon. Kayla knows that she needs to actively listen to Jeremiah to understand his concerns and see how she can help him. She asks him to have a seat and turns off her computer screen to avoid any distractions.

Kayla patiently listens while Jeremiah pours out his heart and describes his problems. She nods at appropriate times and paraphrases what he said after he is done talking to ensure that she correctly understands his concerns. Kayla wants to make sure that Jeremiah knows that she cares about his well-being and that he is not alone in his struggles.

REFLECT on the situation:

What else can Kayla do or say to show Jeremiah she is actively listening?

Do you think it would be difficult for Kayla to hear that Jeremiah is close to “burning out?”

What type of feedback could Kayla give to Jeremiah?

How would Jeremiah feel if Kayla was passively listening rather than actively listening?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Listening Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Kayla is a human resources manager, who works in a corporate office, helping employees with their work-related issues. One day, Kayla is approached by one of her employees, Jeremiah, who wants to talk to her about his work stresses. Jeremiah explains that he is going through a tough time in his personal life and finding it hard to focus on his work.

Jeremiah further elaborates that he is struggling to maintain a work-life balance and feels like he is going to burn out soon. Kayla knows that she needs to actively listen to Jeremiah to understand his concerns and see how she can help him. She asks him to have a seat and turns off her computer screen to avoid any distractions.

Kayla patiently listens while Jeremiah pours out his heart and describes his problems. She nods at appropriate times and paraphrases what he said after he is done talking to ensure that she correctly understands his concerns. Kayla wants to make sure that Jeremiah knows that she cares about his well-being and that he is not alone in his struggles.

REFLECT on the situation:

What else can Kayla do or say to show Jeremiah she is actively listening?

Kayla can clarify terms if she is unsure of a word or phrase Jeremiah says, not interrupt him while he is speaking, listen “between the lines,” and avoid filling silent voids.

Do you think it would be difficult for Kayla to hear that Jeremiah is close to “burning out?”

Yes, it would be difficult to hear that an employee is close to burning out because of their work stress.

What type of feedback could Kayla give to Jeremiah?

Kayla could paraphrase what has been said, such as, “What I am hearing is that you are struggling to maintain a work-life balance, is that correct?” She could also periodically summarize Jeremiah’s comments.

How would Jeremiah feel if Kayla was passively listening rather than actively listening?

Jeremiah would feel that Kayla was not interested in what he had to say and would question her ability to be an effective human resources manager.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Seven – Listening

LEARN: Listening Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to the active listening skills required to be successful in the workplace. Additionally, participants will recognize the benefits of being an active listener and learn five tips to improve their active listening skills.

Materials:

- *Listening* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Listening

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is listening.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Learn the difference between passive and active listening
- Understand why active listening is an essential skill in the workplace
- Identify how to use active listening skills
- Recognize the benefits of being an active listener
- Discover five tips to improve your active listening skills

Slide 3: What Is Passive Listening?

Passive listening is “the act of listening without being fully invested in and tuned into the speaker.” Often, people are distracted or not interested in what the speaker has to say.

Many people joke that passive listeners “listen with one ear,” “goes in one ear and out the other,” or that what is said to them “falls on deaf ears.”

Passive listening is not a desirable trait or employability skill. Instead, you must be an active listener, which we will cover next.

Slide 4: What Is Active Listening?

The opposite of passive listening is active listening, which is the act of listening while being fully engaged and attentive to the speaker.

Active listening includes hearing the words, interpreting the words, and responding to the speaker. Active listeners pay attention not only to the words but to the speaker’s appearance, expressions, and body language, which all play an essential role in understanding the whole meaning of the message the speaker relays. Active listening takes effort and a commitment to be fully present and engaged with the person you are listening to.

Slide 5: Video

Instructor Note: After this short video, ask participants questions pertaining to active listening, such as:

- What kinds of distractions can interfere with active listening?
- What other actions can be taken to improve active listening skills?
- Do the participants consider themselves active listeners?

Then, you can move on to the next slide.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2z9mdX1j4A>

Slide 6: Why Is Active Listening an Essential Skill in the Workplace?

Active listening is an essential workplace skill as it leads to better communication and builds stronger relationships with your customers, coworkers, and managers.

When employees actively listen, they are less confused about what needs to be accomplished at their job, which increases productivity.

Active listening also helps reduce workplace accidents, which can be caused when employees do not pay attention during workplace training.

Slide 7: How to Use Active Listening Skills

- Clarify terms. If the speaker uses a word you are unfamiliar with, have them clarify the meaning at the start of the conversation.
- Repeat/paraphrase. Repeat back some of the words the speaker is saying so they know you are listening and can correct you if you misunderstood something.
- Do not interrupt. Let the speaker talk freely so they can say all they want. While they are speaking, you can formulate questions you would like to ask them when they are done. However, there is a fine line with this. For example, suppose you have a coworker who is talking about something and goes off track or starts repeating themselves. In that case, you may have to gently interrupt and ask them a specific question to redirect them back into the conversation.
- Listen “between the lines.” This is like “reading between the lines.” You want to listen to the speaker’s words, values, feelings, assumptions, fears, and wishes. Use your instinct to determine if the speaker means what they are saying or if

they are only saying what they think you want to hear.

- Do not fill silent voids. Often, people will be quiet while they collect their thoughts and think about what they want to say. Silence can also reflect emotional discomfort. Allowing the person to be silent can provide the space they need to formulate what they would like to say.

Slide 8: Benefits of Using Active Listening

- Eases fear and anxiety. By smiling, making eye contact, and offering a greeting, you can help ease fear and anxiety some people may have when conducting business. By giving your undivided attention, the person you are speaking with sees that you genuinely care about them.
- Builds trust and boosts confidence. When the person you are talking with sees that you are fully engaged, they are more likely to disclose more information and ask questions.
- Less chance of misunderstandings. When you actively listen to people, you may catch something that could be interpreted in several ways. Ask the speaker to clarify what they said, so there is no misunderstanding.
- Enables better customer service. When employees actively listen to their customers, they may notice clues that will enable them to provide better service.
- Provides improved medical outcomes. When you are engaged with your patient, you will offer better care, leading to improved medical outcomes.

Slide 9: 5 Tips to Improve Your Active Listening Skills

1. Pay attention
2. Demonstrate that you are listening
3. Give feedback
4. Do not judge
5. Respond appropriately

These tips will be covered in greater detail in the following slides.

Slide 10: Tip 1: Pay Attention

Provide the speaker with your undivided attention, using verbal and nonverbal communication:

- Look the speaker in the eyes unless you are taking notes about what they are telling you. If taking notes, occasionally look up and make eye contact, showing them that you are engaged in what they are saying.
- Do not mentally prepare a rebuttal. You may disagree with what the speaker is saying, but you want to stay open and not dispute what they are telling you.
- Put aside distracting thoughts. When you show up to work, you must put aside any personal issues you may have and keep your mind open and focused on your customers and coworkers.
- Avoid being distracted by outside factors, such as conversations others may be having around you, ringing telephones, or any other outside noise.

Slide 11: Tip 2: Demonstrate That You are Listening

Show the speaker that you are genuinely listening and interested in what they are saying by using body language:

- Face the speaker, looking them in the eyes
- Occasionally nod in response
- Smile when appropriate
- Keep your arms uncrossed

Slide 12: Tip 3: Give Feedback

Your role is to listen and understand what the speaker is saying. To show that you are listening, provide the following feedback:

1. Paraphrase what has been said by saying, “What I am hearing is...” and “It sounds like you are saying...”
2. Ask clarifying questions, such as “What do you mean when you say...?”
3. Periodically summarize the speaker’s comments.

Slide 13: Tip 4: Do Not Judge

Even if you do not agree with what the speaker is saying, refrain from interrupting them. Allow them to finish speaking before asking questions, and do not argue with them about what they have told you.

Keep your body language and facial expressions neutral, and do not speak to them in a condescending manner. No one likes to be judged.

Slide 14: Tip 5: Respond Appropriately

To encourage respect from the people you interact with, you must respond appropriately without putting them down.

After actively listening to what has been said, do the following:

- Be candid and honest in your response
- Voice your opinions respectfully
- Treat people how you would like to be treated

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have students do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Active Listening Practice

There are several strategies you can use to practice your active listening skills. These are listed below:

- Parroting: Repeating the message
- Paraphrasing: Rephrasing the message in your own words
- Reflecting Feelings/Validating: Showing understanding and valuing of the opinion, even if you don’t agree
- Empathizing: Expressing care and sensitivity to the message sender’s feelings, opinions, and experience

For each of the statements in their workbook, have participants use the active listening strategies shown to rephrase the statement.

Activity 2: Active Listening Practice

Have participants write a complaint statement that they might hear as a customer service representative. Using four active listening strategies, have them rephrase the statement in four different ways.

Next, pair up participants. Have one participant in each pair pretend they are a customer service representative. The other participant will pretend they are a customer with a complaint.

The participant playing the customer will read their complaint statement while the other participant listens carefully and responds appropriately.

Have participants use the tips for active listening in a customer service interaction. They should compare their response to the active listening statements that they and their partner prepared in advance.

Lesson Seven – Listening

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Listening Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a listening scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Listening Quiz*
- *Listening Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Listening Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to work on it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Listening scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' listening skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Listening Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to demonstrate that you are listening to the speaker?
 - a. Look the speaker in the eyes
 - b. Face the speaker
 - c. Smile when appropriate
 - d. Keep your arms crossed
2. Which of the following terms is used to describe passive listeners?
 - a. Goes in one ear and out the other
 - b. Listens with both ears
 - c. Falls on open ears
 - d. Attentive listeners
3. Why is active listening an essential skill in the workplace?
 - a. It improves your chance of being hired
 - b. It helps reduce workplace accidents
 - c. It increases your chance of being promoted
 - d. It leads to decreased productivity
4. Which of the following describes passive listening?
 - a. Listening without being fully invested in and tuned into the speaker
 - b. Listening without interrupting the speaker
 - c. Listening while being fully engaged and attentive to the speaker
 - d. Listening without judging the speaker
5. There are many components to active listening. Which of the following is **not** one of the components?
 - a. Hearing the words
 - b. Interpreting the words
 - c. Passing judgment
 - d. Responding to the speaker

Listening Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to demonstrate that you are listening to the speaker?
 - a. Look the speaker in the eyes
 - b. Face the speaker
 - c. Smile when appropriate
 - d. Keep your arms crossed**
2. Which of the following terms is used to describe passive listeners?
 - a. Goes in one ear and out the other**
 - b. Listens with both ears
 - c. Falls on open ears
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3. Why is active listening an essential skill in the workplace?
 - a. It improves your chance of being hired
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 - d. It leads to decreased productivity
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 - a. Listening without being fully invested in and tuned into the speaker**
 - b. Listening without interrupting the speaker
 - c. Listening while being fully engaged and attentive to the speaker
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5. There are many components to active listening. Which of the following is **not** one of the components?
 - a. Hearing the words
 - b. Interpreting the words
 - c. Passing judgment**
 - d. Responding to the speaker

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Lesson Eight – Respect

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of respect and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will learn about the differences they will encounter in the workplace, recognize how to respect differences, and explore ways to become a respectful person. Participants will then role-play using the Respect scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define respect and its significance in the workplace
- Understand why respect is an essential employability skill
- Learn about the differences in culture, age, gender, and abilities they will encounter in the workplace
- Recognize how to respect differences in the workplace
- Explore how to become a respectful person

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Respect Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Respect Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Respect Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Respect</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Respect</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Respect Quiz</i> • <i>Respect Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Print the <i>Respect Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Respect Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 3. Have the <i>Respect</i> scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Respect Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Eight – Respect

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Respect Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of respect skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Respect Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Respect Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Respect Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Respect Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Respect Introduction Scenario

Paris is a team leader working in a large corporation. She managed a team of employees who are responsible for developing software applications. One day, Paris received a request from one of her team members, Alex, to have a one-on-one meeting with her. During the meeting, Alex shared that he is having difficulties working with one of his colleagues, Mark.

Alex explains that Mark has been repeatedly disrespecting him by interrupting him during meetings, taking credit for his work, and making sarcastic comments about his ideas. Paris listens to Alex carefully and empathetically, understanding how frustrating and demotivating the situation can be for him. She is aware that it is her responsibility to maintain a positive work environment for her team members and to address any issues that may arise.

Paris acknowledges Alex's feelings and assures him that she will take appropriate action to resolve the situation. She advises Alex to document the incidents and promises to investigate the matter further. Paris encourages Alex to speak up if he experiences any similar incidents in the future and assures him that she will always have his back.

By actively listening to Alex and demonstrating her commitment to a respectful workplace culture, Paris helps Alex feel supported and valued as a member of her team

REFLECT on the situation:

What did Paris do to show Alex that she is respectful of his feelings?

Do you think Alex should have spoken directly to Mark about how he's being disrespectful?

How is Mark disrespectful towards Alex?

How would you manage this situation if you were Paris?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Respect Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Paris is a team leader working in a large corporation. She managed a team of employees who are responsible for developing software applications. One day, Paris received a request from one of her team members, Alex, to have a one-on-one meeting with her. During the meeting, Alex shared that he is having difficulties working with one of his colleagues, Mark.

Alex explains that Mark has been repeatedly disrespecting him by interrupting him during meetings, taking credit for his work, and making sarcastic comments about his ideas. Paris listens to Alex carefully and empathetically, understanding how frustrating and demotivating the situation can be for him. She is aware that it is her responsibility to maintain a positive work environment for her team members and to address any issues that may arise.

Paris acknowledges Alex's feelings and assures him that she will take appropriate action to resolve the situation. She advises Alex to document the incidents and promises to investigate the matter further. Paris encourages Alex to speak up if he experiences any similar incidents in the future and assures him that she will always have his back.

By actively listening to Alex and demonstrating her commitment to a respectful workplace culture, Paris helps Alex feel supported and valued as a member of her team

REFLECT on the situation:

What did Paris do to show Alex that she is respectful of his feelings?

Paris actively listened to Alex with empathy, acknowledged his concerns, and said she was going to investigate the matter further.

Do you think Alex should have spoken directly to Mark about how he's being disrespectful?

More needs to be known about the dynamics between Alex and Mark and what the workplace policies say regarding conflict between coworkers. However, there is no wrong answer, as every student will manage conflict differently.

How is Mark disrespectful towards Alex?

Mark has been repeatedly disrespecting Alex by interrupting him during meetings, taking credit for his work, and making sarcastic comments about his ideas.

How would you manage this situation if you were Paris?

I would investigate the situation by talking with Mark, asking for his side of the story, and expressing my concerns if Mark was indeed found being disrespectful towards Alex. I would document the meeting, and discipline Mark based on my company's policies.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Eight – Respect

LEARN: Respect Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to respect and its significance in the workplace, as well as an understanding of why respect is an essential employability skill.

Additionally, participants will learn how to respect differences in the workplace while becoming a more respectful person.

Materials:

- *Respect* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Respect

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is respect.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define respect and its significance in the workplace
- Understand why respect is an essential employability skill
- Learn about the differences in culture, age, gender, and abilities you will encounter in the workplace
- Recognize how to respect differences in the workplace
- Explore how to become a respectful person

Slide 3: What Is Respect?

Respect means to demonstrate admiration for someone or something that you believe has good qualities or ideas. It also means that you accept someone for who they are, even if you do not agree with them.

When you have respect for someone, you have a good opinion of them. Respect can also be used as an adjective to mean to show consideration of others.

For example, you are being respectful to your teachers when you put your phone away during a lesson or to your parents when you bring in the groceries from the car.

Slide 4: Video

Instructor Note: After this short video, ask participants questions pertaining to the video, such as:

- Do you know the name of the person who cleans your school?
- What are ways to show respect?
- What did you get from the video?

Then, you can move on to the next slide. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADq-YGhtng8>

Slide 5: Why Is Respect Needed in the Workplace?

When a business creates a culture of respect in the workplace, the following happens:

- Better employee morale. The employees are happier and more positive.
- Increased productivity. When employees are respected at work, they work harder and produce more.

- Better performance. Employees perform their jobs better when their hard work is noticed.
- Less use of sick days. Employees who feel valued at work look forward to going to work and are less stressed, which can prevent stress-induced illness or injury
- Greater employee retention. When employees are happy at their jobs, they want to keep their jobs and tend not to quit as often.
- Improved collaboration. Employees who feel respected by their peers and managers work better together as a team.
- Less legal issues. If an employee does not feel respected by their managers or bosses, they can often find ways to cause legal issues for the company, such as suing for harassment or discrimination.

Not all businesses create a culture of respect and allow their employees to bully, ridicule, and make fun of others. However, this is a toxic and negative environment, and many employees do not last long in this type of work environment.

Slide 6: Why Is Respect an Essential Employability Skill?

For reasons mentioned in the previous slide, most employers want to create a culture of respect. To create a culture of respect, they must hire respectful employees.

While it is hard to demonstrate that you are a respectful person on a job application or resume, how you act during your job interview will show the interviewer that you are respectful.

Look them in the eyes when you are conversing, shake their hand when you are introduced, do not interrupt, and thank them for their time at the end of the interview.

Slide 7: Video

Instructor Note: After this four-minute video, ask participants questions pertaining to the video, such as:

- What did you get from the video?
- Do participants at their school treat other participants with respect?
- How can they be more respectful of people's differences?

Then, you can move on to the next slide, which talks about differences in the workplace. Video link for reference <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t40SZtaJo84>

Slide 8: Differences in the Workplace

In the workplace, you will often work with a diverse group of people. While you may or may not agree with everything your coworkers or managers say or do, it is important to be inclusive and respect their differences in:

- Culture
- Age
- Gender
- Abilities

We will go into greater detail on respecting these differences on the following slide.

Slide 9: How to Respect Differences in the Workplace

1. Be open-minded. Try to understand and accept the differences that exist among your coworkers. Be respectful of their customs, beliefs, and practices.
2. Avoid making assumptions. Do not assume that everyone thinks, feels, or acts the same way you do. Instead, take the time to learn about your coworkers and their backgrounds.
3. Avoid stereotypes. Avoid making assumptions based on a person's age, gender, or abilities. Treat everyone as an individual and do not generalize based on their demographic characteristics.
4. Use inclusive language. Be mindful of the language you use. Avoid using terms that could be perceived as offensive or exclusionary.

5. Be patient. Understand that people may have different communication styles, and it may take some time to understand how to communicate effectively with everyone.
6. Avoid discrimination. Discrimination has no place in the workplace. If you witness or experience discrimination, report it to the appropriate person or department.
7. Promote diversity. Celebrate the diversity within your workplace and encourage others to do the same. Create a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels respected and valued.

Slide 10: Tips on How to Be Respectful

1. Be kind
2. Be polite
3. Practice compassion
4. Listen to others
5. Think before you speak

These tips will be covered in greater detail in the following slides.

Slide 11: Tip 1: Be Kind

To be kind means you choose to do something that helps others, and that you generally put the needs of others before yourself.

For example, being kind could be offering an older adult person your seat on a bus, or giving a classmate half of your sandwich when they forgot their lunch.

You can also be kind to yourself by taking care of your health, eating well, spending time with loved ones, getting enough rest, and exercising.

Slide 12: Tip 2: Be Polite

Being polite is an integral part of showing respect to others. Politeness involves using kind and courteous language, showing good manners, and treating others with dignity and respect.

When you are polite, you demonstrate that you value the other person's feelings and opinions. This can help to build trust and foster positive relationships with others.

Additionally, practicing politeness can also help you to become more aware of your own behavior and interactions with others, which can lead to an overall improvement in your level of respect towards others.

Slide 13: Tip 3: Practice Compassion
Practicing compassion means showing empathy, kindness, and understanding towards others. It involves being aware of and sensitive to the suffering of others and taking action to alleviate that suffering in any way possible.

Compassion can take many forms, such as volunteering your time, donating to charity, or simply offering a listening ear to someone in need. By practicing compassion, we can create a more caring and supportive world for ourselves and those around us.

Slide 14: Tip 4: Listen to Others

Listening to others is a key aspect of being a respectful person. When you take the time to truly hear what someone else is saying, you are showing them that you value their opinions and thoughts.

It allows you to gain a deeper understanding of their perspective, which can help you build stronger relationships based on mutual respect and trust.

Additionally, actively listening to others can help you avoid misunderstandings and conflicts, as you are better equipped to communicate effectively and address any concerns or issues that may arise.

Overall, listening is an essential skill for anyone who wants to be a respectful and empathetic person.

Slide 15: Tip 5: Think Before You Speak

Thinking before speaking can help you become a more respectful person in several ways.

1. Taking a moment to reflect on what you want to say can help you choose your words more carefully and avoid saying something hurtful or offensive.
 2. It can show that you value the opinions of others and are not just interested in expressing your own ideas.
 3. It can help you express yourself more clearly and effectively, which can lead to more productive conversations and fewer misunderstandings.
 4. It can demonstrate that you are a thoughtful and considerate person who takes the time to consider the impact of your words on others.
2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Respect Self-Assessment

Have participants complete a self-assessment and decide for themselves if they need to improve in any way.

Activity 2: Corporate Values

Have participants research a company they would like to work for and investigate if it values respect in its workplace culture.

Write a report in the space below on how the company promotes respect and how it benefits both the employees and the company.

Activity 3: R-E-S-P-E-C-T Qualities and Attributes

Have participants think of someone they highly respect. This could be a family member, teacher, classmate, celebrity, or athlete.

Have participants write down all the reasons they respect that person and write them a note. This will help participants identify what traits and qualities they admire and respect in someone, which can then be something they try to do in their life, so they are seen as a respectful person.

Lesson Eight – Respect

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Respect Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a respect scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Respect Quiz*
- *Respect Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Respect Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Respect scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' respect skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Respect Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of respect?
 - a. To demonstrate admiration for someone or something that you believe has good qualities or ideas
 - b. Not accepting someone for who they are if you disagree with them
 - c. To have morals and values that are considered superior to others
 - d. To have a feeling of contempt or disdain for others
2. Respect in the workplace is needed for many reasons. Which of the following is **not** one of the reasons?
 - a. Better employee morale
 - b. Decreased productivity
 - c. Less legal issues
 - d. Better performance
3. Why is respect an essential employability skill?
 - a. It improves your chance of being passed over for another candidate
 - b. It helps reduce workplace accidents
 - c. It increases your chance of being promoted
 - d. It helps create a culture of respect in the workplace
4. What would **not** be a good way to respect differences in the workplace?
 - a. Be closed-minded
 - b. Promote diversity
 - c. Avoid stereotypes
 - d. Be patient
5. What does it mean to be kind?
 - a. You choose not to help others
 - b. You choose to put your needs before others
 - c. You like passing judgment on others
 - d. You choose to do something that helps others

Respect Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the best definition of respect?
 - a. To demonstrate admiration for someone or something that you believe has good qualities or ideas**
 - b. Not accepting someone for who they are if you disagree with them
 - c. To have morals and values that are considered superior to others
 - d. To have a feeling of contempt or disdain for others
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Lesson Nine – Critical Thinking

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of critical thinking and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will also learn how employees use critical thinking skills and five steps to improve this skill. Participants will then role-play using the Critical Thinking scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Understand critical thinking skills
- Learn why this skill is an essential employability skill
- Discover how employees use critical thinking skills
- Learn the five steps to improve critical thinking

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Critical Thinking</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Critical Thinking</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Critical Thinking Quiz</i> • <i>Critical Thinking Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Critical Thinking Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Critical Thinking Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Critical Thinking scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Critical Thinking Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Nine – Critical Thinking

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Critical Thinking Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of critical thinking skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario

Andrea is a new employee at a busy restaurant. She is excited to start her first day as a hostess and hopes to work her way up in the restaurant industry. Andrea greets customers as they come in and seats them at their tables. One day, a customer comes in with a severe peanut allergy. He informs Andrea of his allergy and asks if there are any dishes on the menu that contain peanuts.

Andrea checks with the kitchen staff and confirms that there are no dishes containing peanuts on the menu. However, the customer is still hesitant to order and asks Andrea about the preparation of the dishes and the risk of cross-contamination. Andrea is unsure about the details of the food preparation, but she assures the customer that the restaurant takes allergies seriously and that she will double-check with the kitchen staff.

Andrea decides to speak to the head chef, who informs her that the restaurant uses peanut oil in some dishes and that there is a risk of cross-contamination. Andrea is now faced with a critical decision. She needs to decide how to inform the customer about the risk of allergen exposure without causing alarm.

Andrea decides to inform the customer of the potential risk and suggests alternative dishes that are safe for him to eat. The customer appreciates Andrea's honesty and knowledge and decides to leave the restaurant since there is a chance of cross-contamination. Andrea's critical thinking and ability to manage a tricky situation earned her the respect of her colleagues and the gratitude of the customer.

REFLECT on the situation:

Do you think you would have reacted in the same manner as Andrea in this situation?

Besides using critical thinking skills, what other skills did Andrea use in this scenario?

Did Andrea have much time to analyze the problem and develop a solution?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Critical Thinking Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Andrea is a new employee at a busy restaurant. She is excited to start her first day as a hostess and hopes to work her way up in the restaurant industry. Andrea greets customers as they come in and seats them at their tables. One day, a customer comes in with a severe peanut allergy. He informs Andrea of his allergy and asks if there are any dishes on the menu that contain peanuts.

Andrea checks with the kitchen staff and confirms that there are no dishes containing peanuts on the menu. However, the customer is still hesitant to order and asks Andrea about the preparation of the dishes and the risk of cross-contamination. Andrea is unsure about the details of the food preparation, but she assures the customer that the restaurant takes allergies seriously and that she will double-check with the kitchen staff.

Andrea decides to speak to the head chef, who informs her that the restaurant uses peanut oil in some dishes and that there is a risk of cross-contamination. Andrea is now faced with a critical decision. She needs to decide how to inform the customer about the risk of allergen exposure without causing alarm.

Andrea decides to inform the customer of the potential risk and suggests alternative dishes that are safe for him to eat. The customer appreciates Andrea's honesty and knowledge and decides to leave the restaurant since there is a chance of cross-contamination. Andrea's critical thinking and ability to manage a tricky situation earned her the respect of her colleagues and the gratitude of the customer.

REFLECT on the situation:

Do you think you would have reacted in the same manner as Andrea in this situation?

There is no right or wrong answer to this question as everyone will respond differently.

Besides using critical thinking skills, what other skills did Andrea use in this scenario?

Andrea used communication skills, problem solving, attention to detail, teamwork, decision-making, active listening (part of communication), empathy, dependability, and interpersonal skills.

Did Andrea have much time to analyze the problem and develop a solution?

No, Andrea had to think quickly on her feet and determine if there were any peanuts used in the dishes that could cause an allergic reaction in the customer.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Nine – Critical Thinking

LEARN: Critical Thinking Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to critical thinking skills, why they are essential employability skills, how employees use them in the workplace, and five steps to improve critical thinking.

Materials:

- *Critical Thinking* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Critical Thinking

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is critical thinking.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Understand critical thinking skills
- Learn why this skill is an essential employability skill
- Discover how employees use critical thinking skills
- Learn the five steps to improve critical thinking

Slide 3: What Is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is “a logical process to gather information and take purposeful action based on your evaluation.” The critical thinking process includes collecting information and data, asking questions, and analyzing possible solutions.

Critical thinking skills are necessary to help with problem solving and decision-making. Many experts have identified specific skills that demonstrate one has critical thinking, such as the ability to identify problems, draw conclusions, and determine the relevance of information as it relates to a particular situation.

Slide 4: Video

Instructor Note: This video has a slightly different definition of critical thinking than what was mentioned in the previous slide. However, the narrator of the video acknowledges there are many different definitions, so this video is applicable to the lesson.

After playing the video, ask participants questions pertaining to the video, such as:

- What did you get from the video?
- Do you feel you have critical thinking skills?
- How can critical thinking skills be beneficial in the workplace?

Then, you can move on to the next slide.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLyUHbexz04>

Slide 5: Why Is Critical Thinking an Essential Employability Skill?

In today's technology-driven work environments, critical thinking skills enable employees to make correct decisions. Even in non-tech environments, critical thinking helps employees solve problems and develop strategies that make them better at their jobs.

Employers are always looking for employees who are critical thinkers and problem-solvers.

Slide 6: How Do Employees Use Critical Thinking Skills?

Employees use critical thinking skills to analyze information, evaluate situations, and make decisions based on evidence and reasoning. They use these skills to identify problems, assess the available resources, and develop effective solutions. Critical thinking skills are essential in the workplace as they enable employees to think creatively, solve complex problems, and make informed decisions that can positively impact the organization. In addition to this, employees with strong critical thinking skills are highly valued by employers as they can help to improve productivity, reduce errors, and increase innovation in the workplace.

Slide 7: How to Think Critically

- Identify the issue or problem
- Think about why the problem exists and how it can be solved
- Collect data on the issue through research
- Organize your data
- Develop and execute solutions
- Analyze which solutions worked and which did not
- Identify ways to improve the solution

A fundamental part of critical thinking is to be objective, which means to analyze the problem or issue without allowing personal assumptions, emotions, or biases to influence how you think.

If you have a preconceived notion of something, you cannot fully open your mind to accept other solutions or ideas.

Slide 8: The 5 Steps to Improve Critical Thinking Skills

If you feel you need to improve your critical thinking skills, you generally need to improve other skills, as well. Following these five steps will help. Each of these steps will be covered in detail in the following slides.

1. Increase your observation skills
2. Foster analytical skills
3. Draw conclusions using inference skills
4. Strengthen communication skills
5. Improve problem-solving skills

Slide 9: Step 1: Increase Your Observation Skills

People who are observant can quickly sense and identify problems and can understand why something might be a problem.

Observant people can also predict when a problem might happen before it occurs based on past experiences. To increase your observation skills, train yourself to pay close attention to your surroundings.

Some techniques people use to become more observant include actively listening, journaling, and mindfulness techniques to examine what you see and hear throughout the day.

Slide 10: Step 2: Foster Analytical Skills

Analytical skills are essential to analyze and evaluate a situation or problem that has been identified.

This includes gathering information, asking questions to ensure the information is correct, and assessing any findings in an objective manner.

To foster analytical skills, try taking on new experiences to begin thinking in new ways and help you consider new ideas. For example, you can watch a video about something you are unfamiliar with or take an online class to learn a new subject. This will push you to learn something new while improving your analytical skills.

Slide 11: Step 3: Draw Conclusions Using Inference Skills

An inference occurs when you develop answers based on limited information. After receiving the information, you then draw a conclusion from the information you have.

For example, a mechanic might infer the reason a car is running poorly based on the information the owner provides. To improve inference skills, practice making educated guesses rather than quickly coming to a conclusion.

This requires you to slow down and carefully look for as many clues as possible that might help you evaluate the situation.

For example, a mechanic might infer the reason a car is running poorly based on the information the owner provides. To improve inference skills, practice making educated guesses rather than quickly coming to a conclusion.

Slide 12: Step 4: Strengthen Communication Skills

Communication skills are used in every work environment and are important for explaining and discussing ideas, problems, and solutions with coworkers, managers, and customers.

To improve your communication skills and make you a better critical thinker, engage in difficult discussions. These discussions can be about something you and the other person do not agree with.

Practice actively listening, give them respect, and pay attention to the body language of the person you are communicating with. Strengthening your

communication skills will help you become a more critical thinker by helping you get past surface-level communication and communicate on a deeper level. In turn, you are better able to observe and identify the thought process and reasoning of people you are communicating with.

Slide 13: Step 5: Improve Problem-Solving Skills

Critical thinking is needed to solve problems, so improving your problem-solving skills will naturally help improve your critical thinking skills.

To improve your problem-solving skills, you can acquire more knowledge about the industry in which you work so you are better equipped to solve problems when they occur.

If you have a lot of knowledge of the industry, you can observe how others solve problems, take note of their techniques, and ask questions about their process.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: How to Think Critically

Participants learned the steps for thinking critically in this lesson. Using these steps, have them think critically about the problem in their student workbook and how you would solve it using these steps.

Activity 2: Critical Thinking Design Challenge – Pipe Cleaner Tower

Have participants complete some pre-design work in their student workbook for this activity. After five minutes, tell participants that they will use pipe cleaners to build the tallest, free-standing tower that they can within 10 minutes.

Break participants up into groups of three or four. Distribute bundles of 15 pipe cleaners to each group. Ask for any questions and then tell them to begin.

After two to three minutes have passed, tell them to freeze. Tell participants that engineers often work within the restrictions of project plans and budgets.

To experience this, for the next two minutes, each team member must place one arm behind their back. Stop participants again.

Tell participants that, as engineers, we work in a global marketplace. This means being able to communicate with people from many different cultures and countries.

To experience this, participants may no longer talk. Tell participants they have two minutes to finish. Count down from 10 and ask all participants to stop working on their structures.

Walk around the room and make note of all the different shapes and designs that the participants have created. Compare the towers commenting on the good points of their design and find the tallest, free-standing structure among them.

Activity 2 Debrief: Ask participants if everyone came up with the same design, and why not? They should answer that they all have different ideas, and this speaks to the importance and role of diversity in critical thinking and problem solving.

Discuss the different shapes that the teams used for the foundation of their structure, and how they may have used beams and columns to support their structures.

Ask what they could have done differently if they did this again.

Lesson Nine – Critical Thinking

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a critical thinking scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Critical Thinking Quiz*
- *Critical Thinking Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Critical Thinking Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.

3. Display the Critical Thinking scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' critical thinking skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Critical Thinking Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** included in the critical thinking process?
 - a. Collecting information
 - b. Ignoring information
 - c. Asking questions
 - d. Analyzing possible solutions
2. What other skill is strongly associated with critical thinking as an employability skill?
 - a. Honesty
 - b. Integrity
 - c. Problem solving
 - d. Conflict resolution
3. When practicing making educated guesses rather than quickly coming to a conclusion, you are working to improve your ____ skills.
 - a. IQ
 - b. Inference
 - c. Insightful
 - d. Industrious
4. What is the best way to increase your observation skills?
 - a. Develop a questioning mind
 - b. Train yourself to pay close attention to your surroundings
 - c. Use a process of elimination
 - d. Take on new experiences outside your comfort zone
5. What is the first step to thinking critically?
 - a. Identify ways to improve the solution
 - b. Develop and execute solutions
 - c. Collect data on the issue through research
 - d. Identify the issue or problem

Critical Thinking Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** included in the critical thinking process?
 - a. Collecting information
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 - c. Asking questions
 - d. Analyzing possible solutions
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 - d. Take on new experiences outside your comfort zone
5. What is the first step to thinking critically?
 - a. Identify ways to improve the solution
 - b. Develop and execute solutions
 - c. Collect data on the issue through research
 - d. Identify the issue or problem**

Sources

1. Herrity, Jennifer. (2023, August 25). *5 Top Critical Thinking Skills (And How To Improve Them)*. Retrieved from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/critical-thinking-skills>
2. The Indeed Editorial Team. (2023, July 31). *Critical Thinking: What It is and Why It is Important*. Retrieved from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/importance-of-critical-thinking>

Lesson Ten – Time Management

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of time management and its importance in the workplace. Participants will learn how to set SMART goals, explore time management tools, learn about procrastination, and understand how to track their time. Participants will then role-play using the Time Management scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define time management and its importance in the workplace
- Learn how to set SMART goals and prioritize tasks
- Explore different time management tools
- Identify causes and consequences of procrastination
- Understand how to track time
- Role-play time management scenarios

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Time Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Time Management Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Have the answer key available for reference. 2. Print the <i>Time Management Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant).	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Time Management</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Time Management</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Time Management Quiz</i> • <i>Time Management Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Have the <i>Time Management Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 2. Have the Time Management scenario card available for display or reference. 3. Have participants access the <i>Time Management Scenario</i> in their student workbook. 4. Print the <i>Time Management Quiz</i> (one per participant).	20 minutes

Lesson Ten – Time Management

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Time Management Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of time management skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Time Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Time Management Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Time Management Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Time Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Time Management Introduction Scenario

Dave is a marketing manager at a sneaker company. Dave oversees a team of social media analysts who are responsible for creating and implementing social media campaigns. One day, Dave received a request from one of his team members, Kelsey, to have a one-on-one meeting with him. During the meeting, Kelsey shared that she is having difficulties managing her time effectively and achieving her targets on time.

Kelsey explains that she is struggling to balance her workload and is often working overtime to complete her tasks. Dave carefully listens to Kelsey and understands how stressful and overwhelming the situation can be for her. He is aware that it is his responsibility to maintain a productive work environment for his team members and to address any issues related to time management that may arise.

Dave acknowledges Kelsey's concerns and assures her that he will take appropriate action to help her manage her time better. He advises Kelsey to prioritize her tasks based on their importance and to break them down into smaller, manageable tasks. Dave also suggests using time management tools, such as calendars, reminders, and to-do lists, to stay organized and on track with her goals.

Dave encourages Kelsey to speak up if she experiences any difficulties in the future and assures her that he will always be there to support her.

REFLECT on the situation:

Do you think it is Dave's responsibility to help Kelsey manage her time?

Do you have any other ideas on how Kelsey could manage her time better?

What tools do you use to manage your time?

What other skills are used for time management?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Time Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Dave is a marketing manager at a sneaker company. Dave oversees a team of social media analysts who are responsible for creating and implementing social media campaigns. One day, Dave received a request from one of his team members, Kelsey, to have a one-on-one meeting with him. During the meeting, Kelsey shared that she is having difficulties managing her time effectively and achieving her targets on time.

Kelsey explains that she is struggling to balance her workload and is often working overtime to complete her tasks. Dave carefully listens to Kelsey and understands how stressful and overwhelming the situation can be for her. He is aware that it is his responsibility to maintain a productive work environment for his team members and to address any issues related to time management that may arise.

Dave acknowledges Kelsey's concerns and assures her that he will take appropriate action to help her manage her time better. He advises Kelsey to prioritize her tasks based on their importance and to break them down into smaller, manageable tasks. Dave also suggests using time management tools such as calendars, reminders, and to-do lists to stay organized and on track with her goals.

Dave encourages Kelsey to speak up if she experiences any difficulties in the future and assures her that he will always be there to support her.

REFLECT on the situation:

Do you think it is Dave's responsibility to help Kelsey manage her time?

Answers will vary depending on the participant's opinion.

Do you have any other ideas on how Kelsey could manage her time better?

Avoid distractions, set SMART goals, delegate tasks when possible, track her time, and avoid procrastinating

What tools do you use to manage your time?

Answers will vary depending on the student.

What other skills are used for time management?

Critical thinking, problem solving, responsibility, work ethic, and communication, to name a few.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Ten – Time Management

LEARN: Time Management Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to time management skills and their significance in the workplace, as well as learn how to set SMART goals and prioritize tasks.

Additionally, participants will learn about different time management tools, the causes and consequences of procrastination, and how to track their time to become more proficient with time management.

Materials:

- *Time Management* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Time Management

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is time management.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define time management and its importance in the workplace
- Learn how to set SMART goals and prioritize tasks
- Explore different time management tools
- Identify causes and consequences of procrastination
- Understand how to track your time

- Role-play using the time management scenario cards

Slide 3: What Is Time Management?

Time management is the process of making the best use of the time available to you. People who are good time managers use their time wisely by planning and exercising control over their time.

They plan their day, prioritize tasks, and are flexible and adaptable with their schedules when something unforeseen occurs.

Slide 4: Why Is Time Management Important in the Workplace?

- Helps employees meet deadlines. Every job has a deadline. Whether it is getting a customer's food to their table in a timely manner or finishing a project for a customer by the time you promised them, time management is always involved.
- Increases productivity. When employees manage their time, they are more efficient, which leads to increased productivity. Good time managers prioritize high-priority tasks first and save lower-priority tasks for later, which increases the amount of work they produce.
- Helps employees prioritize tasks. When employees understand how to prioritize the most important work first, they can finish that work before moving on to lower-priority jobs. When employees understand the principles of good time management, they know how to evaluate their tasks and assign the appropriate amount of time to each based on its priority.
- Enhances reputation. When an organization has good time management

skills, it enhances its reputation to its customers. When a customer gets their order quickly or the employees finish a project by its deadline, the customers tend to be happier and recommend the business to their friends and family.

- Supports career development. When employees understand how to manage their time effectively and become more proficient at their jobs, they tend to be looked at as leaders and are more likely to advance their careers.
- Promotes discipline in employees. Time management can help employees develop good habits and tend to be more disciplined in how they approach work.

Slide 5: What Are SMART Goals?

SMART goals are a framework for setting goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. This framework helps individuals and organizations set clear and well-defined goals, making them easier to achieve.

By setting SMART goals, people can effectively manage their time and resources and monitor their progress toward achieving their goals.

For example, setting a SMART goal of increasing sales by 10% within the next quarter provides a clear target to work towards and a specific timeframe in which to achieve it.

This allows individuals and teams to focus their efforts and prioritize their tasks to accomplish the goal in a timely and efficient manner.

Slide 6: How to Set SMART Goals

Setting SMART goals is one of the most effective ways to achieve success in any area of your life.

SMART goals are designed to be specific, measurable, and actionable and will help you create goals and action steps to keep you on track to achieve your goals. The following slides will break down each component in more depth.

Slide 7: Specific

The “S” in SMART goals stands for specific. This means that goals should be clear, concise, and well-defined. The more specific a goal is, the easier it is to create an action plan and measure progress towards achieving it.

A specific goal should answer the questions of who, what, when, where, and why. For example, instead of setting a goal to get a job, a specific goal would be to apply to at least three customer service positions per day, five days a week, until I get a job.

Slide 8: Measurable

The letter “M” in SMART goals stands for measurable. This means that a goal should have specific criteria for measuring progress and determining when the goal has been achieved. Having a measurable goal helps to keep track of progress and stay motivated by providing clear indicators of success.

Slide 9: Achievable

The letter “A” in SMART goals stands for achievable or attainable. This means that the goal should be realistic and within reach, given the resources and time available.

It is important to set goals that challenge you, but also ones that are not so far-fetched that they are impossible to achieve.

Slide 10: Relevant

The “R” in SMART goals stands for relevant. This means that your goal should be related to your overall objectives and align with your long-term plans.

It is important to ensure that your goal is relevant to your current situation and that achieving it will make a meaningful impact on your personal or professional growth.

Slide 11: Time Bound

The “T” in SMART goals stands for time bound. This means that the goal should have a specific deadline or timeframe for completion.

Having a set timeframe helps to create a sense of urgency and accountability, as well as providing a clear target to work towards.

Slide 12: Video

Instructor Note: After playing this short video on SMART goals, you can ask participants to name some goals they might want to achieve, or you can move on to the next slide, depending on time constraints. SMART goal setting will be one of the activities for this lesson, so participants will have time to think of their goals. Video reference link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iyl_v-O_Cds

Slide 13: Prioritization Techniques

Prioritization is a key aspect of time management, as it helps individuals and teams focus on the most important tasks and goals, while not getting bogged down by less important or urgent tasks.

Prioritization techniques can help increase productivity, maintain focus, and reduce stress. One technique for prioritizing is the Eisenhower Matrix, which categorizes tasks by their urgency and importance.

Tasks are divided into four categories: urgent and important, important but not urgent, urgent but not important, and neither urgent nor important.

This helps to identify which tasks require immediate attention, and which can be delegated or postponed. Another technique is the ABC method, which involves categorizing tasks into three groups: A tasks are those that are critical and must be done, B tasks are important but not critical, and C tasks are less important or can be delegated.

This helps to ensure that the most important tasks are completed first, while also allowing for flexibility in managing other tasks.

Finally, the Pareto Principle, also known as the 80/20 rule, suggests that 80% of your results come from 20% of your efforts. This principle can be applied to prioritize tasks by identifying the 20% of tasks that will yield the greatest results and focusing on those before moving on to less important tasks.

Prioritization techniques help individuals and teams to manage their time effectively by identifying and focusing on the most important tasks, while also allowing for flexibility and adaptability in managing other tasks.

Slide 14: Time Management Tools

There are various time management tools that you can use to improve your productivity and manage your time effectively. Some common time management tools include:

1. **To-Do Lists:** This is a simple tool that helps you keep track of all the tasks you need to complete in a day. You can use a notebook or an app on your phone to create a to-do list and update it as you complete your tasks.
2. **Calendar:** A calendar is an excellent tool to help you schedule your appointments, meetings, and other tasks. You can use a physical calendar or an online calendar to keep track of your daily schedule.
3. **Pomodoro Timer:** The Pomodoro technique involves breaking down your workday into intervals of 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. A Pomodoro timer helps you adhere to this technique and stay focused on your work.
4. **Time Tracking Software:** Time tracking software allows you to monitor how you spend your time and identify areas where you can improve your productivity. These tools can also generate reports to help you analyze your work patterns and adjust.
5. **Task Management Apps:** These apps help you manage your tasks, deadlines, and projects. You can use these apps to

create and assign tasks, set deadlines, and track progress. Some popular task management apps include Trello, Asana, and Monday.com.

Slide 15: Causes of Procrastination

Procrastination is the act of delaying or postponing a task or activity that needs to be done, often until the last minute. There are several causes of procrastination, including:

1. **Fear of Failure:** Some people put off tasks because they are afraid of failing or making mistakes.
2. **Lack of Motivation:** When someone lacks motivation, they may find it difficult to get started on a task or project.
3. **Distractions:** With so many distractions available, it can be easy to get sidetracked and put off tasks that need to be completed.
4. **Perfectionism:** Some people are so focused on doing things perfectly that they delay starting a task until they feel they can do it perfectly.
5. **Poor Time Management:** If someone struggles with time management, they may find it difficult to prioritize tasks and end up procrastinating.

Slide 16: Consequences of Procrastination

Just like there are causes of procrastination, there are also consequences, such as:

1. **Stress:** Procrastination can lead to increased stress and anxiety, especially when deadlines are approaching.
2. **Poor Performance:** When someone puts off a task until the last minute, they may not have enough time to complete it to the best of their ability.
3. **Missed Opportunities:** Procrastination can lead to missed opportunities, such as job offers, promotions, or academic achievements.
4. **Guilt and Shame:** Procrastination can lead to feelings of guilt and shame, especially if it causes problems or affects others.
5. **Health Problems:** Chronic procrastination can lead to health

problems, such as insomnia, headaches, and digestive issues.

Slide 17: How to Track Your Time

One effective way to overcome procrastination is to track where you are spending your time. This will help you identify the activities that are taking up too much of your time and causing you to procrastinate.

To get started, create a time log in which you record all your activities throughout the day. Be sure to include everything from work tasks to leisure activities.

Once you have recorded your activities for a few days, look at the log and identify any patterns or areas where you are spending too much time.

After identifying the problem areas, set specific goals for how much time you want to spend on each activity. You can use a time tracking app or a simple spreadsheet to record your progress.

As you begin to track your time more effectively, you'll be able to overcome procrastination and improve your productivity.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Time Management for a Day

Have participants track their time for one day, starting when they wake up. They can use the form in their student workbook to see where they spend most of their time.

After participants have tracked their time for one day, have them determine what areas they want to spend less time so they can be more productive throughout the day.

This will be especially useful if participants tend to procrastinate.

Activity 2: Time Management Using SMART Goals

Participants learned about using SMART goals to help manage time and accomplish goals. Using what they learned from their one-day time study, have them identify one specific SMART goal that they would like to accomplish.

Activity 3: Prioritization Techniques – Pros and Cons

Participants learned about three different techniques to focus on the most important tasks and goals, while not getting bogged down by less important or urgent tasks.

In the space provided in their student workbooks, have students identify the pros and cons of each technique. In the end they should choose the one they like best and say why.

Lesson 10 – Time Management

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Time Management Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained from the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a time management scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Program Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Time Management Quiz*
- *Time Management Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Time Management Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Time Management scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participant' time management skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Time Management Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What kind of timer is recognized as a time management tool?
 - a. Smartwatch timer
 - b. Workplace timer
 - c. Kitchen timer
 - d. Pomodoro timer
2. Why is prioritization a key aspect of time management?
 - a. It helps focus on the most important tasks and goals
 - b. It helps focus on the least important tasks and assignments
 - c. It helps focus on what skills need improvement
 - d. It helps focus on how much overtime you need to work
3. What is the best definition of time management?
 - a. The process of delegating tasks to others so you have more time to yourself
 - b. The process of strictly watching the clock so you do not accrue overtime
 - c. The process of making the best use of the time available to you
 - d. The process of chipping away at a project until it is complete
4. When referring to SMART goals, what does the “S” represent?
 - a. Short
 - b. Sustainable
 - c. Stereotypical
 - d. Specific
5. The “A” in SMART goals stands for achievable or _____.
 - a. Attainable
 - b. Abatable
 - c. Acceptable
 - d. Accomplishable

Time Management Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What kind of timer is recognized as a time management tool?
 - a. Smartwatch timer
 - b. Workplace timer
 - c. Kitchen timer
 - d. Pomodoro timer**

2. Why is prioritization a key aspect of time management?
 - a. It helps focus on the most important tasks and goals**
 - b. It helps focus on the least important tasks and assignments
 - c. It helps focus on what skills need improvement
 - d. It helps focus on how much overtime you need to work

3. What is the best definition of time management?
 - a. The process of delegating tasks to others so you have more time to yourself
 - b. The process of strictly watching the clock so you do not accrue overtime
 - c. The process of making the best use of the time available to you**
 - d. The process of chipping away at a project until it is complete

4. When referring to SMART goals, what does the “S” represent?
 - a. Short
 - b. Sustainable
 - c. Stereotypical
 - d. Specific**

5. The “A” in SMART goals stands for achievable or _____.
 - a. Attainable**
 - b. Abatable
 - c. Acceptable
 - d. Accomplishable

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Lesson Eleven – Professionalism

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition and qualities of professionalism and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will also learn how to present themselves and positively communicate in the workplace to highlight their professional traits. Participants will then role-play using the Professionalism scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as homework assignments.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Learn the definition of professionalism and why it is an essential employability skill
- Understand the qualities of professionalism
- Recognize how presentation and communication skills highlight professionalism
- Identify how a positive attitude towards work and coworkers equals professionalism
- Discover the benefits of professionalism in the workplace and how to improve this skill

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Professionalism Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Professionalism Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Professionalism Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Professionalism</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Professionalism</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Professionalism Quiz</i> • <i>Professionalism Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Professionalism Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Professionalism Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Professionalism scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Professionalism Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Eleven – Professionalism

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Professionalism Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of professionalism skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Professionalism Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Professionalism Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Professionalism Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Professionalism Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Professionalism Introduction Scenario

Jane works at a catering service as a team leader. Her team is responsible for providing food and beverage services at various events and wedding venues. One day, Jane received a phone call from one of her clients, Bethany, who had hired them to cater her daughter's wedding. Bethany praised the quality of the food and drinks but also mentioned the high level of professionalism displayed by the team members. Jane was pleased to receive positive feedback from her client. She knew that professionalism was a key aspect of their business and that it was important to maintain high standards in the workplace. Jane shared the feedback with her team members and acknowledged their hard work and dedication. Jane emphasized the importance of professionalism in the workplace and how it could impact their business.

Jane commended her team members for always dressing appropriately, maintaining a positive attitude, and communicating effectively with clients and coworkers. She also encouraged them to continue being punctual, reliable, and honest. Jane's response to the positive feedback from her client demonstrates the importance of professionalism in the workplace. By maintaining high standards of professionalism, Jane's team has created a positive reputation for their catering service, which can lead to increased business opportunities and customer satisfaction. It also shows that by emphasizing the value of professionalism, Jane was able to create a work environment where employees feel valued and empowered to take ownership of their work.

REFLECT on the situation:

What are some other ways to show professionalism in the workplace?

Do you think professionalism can be taught to employees?

Have you ever been to an event that was catered? If so, did the catering team act professionally?

Suppose Bethany called and complained to Jane that her team was unprofessional. What could be signs that the catering team **wasn't** acting professionally?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Professionalism Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Jane works at a catering service as a team leader. Her team is responsible for providing food and beverage services at various events and wedding venues. One day, Jane received a phone call from one of her clients, Bethany, who had hired them to cater her daughter's wedding. Bethany praised the quality of the food and drinks but also mentioned the high level of professionalism displayed by the team members. Jane was pleased to receive positive feedback from her client. She knew that professionalism was a key aspect of their business and that it was important to maintain high standards in the workplace. Jane shared the feedback with her team members and acknowledged their hard work and dedication. Jane emphasized the importance of professionalism in the workplace and how it could impact their business.

Jane commended her team members for always dressing appropriately, maintaining a positive attitude, and communicating effectively with clients and coworkers. She also encouraged them to continue being punctual, reliable, and honest. Jane's response to the positive feedback from her client demonstrates the importance of professionalism in the workplace. By maintaining high standards of professionalism, Jane's team has created a positive reputation for their catering service, which can lead to increased business opportunities and customer satisfaction. It also shows that by emphasizing the value of professionalism, Jane was able to create a work environment where employees feel valued and empowered to take ownership of their work.

REFLECT on the situation:

What are some other ways to show professionalism in the workplace?

Provide excellent customer service, greet customers and coworkers with a smile, do tasks without being asked, have good hygiene, do not gossip, do not abuse company time by being on your phone, etc.

Do you think professionalism can be taught to employees?

Answers will vary depending on the student. However, most employees can be taught to be professional in the workplace by having excellent leaders directing them on how to do so.

Have you ever been to an event that was catered? If so, did the catering team act professionally?

Answers will vary by student.

Suppose Bethany called and complained to Jane that her team was unprofessional. What could be signs that the catering team **wasn't** acting professionally?

The team was rude, did not dress appropriately, were not happy and positive, did not do their jobs properly, were caught on their phones when they should have been working, did not greet customers with a smile, etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Eleven – Professionalism

LEARN: Professionalism Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to professionalism and its significance in the workplace, as well as the qualities of professional people.

Participants will also learn how their communication skills and the way they present themselves display their professional behavior, the benefits of professionalism, and how to improve this skill.

Materials:

- *Professionalism* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Professionalism

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is professionalism.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Learn the definition of professionalism and why it is an essential employability skill
- Understand the qualities of professionalism
- Recognize how presentation and communication skills highlight your professionalism

- Identify how a positive attitude towards work and coworkers equals professionalism
- Discover the benefits of professionalism in the workplace and how to improve this skill

Slide 3: What Is Professionalism?

Professionalism refers to the set of behaviors, attitudes, and qualities that are expected of someone who works in a professional environment.

This can include things like demonstrating expertise in your field, adhering to ethical standards, being reliable and accountable, communicating effectively, and maintaining a respectful and courteous demeanor toward colleagues and clients.

Essentially, professionalism is about conducting yourself in a way that inspires trust and respect from others in your workplace and industry.

Slide 4: Why Is Professionalism an Essential Employability Skill?

Professionalism is an essential employability skill because it refers to the behavior, attitudes, and skills that demonstrate a high level of competence and integrity in the workplace.

Employers expect their employees to behave in a professional manner, which means showing up on time, dressing appropriately, communicating effectively, and performing their duties to the best of their abilities. Professionalism also encompasses ethical behavior, respect for others, teamwork, and a commitment to continuous learning and development. In today's competitive job market, possessing strong professionalism skills can give job seekers a distinct

advantage and help them stand out to potential employers.

Slide 5: Video

Instructor Note: After this short video on professionalism in the workplace, ask participants questions pertaining to the video, such as:

- What other qualities make people appear professional?
- Do the participants carry themselves in a professional manner?
- What is the first thing they notice when they see a professional person?

Then, you can move on to the next slide.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC4TEKmySIM>

Slide 6: Professionalism Qualities

There are several qualities that define professionalism. Some of these include honesty and integrity, accountability, reliability, punctuality, respectfulness, and a strong work ethic. Additionally, professionalism often involves having a positive attitude, being a team player, communicating effectively, and continuously learning and improving your skills. Adopting these qualities can help individuals build a strong professional reputation and achieve success in their careers.

Slide 7: Presentation and Communication Skills

The way a person presents themselves and communicates can greatly impact how others perceive their professionalism. A person who presents themselves confidently and communicates clearly with others is more likely to be seen as professional compared to someone who seems nervous or unsure of themselves.

Effective communication skills enable a person to express their ideas, thoughts, and opinions in a clear and concise manner, and this can help them build strong relationships with their colleagues and clients.

On the other hand, poor communication skills can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, which can damage professional relationships.

Slide 8: Positive Attitude Towards Work and Coworkers

Maintaining a positive attitude towards work and coworkers is an essential aspect of professionalism in any workplace. When employees demonstrate a positive attitude, they show that they are committed to their work and are willing to contribute to the team's success.

This positive attitude can also inspire others to do the same, leading to a more productive and harmonious work environment. Additionally, a positive attitude towards coworkers shows respect and empathy, which are important values in any workplace. It helps create a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere that encourages cooperation, collaboration, and a sense of community. Overall, a positive attitude towards work and coworkers is a critical element of professionalism that can lead to individual and organizational success.

Slide 9: Benefits of Professionalism in the Workplace

There are many benefits of professionalism in the workplace, such as:

1. Enhanced credibility
2. Building trust with those you work with
3. Better job opportunities
4. Career advancement

We will cover each of these in-depth and give examples of how to improve your professionalism skills on the following slides.

Slide 10: Enhanced Credibility

Being professional in the workplace can enhance your credibility because you have demonstrated that you take your work seriously and are committed to achieving your goals.

Tips to improve your professionalism include dressing appropriately, communicating effectively, being punctual, being reliable, and maintaining a positive attitude. These actions show that you are committed to your work, respectful of others, and can be trusted as a valuable team member.

Slide 11: Building Trust

Professionalism in the workplace helps to build trust with coworkers, employers, and customers. When you conduct yourself in a professional manner, you demonstrate that you are reliable, competent, and accountable.

This can help to establish a sense of trust and confidence in your abilities, which can be invaluable when it comes to building strong working relationships.

One way to improve your coworkers' trust in you is to consistently demonstrate professionalism in your work. This means being reliable and accountable by meeting deadlines and fulfilling your commitments.

You can also communicate clearly and respectfully with your coworkers, actively listen to their feedback, and offer your own constructive feedback in return.

Slide 12: Better Job Opportunities

Professionalism in the workplace can create better opportunities for you by displaying your skills and abilities in a positive light.

When you conduct yourself in a professional manner, you are more likely to be recognized for your work, be given greater responsibilities, and be considered for promotions or other career advancement opportunities.

To improve your professionalism in the workplace, you can start by being punctual and reliable, showing respect to your colleagues and superiors, being proactive and taking initiative, and communicating effectively. Additionally, you can work to develop your skills and knowledge through

training, networking, and seeking feedback from others. By consistently demonstrating professionalism in your work, you can create a positive reputation for yourself and open up new opportunities for career growth and advancement.

Slide 13: Career Advancement

Professionalism in the workplace is crucial for career advancement because it is one of the key factors that employers look for when promoting or hiring employees.

Professionalism encompasses a variety of different traits, including punctuality, reliability, integrity, communication skills, and a positive attitude.

To improve your professionalism in the workplace, it is important to focus on developing these traits. One way to do this is by being punctual and reliable; show up to work on time and meet your deadlines consistently.

You should also communicate clearly and effectively with your colleagues and superiors and be open to feedback and constructive criticism.

Additionally, it is important to maintain a positive attitude and be respectful of others in the workplace. This means avoiding gossip and negative talk and treating your colleagues with kindness and empathy.

By embodying these traits, you can demonstrate your professionalism and increase your chances of career advancement.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Showing Professionalism

Have participants think of the ways that they show professionalism for each quality listed in their workbook. Then, have participants rate themselves from 1 to 10 on how strongly they believe they show this quality. Participants should choose one quality they would like to improve and list a few ways they can develop this quality.

Activity 2: Professionalism on a Resume

On the sample resume in the student workbook, have participants underline all the examples that highlight professionalism.

Lesson Eleven – Professionalism

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Professionalism Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they learned in a professionalism scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Professionalism Quiz*
- *Professionalism Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Professionalism Quiz* to students and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Professionalism scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' professionalism skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Professionalism Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What does **not** describe professionalism?
 - a. Demonstrating expertise
 - b. Adhering to ethical standards
 - c. Communicating ineffectively
 - d. Being reliable and accountable
2. Why is professionalism an essential employability skill?
 - a. It demonstrates a high level of competence and integrity in the workplace
 - b. It demonstrates your willingness to work on the least important tasks and assignments
 - c. It demonstrates you have a lot of work experience
 - d. It demonstrates how much overtime you are willing to work
3. What quality is **not** associated with professionalism?
 - a. Honesty
 - b. Team player
 - c. Accountability
 - d. Tardiness
4. The way a person ____ themselves and ____ greatly impacts how others perceive their professionalism.
 - a. Perceives, helps
 - b. Sells, listens
 - c. Humbles, looks
 - d. Presents, communicates
5. If an employee has a positive attitude at work, what can this lead to?
 - a. A more productive work environment
 - b. Disgruntled coworkers
 - c. A bad performance review
 - d. An unhappy manager

Professionalism Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What does **not** describe professionalism?
 - a. Demonstrating expertise
 - b. Adhering to ethical standards
 - c. Communicating ineffectively**
 - d. Being reliable and accountable
2. Why is professionalism an essential employability skill?
 - a. It demonstrates a high level of competence and integrity in the workplace**
 - b. It demonstrates your willingness to work on the least important tasks and assignments
 - c. It demonstrates you have a lot of work experience
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 - a. Honesty
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 - a. Perceives, helps
 - b. Sells, listens
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 - b. Disgruntled coworkers
 - c. A bad performance review
 - d. An unhappy manager

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Lesson Twelve – Decision-Making and Goal Setting

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of decision-making, different types of decisions in the workplace, and the importance of decision-making and goal setting in the workplace. Participants will also learn how to set goals using different methods, strategies for achieving goals, and how to highlight these employability skills to a potential employer. Participants will then role-play using the Decision-Making and Goal Setting scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as homework assignments.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define decision-making and the different types of decisions in the workplace
- Understand the importance of decision-making and goal setting in a work environment
- Learn how to set goals using different methods and strategies for achieving goals
- Identify how decision-making and goal setting are related
- Explore strategies for making decisions that support goals
- Discover how to highlight these employability skills to a potential employer

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Quiz</i> • <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Decision-Making and Goal Setting scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Decision-Making and Goal Setting Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Twelve – Decision-Making and Goal Setting

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Decision-Making and Goal Setting Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of decision-making and goal setting skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Decision-Making and Goal Setting

Introduction Scenario

Antonio is the manager of a popular movie theater in town. Candice is one of his employees who works in the ticket booth. One day, Antonio noticed the theater was not selling as many tickets as expected and sales were down. Since he respected Candice and her opinion, Antonio asked her if she had any ideas on how they could boost ticket sales.

Candice suggested they could offer better deals or a promotion to entice customers to buy tickets. Antonio thought it was a great idea and asked Candice to come up with a plan. Candice researched what promotions and deals other theaters were offering. She then came up with a list of ideas and shared it with Antonio.

Antonio reviewed the list and decided to implement a few of the ideas that he thought would work best for their theater. He discussed the plan with Candice and asked her to take charge of implementing and marketing the promotions. Candice was excited to take on this responsibility and worked hard to make sure that the promotions were pushed on social media and in the local news.

After a few weeks, Antonio noticed that ticket sales had increased significantly. He was pleased with the results and decided to have a meeting with Candice to discuss their success. During the meeting, Antonio praised Candice for her excellent work and the impact it had on the theater's profits. He also used this opportunity to discuss the importance of decision-making and goal setting in the workplace.

Antonio emphasized the importance of making informed decisions and setting specific goals to achieve success in any business. He encouraged Candice to continue taking the initiative and making decisions that would benefit the theater. Candice felt empowered and appreciated that Antonio valued her input and hard work, and felt it lined her up perfectly for a promotion in the future.

REFLECT on the situation:

What decisions did Candice have to make in this scenario?

If you were Candice, what goal setting method would you have used in this scenario, and why?

Why do you think Antonio asked Candice for her opinion on how to boost ticket sales?

Middle School Employability Skills Curriculum

How did Candice's initiative and hard work in implementing and advertising the promotions contribute to the success of the theater? What did you learn from her approach to decision-making and goal setting in the workplace?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Decision-Making and Goal Setting Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Antonio is the manager of a popular movie theater in town. Candice is one of his employees who works in the ticket booth. One day, Antonio noticed the theater was not selling as many tickets as expected and sales were down. Since he respected Candice and her opinion, Antonio asked her if she had any ideas on how they could boost ticket sales.

Candice suggested they could offer better deals or a promotion to entice customers to buy tickets. Antonio thought it was a great idea and asked Candice to come up with a plan. Candice researched what promotions and deals other theaters were offering. She then came up with a list of ideas and shared it with Antonio.

Antonio reviewed the list and decided to implement a few of the ideas that he thought would work best for their theater. He discussed the plan with Candice and asked her to take charge of implementing and marketing the promotions. Candice was excited to take on this responsibility and worked hard to make sure that the promotions were pushed on social media and in the local news.

After a few weeks, Antonio noticed that ticket sales had increased significantly. He was pleased with the results and decided to have a meeting with Candice to discuss their success. During the meeting, Antonio praised Candice for her excellent work and the impact it had on the theater's profits. He also used this opportunity to discuss the importance of decision-making and goal setting in the workplace.

Antonio emphasized the importance of making informed decisions and setting specific goals to achieve success in any business. He encouraged Candice to continue taking the initiative and making decisions that would benefit the theater. Candice felt empowered and appreciated that Antonio valued her input and hard work, and felt it lined her up perfectly for a promotion in the future.

REFLECT on the situation:

What decisions did Candice have to make in this scenario?

Candice had to decide what types of promotions would be best to increase ticket sales and how best to promote them.

If you were Candice, what goal setting method would you have used in this scenario, and why?

This will vary depending on the participant.

Why do you think Antonio asked Candice for her opinion on how to boost ticket sales?

Antonio asked Candice for her advice on how to boost ticket sales because he respected her opinion and felt that she may have some good ideas since she sells tickets and may have more of a “pulse” on what drives ticket sales.

How did Candice's initiative and hard work in implementing and advertising the promotions contribute to the success of the theater? What did you learn from her approach to decision-making and goal setting in the workplace?

The theater was successful because Candice had some great ideas and knew how to use social media and the local news to advertise the theater's promotions to boost ticket sales. I learned that it is a great idea to look at what other businesses have done to increase profits and use some of the same ideas.

There is no reason to reinvent the wheel, but it is also a great idea to have some new, creative ideas of your own. As far as goal setting, I think Candice was successful in reaching her goal because she broke down each task into micro-tasks, which makes achieving goals not as overwhelming.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Twelve – Decision-Making and Goal Setting

LEARN: Decision-Making and Goal Setting Slide Presentation and Activities

30 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to decision-making and the different types of decisions there are in the workplace. Participants will also learn how to set goals, strategies for achieving goals, and how to highlight decision-making and goal setting employability skills to future employers.

Materials:

- *Decision-Making and Goal Setting* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Decision-Making and Goal Setting
Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The ones we will cover in this lesson are decision-making and goal setting.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define decision-making and the different types of decisions in the workplace
- Understand the importance of decision-making and goal setting in a work environment
- Learn how to set goals using different methods and strategies for achieving goals
- Identify how decision-making and goal setting are related

- Explore strategies for making decisions that support goals
- Discover how to highlight these employability skills to a potential employer

Slide 3: What Is Decision-Making?

Decision-making is the process of selecting the best option from a set of available choices by considering several factors such as goals, constraints, risks, and benefits.

Decision-making is an essential skill in both personal and professional life as it helps individuals make informed choices that can lead to success and positive outcomes.

In the workplace, decision-making is considered an important employability skill because it enables employees to contribute effectively to the organization's goals.

Effective decision-making involves critical thinking, problem solving, and a thorough understanding of the business and industry.

Successful decision-making also requires the ability to analyze and evaluate information, consider different perspectives, and make sound judgments based on available data.

Slide 4: Different Types of Decisions in a Work Environment

There are several types of decisions that you might encounter in a work environment. Some of the common types include strategic decisions, tactical decisions, operational decisions, and routine decisions. Strategic decisions are long-term decisions that are made by top-level management. They are focused on achieving the overall Goals of the organization. Tactical decisions are medium-term decisions made by middle-level management. They are focused on achieving specific objectives and targets within the organization's overall strategy.

Operational decisions are short-term decisions made by lower-level management. They are focused on the organization's day-to-day activities and processes. Routine decisions are made on a regular basis by all employees and management and do not require much thought or analysis. However, each type of decision requires a different level of analysis and decision-making skills. Therefore, it is important for individuals to understand the different types of decisions and the appropriate decision-making process for each type.

Slide 5: What Is Goal Setting?

Goal setting is the process of taking active steps to achieve your desired outcome. It is a valuable tool for personal and professional growth as it helps you focus your efforts and track your progress toward achieving your desired outcomes.

In the workplace, goal setting is essential for several reasons. First, it helps align individual and team efforts with the company's mission and vision.

By setting goals that are aligned with the company's objectives, individuals and teams can work towards achieving them in a more productive and efficient manner.

Second, goal setting provides clarity and direction to employees. It helps them understand what they need to do, how they need to do it, and when they need to do it by.

This clarity helps to reduce confusion, which can lead to more focused and effective work. Third, setting and achieving goals can provide employees with a sense of accomplishment and motivation.

By achieving their goals, employees feel a sense of pride and satisfaction, which can boost their morale, motivation, and engagement levels.

Slide 6: Different Methods to Set Goals

There are various methods you can use to set goals. Here, we will cover five of the most common ones:

1. SMART goals
2. HARD goals
3. WOOP goals
4. Micro goals
5. Visual goals

These will each be covered more in-depth on the following slides.

Slide 7: 1. SMART Goals

SMART goals are a popular method for creating effective and achievable goals. The acronym SMART stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

When setting a goal, it is important to make sure that it is clear and specific, has a way to measure progress, is realistic and achievable, is relevant to your overall objectives, and has a deadline for completion.

Many employers like using SMART goals because they are designed to be realistic, meaning you are more likely to achieve your goal.

Slide 8: 2. HARD Goals

HARD goals are a specific type of goal setting method used in the workplace. HARD stands for heartfelt, animated, required, and difficult. Heartfelt refers to the idea that the goal should be personally meaningful to the individual. Animated means that the goal should be inspiring and motivating. Required means that the goal aligns with what is needed from the individual or team in their role. Difficult means that the goal should be challenging but achievable.

HARD goals are used in the workplace to help individuals and teams set meaningful and challenging goals that align with the overall mission and vision of the organization. This goal setting framework can help increase motivation, engagement, and productivity, as well as provide a clear path for growth and development.

Slide 9: 3. WOOP Goals

WOOP goals use a goal setting technique that involves four steps: wish, outcome, obstacle, and plan. The technique is based on the idea that simply visualizing a positive outcome is not enough to achieve it.

Instead, it is necessary to identify the obstacles that may prevent you from achieving your goal and create a plan to overcome them.

The first step is to identify your wish or goal. The second step is to visualize the outcome of achieving that goal. The third step is to identify the obstacles that may prevent you from achieving your goal.

Finally, the fourth step is to develop a plan to overcome those obstacles. WOOP goals are used for goal setting because they are a practical and effective way to achieve your goals.

By identifying obstacles ahead of time, you can plan for them and increase your chances of success. Additionally, the WOOP technique's visualization aspect helps keep you motivated and focused on your goal.

Slide 10: Video

Instructor Note: While this video does not specify what goal setting method the presenter recommends, what she describes is closest to WOOP goals, so it is pertinent to the lesson. After the video, you can open the class for discussion or continue to the next slide. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4jnPD7pO8>

Slide 11: 4. Micro Goals

Micro goals are small, specific, and measurable objectives that are set to achieve a bigger goal or target. They are used in the workplace to break down complex or long-term projects into smaller, more manageable tasks.

Micro goals help employees stay motivated and focused on achieving their objectives while also providing a sense of accomplishment as they complete each small task.

By breaking down larger projects into smaller goals, it becomes easier to track progress and identify any potential roadblocks early in the process.

Additionally, micro goals can help individuals and teams prioritize their work and manage their time more efficiently.

Slide 12: 5. Visual Goals

Visual goals are objectives that are represented through images, graphs, or other visual aids.

They are used in the workplace to help individuals and teams better understand their goals and progress towards achieving them. Visual goals can be an effective way to communicate complex information and data and can help increase motivation and engagement by making progress more tangible and visible. By using visual aids, teams can better understand their progress and identify areas for improvement.

Slide 13: Strategies for Achieving Goals

There are several strategies that can help you achieve your goals. These include:

1. Set specific and measurable goals. Be clear and specific about what you want to achieve, and make sure you can measure your progress along the way.
2. Break your goals down into smaller tasks. This can help you avoid feeling overwhelmed and make your goals more manageable.
3. Create a plan. Develop a plan of action that outlines the steps you need to take to achieve your goals.
4. Stay motivated. Stay focused and motivated by reminding yourself why you set your goals in the first place and celebrating small successes along the way.
5. Seek support. Surround yourself with people who support and encourage your goals, and don't be afraid to ask for help or guidance when you need it.

Slide 14: How Decision-Making and Goal Setting Are Related

Decision-making and goal setting are closely related in the workplace. In fact, they are two sides of the same coin.

Setting clear and specific goals is essential to making informed decisions that will help you achieve those goals effectively.

Without clear goals in mind, decision-making can be aimless, leading to wasted time, resources, and effort. On the other hand, when you have clear goals, decision-making becomes much easier as you can evaluate which options will bring you closer to your objectives. Therefore, it is crucial to establish clear goals before making any significant decisions in the workplace.

Slide 15: How to Make Decisions That Support Your Goals

Making decisions that support your goals can be challenging, but there are a few things that can help. First, it is important to clearly define your goals so that you know what you are working towards.

Then, when faced with a decision, ask yourself how each option will help you achieve your goals. If an option doesn't support your goals, it may be best to choose a different option.

It is also helpful to consider the potential consequences of each decision, both positive and negative, and weigh them against your goals.

Finally, don't be afraid to ask for advice from others who have experience or knowledge in the area you are making a decision about.

Slide 16: How to Highlight These Employability Skills

To highlight your decision-making and goal-setting skills as employability skills to a potential employer, it is important to highlight them both in person and on your resume. Below are some tips on how to do that effectively.

In Person:

1. **Use the STAR method.** When discussing your experiences in person, use the STAR method (situation, task, action, result) to provide specific examples of your decision-making and goal-setting skills. This method

- helps you structure your responses and provide clear, concise examples.
2. **Practice active listening.** During your interactions with the potential employer, actively listen to their needs and concerns. Demonstrate your decision-making skills by asking questions and providing solutions that align with their goals.
 3. **Show confidence.** Show confidence in your ability to make sound decisions, set and achieve goals, and solve problems effectively. Use confident body language, maintain eye contact, and speak clearly and concisely.

On Your Resume:

1. **Use keywords.** Use keywords and phrases that highlight your decision-making and goal-setting skills throughout your resume. Incorporate them into your summary statement, work experience bullet points, and skills section.
2. **Quantify your results.** Whenever possible, quantify the results of your decision-making and goal setting. Use numbers and percentages to show the impact of your work.
3. **Highlight relevant experiences.** Highlight experiences that display your decision-making and goal setting abilities. For example, include a bullet point that states, "Successfully managed a project from start to finish, achieving all project goals on time and within budget."
4. **Customize for each job.** Customize your resume for each job you apply for. Highlight the skills and experiences that are most relevant to the position and company you are applying to. By following these tips, you can effectively highlight your decision-making and goal-setting skills to a potential employer both in person and on your resume.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have students do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: WOOP Goal Method

Have participants write down a goal using the WOOP goal method.

Activity 2: Decision-Making Process

Ask participants what routine decisions they make every day. Have they ever thought there was a decision-making process?

Have participants write down a decision they had to make recently and the process they had to go through to make that decision.

Lesson Twelve – Decision-Making and Goal Setting

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Decision-Making and Goal Setting Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained from the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a decision-making and goal-setting scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Quiz*
- *Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Decision-Making and Goal Setting scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' decision-making and goal setting skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What method would you use to highlight your decision-making and goal-setting skills to a potential employer during a job interview?
 - a. WOOP method
 - b. Reverse psychology method
 - c. Empathetic method
 - d. STAR method
2. Which of the following is **not** a strategy for achieving goals?
 - a. Set specific and measurable goals
 - b. Demonstrate your willingness to help coworkers with projects
 - c. Stay motivated
 - d. Break your goals down into smaller tasks
3. What type of goal setting method is represented through images or graphs?
 - a. Visual goals
 - b. SMART goals
 - c. WOOP goals
 - d. Micro goals
4. What is a common long-term decision that is made in the workplace by top-level management called?
 - a. Tactical decision
 - b. Operational decision
 - c. Routine decision
 - d. Strategic decision
5. In the SMART goal method, what does the “R” represent?
 - a. Reachable
 - b. Realistic
 - c. Relevant
 - d. Responsible

Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What method would you use to highlight your decision-making and goal-setting skills to a potential employer during a job interview?
 - a. WOOP method
 - b. Reverse psychology method
 - c. Empathetic method
 - d. STAR method**

2. Which of the following is **not** a strategy for achieving goals?
 - a. Set specific and measurable goals
 - b. Demonstrate your willingness to help coworkers with projects**
 - c. Stay motivated
 - d. Break your goals down into smaller tasks

3. What type of goal setting method is represented through images or graphs?
 - a. Visual goals**
 - b. SMART goals
 - c. WOOP goals
 - d. Micro goals

4. What is a common long-term decision that is made in the workplace by top-level management called?
 - a. Tactical decision
 - b. Operational decision
 - c. Routine decision
 - d. Strategic decision**

5. In the SMART goal method, what does the “R” represent?
 - a. Reachable
 - b. Realistic
 - c. Relevant**
 - d. Responsible

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Lesson Thirteen – Honesty and Integrity

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definitions of honesty and integrity and why these are essential employability skills. Participants will recognize how to practice integrity in their professions and learn five steps to improve honesty and integrity. Participants will then role-play using the Honesty and Integrity scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Learn the definitions of honesty and integrity
- Understand why honesty and integrity are essential employability skills
- Identify the benefits of having honesty and integrity in the workplace
- Recognize how to practice integrity in their professions
- Discover the five steps to improving honesty and integrity

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Honesty and Integrity</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare <i>Honesty and Integrity</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Honesty and Integrity Quiz</i> • <i>Honesty and Integrity Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Honesty and Integrity Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Honesty and Integrity Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Honesty and Integrity scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Honesty and Integrity Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Thirteen – Honesty and Integrity

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Honesty and Integrity Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of honesty and integrity skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario

Ralph and Juanita work as bank tellers at a local credit union. One day, during their lunch break, Ralph went to the restroom, and Juanita pulled a purple container out of the break room refrigerator. Ralph returned and sat across from her, starting to eat his sandwich. Juanita offered him a bite of her lunch, which he refused.

Later that day, their supervisor, Adam, walked in and asked who had eaten his lunch. He said he had kept it in a purple container, and it was missing. Juanita looked towards Ralph and made a face as if to say, “Don’t say anything.” Ralph prides himself on his honesty and is upset to be caught in this situation by his fellow coworker and friend.

REFLECT on the situation:

In your opinion, what is the definition of integrity?

What would you do in this situation if you were Ralph?

Do you think Juanita has integrity if she refuses to be honest about eating Adam’s food?

Do you believe people are born with honesty and integrity, or are they learned?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Honesty and Integrity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Ralph and Juanita work as bank tellers at a local credit union. One day, during their lunch break, Ralph went to the restroom, and Juanita pulled a purple container out of the break room refrigerator. Ralph returned and sat across from her, starting to eat his sandwich. Juanita offered him a bite of her lunch, which he refused.

Later that day, their supervisor, Adam, walked in and asked who had eaten his lunch. He said he had kept it in a purple container, and it was missing. Juanita looked towards Ralph and made a face as if to say, “Don’t say anything.” Ralph prides himself on his honesty and is upset to be caught in this situation by his fellow coworker and friend.

REFLECT on the situation:

In your opinion, what is the definition of integrity?

I would define integrity as honesty, trustworthiness, and strong morals and principles.

What would you do in this situation if you were Ralph?

If I were Ralph, I would first talk to Juanita privately and tell her that I knew she had eaten Adam’s food. I would say to her that she should tell Adam and apologize for eating his food. If Juanita refused to tell Adam what she had done, I would talk to Adam and explain what I saw.

It would be hard for me to want to remain friends with Juanita since she doesn’t have the same values and principles as I do.

Do you think Juanita has integrity if she refuses to be honest about eating Adam’s food?

No, people with integrity will be honest and own up to their mistakes.

Do you believe people are born with honesty and integrity, or are they learned?

I believe honesty and integrity are learned traits. Children are not born being honest and having morals and values. It is taught to them by their parents, caregivers, teachers, and friends.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Thirteen – Honesty and Integrity

LEARN: Honesty and Integrity Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to the honesty and integrity skills required to be successful in the workplace. Additionally, participants will learn the benefits of having honesty and integrity in the workplace and five steps to improving honesty and integrity.

Materials:

- *Honesty and Integrity* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Honesty and Integrity

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The ones we will cover in this lesson are honesty and integrity.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Learn the definitions of honesty and integrity
- Understand why honesty and integrity are essential employability skills
- Identify the benefits of having honesty and integrity in the workplace
- Recognize how to practice honesty and integrity in your profession
- Discover the five steps to improving your honesty and integrity

Slide 3: What Is Honesty?

Honesty is the quality of being truthful and sincere. It involves speaking and acting truthfully, without any intention of deceiving others or hiding the truth.

Honesty is an important trait in both personal and professional relationships, as it promotes trust, respect, and transparency.

Being honest requires courage, integrity, and a willingness to accept responsibility for your actions and decisions. It is a fundamental aspect of ethical and moral behavior and is valued by many cultures and societies around the world.

Instructor Note: Ask participants what the quote by Mark Twain that is shown on the slide means to them.

Slide 4: What Is Integrity?

Integrity is a term used to describe the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. When someone is said to have integrity, it means that they are viewed as a person who is honest and follows a moral compass.

According to the great British writer C. S. Lewis, “**Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.**”

Another popular quote that describes integrity is, “**Do what is right, not what is easy.**”

Slide 5: Video

Instructor Note: After watching this short video, you can open the class for discussion or continue on to the following slide. Video link for reference:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSHh_P9Mq7E

Slide 6: Why Are Honesty and Integrity Essential Employability Skills?

Honesty and integrity are considered essential employability skills because they are foundational qualities that employers look for in their employees.

These skills are vital for building trust and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues, clients, and customers.

Demonstrating honesty and integrity in the workplace also helps to create a positive work environment and fosters a culture of respect and accountability.

Employers value employees who exhibit these qualities because they know that they can be trusted to act ethically and responsibly.

Slide 7: Benefits of Having Honesty and Integrity in the Workplace

Having honesty and integrity in the workplace can lead to numerous benefits for both the employees and the organization. Some of the key benefits include:

1. **Trust and Respect:** When employees exhibit honesty and integrity, it helps build trust and respect among team members. This, in turn, leads to a more positive work environment and stronger working relationships.
2. **Improved Communication:** Honesty and integrity promote open and transparent communication, which is essential for effective teamwork and collaboration. It also helps prevent misunderstandings and conflicts that can develop from miscommunication.
3. **Increased Accountability:** Employees who value honesty and integrity are more likely to take responsibility for their actions and be accountable for their mistakes. This fosters a culture of accountability throughout the organization.
4. **Enhanced Reputation:** Organizations that prioritize honesty and integrity are viewed more positively by customers, investors, and the public. This can lead

to increased brand loyalty and a stronger reputation in the market.

5. **Reduced Legal Risks:** By promoting ethical behavior, organizations can reduce the risk of legal issues, such as lawsuits, fines, and damage to their reputation.

Slide 8: How to Practice Honesty and Integrity in Your Profession

Practicing honesty and integrity in your profession is essential for building trust and credibility with your coworkers, clients, managers, and customers. Here are some ways to practice these skills at work:

1. **Be truthful.** Always strive to be honest in your communication with others. This means not exaggerating your abilities or accomplishments, and admitting to mistakes when they occur.
2. **Keep your promises.** If you make a commitment to someone, follow through on it. Whether it is meeting a deadline or delivering a product, keeping your promises demonstrates your reliability and builds trust.
3. **Respect confidentiality.** If you are privy to sensitive information, keep it confidential. This means not sharing it with others who do not need to know and being careful with how you store and transmit the information.
4. **Be accountable.** Take responsibility for your actions and decisions. This means not blaming others for mistakes or failures and being willing to admit when you are wrong.
5. **Treat others with respect.** Show respect to your colleagues, clients, and customers. This means being polite, listening to their concerns, and treating them fairly.

Slide 9: 5 Steps to Improving Your Honesty and Integrity

1. Make and keep promises
2. Be honest in all communications
3. Be organized
4. Stay focused
5. Surround yourself with honest people

Each of these steps will be covered in the following slides.

Slide 10: Step 1: Make and Keep Promises

If you want to be viewed as a person with integrity, you must keep your promises and honor your commitments.

If you do not feel that you can keep your promises, avoid making them. It is better to be honest and tell someone you cannot do something rather than let them down by breaking your promise.

Slide 11: Step 2: Be Honest in All Communications

One of the fastest ways to show a person you lack integrity is if you are dishonest or lie to them. When you are honest in your communications, it demonstrates that you are a trustworthy and reliable person.

It means that you are accountable for your actions and are willing to take responsibility for mistakes or miscommunications if they occur.

When you are honest, you build trust and respect with your colleagues, clients, and superiors. Conversely, if you are dishonest, it can damage relationships, harm your reputation, and erode trust in the workplace.

Honesty is a fundamental aspect of professionalism and crucial for building a successful career.

Slide 12: Step 3: Be Organized

Being organized at work is a great way to demonstrate your honesty and integrity to your coworkers and supervisors.

Being well-organized shows that you are responsible and reliable and can be trusted to keep track of essential information and complete tasks on time.

Additionally, being organized helps you maintain a high level of transparency in your work, as it allows others to easily access the information they need to do their jobs effectively.

Slide 13: Step 4: Stay Focused

Staying focused at work is a great way to demonstrate honesty and integrity because it shows that you are committed to doing your job to the best of your abilities.

By staying focused, you are ensuring that you are giving your employer your full attention and effort, which is a sign of honesty.

It also shows that you have integrity and are willing to do what it takes to get the job done right. Additionally, being focused makes you less likely to make mistakes or cut corners, which is a sign of someone with integrity.

Slide 14: Step 5: Surround Yourself with Honest People

When you surround yourself with honest people, your integrity automatically increases. People perceive the company you keep as the type of person you are.

If you surround yourself with dishonest people, others will assume you are dishonest. When you keep company with highly respected people who have strong morals and principles, you will be perceived the same.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have students do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Honesty – Does it Pay?

Tell participants to imagine they found an envelope in a supermarket grocery cart as they were returning it to the shopping cart stall.

The envelope had a to-do list on the outside, and inside was \$400 cash. There was also a phone number and a date and time on the outside like the person had made an appointment.

Ask participants what they would do in this situation, highlighting the steps they would take and why. Have them write a compelling argument for why they chose the actions they took, whether it is trying to find the owner, turning the envelope into the store manager or police, or keeping the money.

Activity 2: Dishonesty Reflection

Tell participants to think about a time they were dishonest and how it made them feel.

Activity 3: Honesty Role-Play

Have participants pair up with two classmates, family members, or friends. They should role-play the scenario in their student workbooks that involves honesty and integrity in the workplace in which two people are partnered up as employees at a fast-food restaurant and the third person is the manager.

Lesson Thirteen – Honesty and Integrity

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Honesty and Integrity Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained from the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in an honesty and integrity scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Honesty and Integrity Quiz*
- *Honesty and Integrity Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Honesty and Integrity Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Honesty and Integrity scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' honesty and integrity skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Honesty and Integrity Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** a step to improving honesty and integrity?
 - a. Make and keep promises
 - b. Stay focused
 - c. Surround yourself with dishonest people
 - d. Be organized
2. Choose the correct answer that defines integrity.
 - a. Quality of being compassionate and empathetic
 - b. Ability to earn people's trust through your actions
 - c. Quality of being honest and having strong moral principles
 - d. Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something
3. Which of the following phrases was quoted by the writer C.S. Lewis?
 - a. "Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching."
 - b. "Integrity is a learned trait, not one we are born with."
 - c. "Integrity is choosing your thoughts and actions based on values rather than personal gain."
 - d. "Integrity is telling myself the truth, and honesty is telling the truth to other people."
4. Why does surrounding yourself with honest people increase your integrity?
 - a. People will think you know how to say the right things
 - b. People will automatically think you are intelligent
 - c. People will perceive you as the same
 - d. People will think you have good taste
5. What is one of the fastest ways to show a person you lack integrity?
 - a. You are dishonest or lie to them
 - b. You do not dress professionally
 - c. You use unprofessional terminology
 - d. You are easily distracted

Honesty and Integrity Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is **not** a step to improving honesty and integrity?
 - a. Make and keep promises
 - b. Stay focused
 - c. Surround yourself with dishonest people**
 - d. Be organized

2. Choose the correct answer that defines integrity.
 - a. Quality of being compassionate and empathetic
 - b. Ability to earn people's trust through your actions
 - c. Quality of being honest and having strong moral principles**
 - d. Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something

3. Which of the following phrases was quoted by the writer C.S. Lewis?
 - a. "Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching."**
 - b. "Integrity is a learned trait, not one we are born with."
 - c. "Integrity is choosing your thoughts and actions based on values rather than personal gain."
 - d. "Integrity is telling myself the truth, and honesty is telling the truth to other people."

4. Why does surrounding yourself with honest people increase your integrity?
 - a. People will think you know how to say the right things
 - b. People will automatically think you are intelligent
 - c. People will perceive you as the same**
 - d. People will think you have good taste

5. What is one of the fastest ways to show a person you lack integrity?
 - a. You are dishonest or lie to them**
 - b. You do not dress professionally
 - c. You use unprofessional terminology
 - d. You are easily distracted

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Lesson Fourteen – Team Building

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn the definition of team building and its importance in the workplace. Participants will learn about the different types of teams, the roles and responsibilities of team members, the stages of team development, and team-building activities that can be used in the workplace. Participants will then role-play using the Team Building scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define team building and its importance in the workplace
- Learn about different types of teams
- Explore the roles and responsibilities of team members
- Identify the stages of team development
- Understand how to build a strong team
- Discover team-building activities that can be used in the workplace

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Team Building Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Team Building Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Team Building Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Team Building</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare <i>Team Building</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Team Building Quiz</i> • <i>Team Building Setting Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Team Building Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Team Building Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Team Building scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Team Building Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Fourteen – Team Building

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Team Building Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of team building skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Team Building Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key
- *Team Building Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Team Building Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Team Building Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key page available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Team Building Introduction Scenario

Emmanuelle was a new manager brought into a local internet provider to boost morale and build a stronger team. She noticed that the team was struggling to work together, there was a negative atmosphere in the office, and the company was receiving horrible customer service reviews online.

Emmanuelle knew that she had to do something to turn things around. She started by organizing team-building activities, such as a company-wide scavenger hunt and off-site retreats. During these events, Emmanuelle encouraged the team to work together and communicate effectively. She also made sure that everyone had an opportunity to contribute and that their efforts were recognized and appreciated.

As a result of Emmanuelle's efforts, the team started to work together more cohesively. They started to collaborate more effectively, and the atmosphere in the office became more positive. As a result, they started receiving better reviews, as well. Emmanuelle continued to encourage the team, offering guidance and support when needed and recognizing and rewarding their successes.

REFLECT on the situation:

In your opinion, what team-building activities seem the most exciting to you? Your answer can be something different than what is mentioned in the scenario.

How would you have approached this situation if you were Emmanuelle?

Have you ever worked to build a team up? If so, what did you do?

What are some reasons employees might have low morale in a workplace?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Team Building Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Emmanuelle was a new manager brought into a local internet provider to boost morale and build a stronger team. She noticed that the team was struggling to work together, there was a negative atmosphere in the office, and the company was receiving horrible customer service reviews online.

Emmanuelle knew that she had to do something to turn things around. She started by organizing team-building activities, such as a company-wide scavenger hunt and off-site retreats. During these events, Emmanuelle encouraged the team to work together and communicate effectively. She also made sure that everyone had an opportunity to contribute and that their efforts were recognized and appreciated.

As a result of Emmanuelle's efforts, the team started to work together more cohesively. They started to collaborate more effectively, and the atmosphere in the office became more positive. As a result, they started receiving better reviews, as well. Emmanuelle continued to encourage the team, offering guidance and support when needed and recognizing and rewarding their successes.

REFLECT on the situation:

In your opinion, what team-building activities seem the most exciting to you? Your answer can be something different than what is mentioned in the scenario.

Answers will vary by participant as this is an opinion-based question.

How would you have approached this situation if you were Emmanuelle?

Answers will vary by participant.

Have you ever worked to build a team up? If so, what did you do?

Answers will vary by participant.

What are some reasons employees might have low morale in a workplace?

Poor management, hostile working conditions, low pay, terrible hours, unfriendly coworkers and/or customers, etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Fourteen – Team Building

LEARN: Team Building Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to team building and its importance in the workplace. Additionally, students will learn the roles and responsibilities of team members, the stages of team development and how to build a strong team, and team-building activities that can be used in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Team Building* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Team Building

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is team building.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define team building and its importance in the workplace
- Learn about the different types of teams
- Explore the roles and responsibilities of team members
- Identify the stages of team development
- Understand how to build a strong team
- Discover team-building activities that can be used in the workplace

Slide 3: What Is Team Building?

Team building is the process of creating a collaborative and productive team. It involves bringing together a group of individuals with different skills and personalities to work towards a common goal.

Team building improves communication, boosts morale, enhances problem-solving skills, and increases productivity.

Slide 4: Why Is Team Building Important in the Workplace?

Team building is an important aspect of any workplace as it helps to develop trust, strengthen relationships between coworkers and managers, improve creativity and communication, and increase collaboration.

By engaging in team-building activities, employees learn to effectively work together, identify each other's strengths and weaknesses, and develop a sense of camaraderie. This leads to a more cohesive and productive work environment, where employees can work towards common goals and achieve better results. In addition, team-building activities can also help to reduce stress, boost morale, and improve job satisfaction among employees.

Slide 5: What Are the Different Types of Teams?

There are several types of teams in the workplace, including:

1. **Cross-Functional Teams:** From different departments with multiple specialties
2. **Project Teams:** Formed for a specific project
3. **Virtual Teams:** Work remotely

4. **Self-Managed Teams:** Manage themselves and make decisions collectively.
5. **Functional Teams:** Work within the same department

The following slides will cover each team more in-depth.

Slide 6: Cross-Functional Teams

Cross-functional teams are groups of individuals from different areas of an organization who come together to work on a common project or goal.

These teams bring together diverse perspectives and expertise to solve complex problems and make decisions collaboratively. By including individuals with different skill sets and backgrounds, cross-functional teams can often produce more innovative and effective results than teams made up of individuals from the same department or function.

These teams can be found in a variety of industries, including technology, healthcare, and manufacturing, among others. Healthcare specifically calls these types of teams “**interdisciplinary**” or “**multidisciplinary**” teams.

Slide 7: Project Teams

Project teams are groups of individuals who work together to achieve a common goal or objective within a specific timeframe. They are created to conduct projects that require different skills and competencies and can be composed of members from different departments or even different organizations.

Project teams are usually temporary and disband once the project is completed. The success of a project team largely depends on effective communication, teamwork, and a shared vision of the project goals.

Slide 8: Virtual Teams

Virtual teams are groups of people who work together from separate locations, using technology to communicate and collaborate.

These teams can be made up of employees from the same company who work remotely or can be freelancers or contractors from different parts of the world who work together to complete a project.

The use of virtual teams has become increasingly popular as advances in communication technology have made it easier for people to work together from anywhere in the world.

Slide 9: Self-Managed Teams

Self-managed teams are groups of employees who work together with minimal supervision to achieve a common goal or complete a specific task.

In a self-managed team, each member takes on a variety of roles and responsibilities, and decisions are made collectively rather than by a designated leader.

This approach is often used in organizations that value autonomy, creativity, and innovation, as it allows team members to take ownership of their work and collaborate more effectively.

Self-managed teams can be found in a variety of industries, including manufacturing, technology, and healthcare.

Slide 10: Functional Teams

Functional teams are groups of individuals with specialized skills and expertise who work together to achieve a common goal.

These teams are typically organized around specific functions or departments within an organization, such as marketing, finance, or human resources.

Each member of a functional team brings their unique knowledge and experience to the table, allowing the team to tackle complex problems and complete tasks efficiently. Functional teams are often used in large organizations where there is a need for highly specialized skills and knowledge to be applied to specific projects or initiatives.

Slide 11: Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

In a workplace, team members have various roles and responsibilities that contribute to the success of the team and the organization, such as:

1. **Communication:** Team members need to communicate with each other regularly and effectively to ensure that everyone is on the same page and that tasks are completed efficiently.
2. **Collaboration:** Team members need to work together to achieve common goals and objectives. This involves sharing ideas, brainstorming, and supporting each other.
3. **Accountability:** Every team member should take responsibility for their work and be accountable for their actions. This includes meeting deadlines, delivering quality work, and being responsive to feedback.
4. **Problem Solving:** Team members should be able to identify problems and come up with solutions to address them. This requires critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to work under pressure.
5. **Continuous Learning:** Team members should be committed to continuously learning and developing their skills to stay up to date with industry trends and best practices.

Slide 12: Stages of Team Development

The stages of team development were first proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965 and later expanded upon by himself and Mary Ann Jensen in 1977. The stages are:

1. **Forming:** This is the initial stage in which team members come together,

get to know each other, and try to establish their roles and responsibilities.

2. **Storming:** This is the stage in which conflicts and disagreements arise among team members as they start to express their opinions and ideas.
3. **Norming:** This is the stage in which team members start to resolve their conflicts and establish norms and rules for working together.
4. **Performing:** This is the stage in which the team members work together effectively and achieve their goals.
5. **Adjourning:** This is the stage in which the team disbands after completing their project or goal. It is important to note that not all teams go through these stages in a linear fashion, and some teams may even skip certain stages. Additionally, some teams may experience relapses and return to previous stages when new members join or challenges arise.

Slide 13: How to Build a Strong Team

Building a strong team is an important aspect of achieving success in any project or organization. Here are a few tips to help you build a strong team:

1. **Hire or choose the right people.** It is important to hire or choose people with the right skill set and experience for the job. Look for people who have the right qualifications, but also those who share your values and work ethic.
2. **Set clear goals and expectations.** It is important to set clear goals and expectations for your team. This will help everyone understand what they are working towards and what is expected of them.
3. **Encourage collaboration.** Encourage collaboration and communication between team members. This will help everyone work together more effectively and help build a sense of unity within the team.
4. **Provide opportunities for growth.** Provide opportunities for your team members to learn and grow. This will

keep them engaged and motivated and will also help them develop new skills that will benefit the team.

5. **Recognize and reward success.** It is important to recognize and reward the success of your team. This will help build morale and motivate team members to continue working hard.

Instructor Note: Ask participants for ideas on how they would reward the success of their team.

Slide 14: Team-Building Activities

There are several team-building activities that can be used in the workplace to strengthen teams and improve teamwork, such as:

1. **Scavenger Hunt:** Divide your team into smaller groups and give them a list of items to find around the office. This activity encourages communication and problem-solving skills.
2. **Escape Room:** Take your team to an escape room where they will work together to solve puzzles and escape before time runs out. This activity promotes teamwork and critical thinking.
3. **Volunteer Day:** Spend a day volunteering as a team at a local charity. This activity not only promotes teamwork but also helps your team give back to the community.
4. **Group Lunch:** Take your team out for a group lunch or organize a potluck in the office. This activity provides an opportunity for your team to socialize and get to know each other better.
5. **Office Olympics:** Organize a series of fun and competitive office games, such as paperclip javelin, chair racing, or desk chair soccer. This activity promotes teamwork and can be a great stress reliever.

Remember, team-building activities should be fun and engaging while also promoting teamwork and communication. These are usually organized by managers or team

leaders, but employees should feel comfortable suggesting team-building exercises to those in charge.

Slide 15: Video

Instructor Note: Take note of the different activities mentioned in the video, as you will choose one to use with participants after the video to work on their team-building skills.

After the activity, you can move on to the last slide. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajo00o8RASK>

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: 60 Second Pitch

Put participants in small groups with at least three participants in each group. Have participants work together to develop a 60-second sales pitch of any item they want to sell.

It could be something as inexpensive as a pen or pencil, or pricier like a laptop or cell phone. This will help participants work as a team, understand the team's strengths and weaknesses, and use those strengths to make the team stronger.

After they come up with their sales pitch, have participants try "selling" the object to another small group.

Activity 2: Team Short Story Exercise

For this activity, put participants into a small group of four to five. They will work together to write a short story, with each person taking turns writing four to five sentences.

The first person will write four to five sentences, then pass the paper to the next person, who will add to the story by writing four to five sentences.

Participants should try to build on each other's ideas to create a cohesive story. Everyone in the group must remain silent while each person writes their sentences, so they have a chance to think.

The topic of the story is to describe how they received an unusual scar on their face.

Activity 3: Team Building and Communication

This exercise will help to build participants' communication skills. Participants will pair up and sit back-to-back with their partner. In the space in their student workbooks, have participants sketch a very simple line drawing of an object.

Students should not let their partner see their drawing. Students will describe their line drawing to their partner verbally. They should each draw the illustration as described by their partner, listening to the verbal instructions alone.

Lesson Fourteen – Team Building

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Team-Building Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a team-building scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Team-Building Quiz*
- *Team-Building Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Team-Building Quiz* to students and give participants two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.

3. Display the Team Building scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' team building skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Team Building Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the definition of a cross-functional team?
 - a. A team formed for a specific project
 - b. A remote team with members across the world
 - c. A team from different areas of an organization
 - d. A team who works with minimal supervision
2. Choose the answer that defines a functional team.
 - a. A group of individuals with specialized skills and expertise who work together to achieve a common goal
 - b. A group of employees who work together with minimal supervision to achieve a common goal or specific task
 - c. A group of people who work together from separate locations, using technology to communicate and collaborate
 - d. A group of individuals who work together to achieve a common goal or objective within a specific timeframe
3. Cross-functional teams are generally called “interdisciplinary” or “_____” teams in a healthcare setting.
 - a. Exdisciplinary
 - b. Polydisciplinary
 - c. Unidisciplinary
 - d. Multidisciplinary
4. Which of the following is **not** one of the reasons to engage in team-building activities?
 - a. Employees will develop a sense of camaraderie
 - b. Employees will get in shape and be healthier
 - c. Employees identify each other’s strengths and weaknesses
 - d. Employees learn to effectively work together
5. What is the initial stage of team development?
 - a. Norming
 - b. Storming
 - c. Forming
 - d. Adjourning

Team Building Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the definition of a cross-functional team?
 - a. A team formed for a specific project
 - b. A remote team with members across the world
 - c. A team from different areas of an organization**
 - d. A team who works with minimal supervision
2. Choose the answer that defines a functional team.
 - a. A group of individuals with specialized skills and expertise who work together to achieve a common goal**
 - b. A group of employees who work together with minimal supervision to achieve a common goal or specific task
 - c. A group of people who work together from separate locations, using technology to communicate and collaborate
 - d. A group of individuals who work together to achieve a common goal or objective within a specific timeframe
3. Cross-functional teams are generally called “interdisciplinary” or “_____” teams in a healthcare setting.
 - a. Exdisciplinary
 - b. Polydisciplinary
 - c. Unidisciplinary
 - d. Multidisciplinary**
4. Which of the following is **not** one of the reasons to engage in team-building activities?
 - a. Employees will develop a sense of camaraderie
 - b. Employees will get in shape and be healthier**
 - c. Employees identify each other’s strengths and weaknesses
 - d. Employees learn to effectively work together
5. What is the initial stage of team development?
 - a. Norming
 - b. Storming
 - c. Forming**
 - d. Adjourning

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Lesson Fifteen – Conflict Resolution

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will learn about conflict resolution and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will explore the types of conflicts encountered in the workplace, discover what skills are needed to resolve conflicts, and learn the five steps of conflict resolution. Students will then role-play using the Conflict Resolution scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Understand conflict resolution and why it is an essential employability skill
- Explore the types of conflicts encountered in the workplace
- Discover what skills are needed to resolve conflicts
- Learn the five steps of conflict resolution

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Conflict Resolution</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Conflict Resolution</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Conflict Resolution Quiz</i> • <i>Conflict Resolution Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Conflict Resolution Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Conflict Resolution Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference 3. Have the Conflict Resolution scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Conflict Resolution Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Fifteen – Conflict Resolution

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Conflict Resolution Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of conflict resolution skills in the workplace

Materials:

- *Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario

Erik and Tommy are cashiers at a busy convenience store. They had a minor disagreement about how to manage a difficult customer. Erik felt that Tommy was too lenient with the customer, while Tommy felt that Erik was too strict. The disagreement caused some tension between them, and they were not communicating effectively.

However, instead of escalating the situation, Erik and Tommy decided to resolve the conflict on their own. Erik and Tommy took a few minutes to talk it out and listen to each other's perspectives. They were able to come to a compromise, agreeing to manage difficult customers by using a mix of kindness and firmness.

As a result of their mature and respectful approach to conflict resolution, Erik and Tommy were able to work together more effectively, and the atmosphere in the store improved. Erik and Tommy continued to communicate openly and respectfully, understanding the importance of working together as a team.

The manager of the convenience store, who had been unaware of the conflict, was happy to see the improvement in their working relationship and appreciated their ability to resolve the issue on their own.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Tommy or Erik, would you have managed the situation in the same way? Why or why not?

Even though the manager was unaware of the situation, do you think they should have intervened when they realized the working relationship wasn't the best between Erik and Tommy? Explain your answer.

Have you ever been involved in a conflict? If so, what was the conflict and what did you do?

What are some other reasons employees might have disagreements in the workplace?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Conflict Resolution Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Erik and Tommy are cashiers at a busy convenience store. They had a minor disagreement about how to manage a difficult customer. Erik felt that Tommy was too lenient with the customer, while Tommy felt that Erik was too strict. The disagreement caused some tension between them, and they were not communicating effectively. However, instead of escalating the situation, Erik and Tommy decided to resolve the conflict on their own.

Erik and Tommy took a few minutes to talk it out and listen to each other's perspectives. They were able to come to a compromise, agreeing to manage difficult customers by using a mix of kindness and firmness. As a result of their mature and respectful approach to conflict resolution, Erik and Tommy were able to work together more effectively, and the atmosphere in the store improved.

Erik and Tommy continued to communicate openly and respectfully, understanding the importance of working together as a team. The manager of the convenience store, who had been unaware of the conflict, was happy to see the improvement in their working relationship and appreciated their ability to resolve the issue on their own.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Tommy or Erik, would you have managed the situation in the same way? Why or why not?

Answers will vary by student.

Even though the manager was unaware of the situation, do you think they should have intervened when they realized the working relationship wasn't the best between Erik and Tommy? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary by student.

Have you ever been involved in a conflict? If so, what was the conflict and what did you do?

Answers will vary by student.

What are some other reasons employees might have disagreements in the workplace?

Personality differences, cultural biases, different work ethic, lack of respect, etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Fifteen – Conflict Resolution

LEARN: Conflict Resolution Slide Presentation and Activities

30 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to conflict resolution, why it is an essential employability skill, and the several types of conflicts encountered in the workplace.

Additionally, participants will discover what skills are needed to resolve conflicts and the five steps of conflict resolution.

Materials:

- *Conflict Resolution* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Conflict Resolution

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is conflict resolution.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Understand conflict resolution and why it is an essential employability skill
- Explore the types of conflicts encountered in the workplace
- Discover what skills are needed to resolve conflicts
- Learn the five steps of conflict resolution

Slide 3: What Is Conflict Resolution?

Conflict resolution refers to the process of finding a peaceful solution to a disagreement or dispute between two or more parties. It involves identifying the underlying issues, exploring possible solutions, and negotiating a mutually acceptable agreement.

Conflict resolution can be applied to a wide range of situations, from personal conflicts between individuals to large-scale disputes between coworkers.

Effective conflict resolution can help improve relationships, reduce stress, and promote cooperation and understanding.

Sometimes, the person who helps resolve the conflict can be a neutral party or mediator if the parties involved cannot find a solution.

Other times, the conflict can be resolved between the parties involved in the conflict.

Slide 4: Why Is Conflict Resolution an Essential Employability Skill?

Conflict resolution is an essential employability skill because it helps individuals navigate tricky situations in the workplace.

It is common for people to have varying opinions and perspectives, which can lead to disagreements and conflicts.

Resolving conflicts effectively and efficiently can help maintain a positive work environment, improve productivity, and increase job satisfaction.

Slide 5: What Skills Are Needed to Resolve Conflicts?

Conflict resolution requires the following skills:

- Effective communication skills by both parties
- Active listening so all parties truly hear what the other people involved in the conflict are saying
- Empathy (the ability to understand and share the feelings of others)
- Problem-solving abilities so a solution to the conflict (problem) can be found
- Patience to listen and understand what the other parties are saying

By developing conflict-resolution skills, individuals can become better communicators and leaders within an organization.

Slide 6: When Are Conflict Resolution Skills Needed in the Workplace?

Conflict resolution skills are needed in the workplace when there are disagreements or misunderstandings between employees or teams.

These conflicts can arise due to differences in opinions, communication breakdowns, or work-related issues. In such situations, employees with strong conflict resolution skills can effectively resolve the situation by listening actively, communicating clearly, and finding mutually beneficial solutions.

Good conflict resolution can lead to a positive work environment, increased productivity, and better collaboration among team members.

Slide 7: Workplace Conflicts

The most common workplace conflicts include:

- Communication issues
- Personality differences
- Power struggles
- Differences in work styles or approaches
- Conflicts of interest
- Misunderstandings or misinterpretations of actions or intentions

These conflicts can arise between coworkers, employees and their supervisors, and different departments or teams within a company.

Slide 8: The 5 Steps of Conflict Resolution

1. Address the conflict
2. Determine the problem
3. Talk to the involved party
4. Identify a solution
5. Follow up

Each step will be covered more in depth on the following slides.

Slide 9: Step 1: Address the Conflict

Most people do not like confrontation, so they will choose to ignore what is bothering them. However, ignoring the conflict will not make it go away, and it will only become worse.

When the conflict becomes worse, it decreases employee morale and creates an uncomfortable work environment that affects everyone. Therefore, the first step is to address there is a conflict that needs to be resolved.

Slide 10: Step 2: Determine the Problem

Determining the cause of the problem will help you and the involved party understand how the issue started in the first place. All involved parties must agree on what the issue is and discuss how needs are not being met on both sides.

Obtain as much information as possible on how each party views the issue.

Slide 11: Step 3: Talk to the Involved Party

This step entails talking to everyone involved in the conflict. This should be done in an environment that is neutral and safe for all parties while providing privacy so everyone can talk openly and honestly.

Each party should have a chance to express their views about the problem while not being interrupted by others involved.

Everyone should have the same amount of time to speak in a respectful manner, while avoiding placing blame on any of the people involved.

Slide 12: Step 4: Identify a Solution

Before a conflict can be successfully resolved, all parties must identify and agree upon a solution. When coming up with solutions, determine which option will be best for everyone involved.

All parties must acknowledge that they agree with the solution. If a solution cannot be found, you have to consider bringing in a neutral party or mediator who can listen to everyone involved and offer their suggestion on how to resolve the problem.

Slide 13: Step 5: Follow Up

After talking things out and developing a solution to the problem, it is best to follow up with the involved parties to see how things are going.

You can ask those involved for feedback to make sure they are satisfied with the resolution. If you notice any tension or resentment towards you, you might need to revisit the issue and resolve it quickly. Remember, even though conflict is uncomfortable, it is an opportunity to learn and grow. You can look back and see what worked and what didn't in your communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills and use that experience to help you improve if needed.

Slide 14: Video

Instructor Note: This video provides additional insight into what is needed to resolve conflicts. After the video, ask participants if they have additional input or ideas for resolving conflicts.

After the discussion, you can move on to the last slide of the presentation. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHXYWMnm7Yg>

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have students do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Conflict Role-Play

For this activity, participants will pair up and role-play this scenario. One participant will act as an employee who is consistently 15 minutes late to work.

The participant will play the manager, who has already asked the employee three times this week to be on time. The manager needs to address the issue of the tardiness, and together, both participants need to find a solution to this problem.

After participants come to a resolution, they should give each other feedback on how resolving this conflict went.

Activity 2: Using the 5 Steps of Conflict Resolution

Students learned the five steps of conflict resolution in this lesson. Putting this process to work, have students resolve the conflict in the customer service scenario in their student workbooks.

Activity 3: Personal Conflict Resolution

Ask participants to think of a conflict they have had with someone. This could be a family member, friend, classmate, or neighbor.

Have participants make a journal entry describing the problem, if they addressed the problem, and if so, how they did so. If they did not confront the person and resolve the issue, they should write down why they avoided the confrontation and if the problem resolved on its own.

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After learning what they have about conflict resolution, have participants describe how they would do things differently in a similar situation.

Lesson Fifteen – Conflict Resolution

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Conflict Resolution Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Students will also apply what they have learned in a conflict resolution scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Conflict Resolution Quiz*
- *Conflict Resolution Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Conflict Resolution Quiz* to students and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have students self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Conflict Resolution scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants conflict resolution skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Conflict Resolution Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the last step of conflict resolution?
 - a. Determine the problem
 - b. Follow up
 - c. Identify a solution
 - d. Talk to the involved party
2. Which of the following is **not** a skill needed when resolving conflicts?
 - a. Effective communication skills
 - b. Active listening
 - c. Problem-solving abilities
 - d. Passive listening
3. What does conflict resolution refer to?
 - a. The process of finding who caused an argument and reprimanding them
 - b. The process of finding the cause of an argument between three or more parties
 - c. The process of finding a peaceful solution to a disagreement or dispute between two or more parties
 - d. The process of finding a solution to a problem that makes at least one of the involved parties happy
4. What do many employees do when faced with conflict in the workplace?
 - a. Quit and find another job
 - b. Ignore what is bothering them
 - c. Yell at the person causing the conflict
 - d. Fight the person who is causing the conflict
5. What is the first step of conflict resolution?
 - a. Address the conflict
 - b. Follow up
 - c. Determine the problem
 - d. Talk to the involved party

Conflict Resolution Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. Which of the following is the last step of conflict resolution?
 - a. Determine the problem
 - b. Follow up**
 - c. Identify a solution
 - d. Talk to the involved party
2. Which of the following is **not** a skill needed when resolving conflicts?
 - a. Effective communication skills
 - b. Active listening
 - c. Problem-solving abilities
 - d. Passive listening**
3. What does conflict resolution refer to?
 - a. The process of finding who caused an argument and reprimanding them
 - b. The process of finding the cause of an argument between three or more parties
 - c. The process of finding a peaceful solution to a disagreement or dispute between two or more parties**
 - d. The process of finding a solution to a problem that makes at least one of the involved parties happy
4. What do many employees do when faced with conflict in the workplace?
 - a. Quit and find another job
 - b. Ignore what is bothering them**
 - c. Yell at the person causing the conflict
 - d. Fight the person who is causing the conflict
5. What is the first step of conflict resolution?
 - a. Address the conflict**
 - b. Follow up
 - c. Determine the problem

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Lesson Sixteen – Creativity

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about creativity in the workplace and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will explore the benefits of creativity in the workplace, discover ways to show creativity at work, and learn five steps to becoming a more creative person in the workplace. Participants will then role-play using the Creativity scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Understand creativity in the workplace and why it is an essential employability skill
- Explore the benefits of creativity in the workplace
- Discover ways to show creativity at work
- Learn the five steps to becoming a more creative person in the workplace

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Creativity Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Creativity Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Creativity Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Creativity</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare <i>Creativity</i> slide presentation for viewing 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Creativity Quiz</i> • <i>Creativity Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Print the <i>Creativity Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Creativity Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 3. Have the Creativity scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Creativity Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Sixteen – Creativity

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Creativity Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of creativity skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Creativity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Creativity Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Creativity Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Creativity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Creativity Introduction Scenario

Adam, Jack, and Afton are part of the creative team at a digital marketing agency. They were tasked with creating a new campaign for a client, but they were struggling to come up with a unique and innovative idea. They brainstormed for hours, but nothing seemed to work. Feeling frustrated and lacking inspiration, Adam suggested they take a break and go for a walk outside to clear their heads.

Jack and Afton agreed, and they headed out into the sunshine. As they walked, they talked about their favorite hobbies and interests, hoping to find some inspiration. Suddenly, Afton stopped in her tracks and shouted, "I've got it!" She had just thought of an idea that drew inspiration from her love of music.

Jack and Adam were both impressed by the idea and quickly jumped in to add their own unique touches. Back at the office, they presented their idea to their boss, who was impressed by their creativity and originality. The campaign was a huge success, and the client was thrilled.

REFLECT on the situation:

When you feel you are lacking creativity in a project, what do you like to do to clear your head?

Do you think it will be hard to be creative in the workplace when asked to?

Have you ever come up with a creative idea for a problem or a task you were assigned? If so, describe your idea and how it turned out.

What other employability skills were used in this scenario?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Creativity Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Adam, Jack, and Afton are part of the creative team at a digital marketing agency. They were tasked with creating a new campaign for a client, but they were struggling to come up with a unique and innovative idea. They brainstormed for hours, but nothing seemed to work. Feeling frustrated and lacking inspiration, Adam suggested they take a break and go for a walk outside to clear their heads.

Jack and Afton agreed, and they headed out into the sunshine. As they walked, they talked about their favorite hobbies and interests, hoping to find some inspiration. Suddenly, Afton stopped in her tracks and shouted, "I've got it!" She had just thought of an idea that drew inspiration from her love of music.

Jack and Adam were both impressed by the idea and quickly jumped in to add their own unique touches. Back at the office, they presented their idea to their boss, who was impressed by their creativity and originality. The campaign was a huge success, and the client was thrilled.

REFLECT on the situation:

When you feel you are lacking creativity in a project, what do you like to do to clear your head?

Answers will vary by participant.

Do you think it will be hard to be creative in the workplace when asked to?

Answers will vary by participant.

Have you ever come up with a creative idea for a problem or a task you were assigned? If so, describe your idea and how it turned out.

Answers will vary by participant.

What other employability skills were used in this scenario?

Communication, teamwork, patience, critical thinking, problem-solving, work ethic, etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Sixteen – Creativity

LEARN: Creativity Slide Presentation and Activities

30 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to creativity in the workplace, why it is an essential employability skill, and the benefits of creativity in the workplace.

Additionally, participants will discover ways to show creativity at work and learn five steps to becoming a more creative person in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Creativity* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Creativity

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is creativity.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Understand creativity in the workplace and why it is an essential employability skill
- Explore the benefits of creativity in the workplace
- Discover ways to show creativity at work
- Learn the five steps to becoming a more creative person in the workplace

Slide 3: Video

Instructor Note: Before showing this short video on creativity video, tell participants to pay attention to the part on “mind mapping,” as one of their student workbook activities will be making a mind map.

After the video, ask participants what creativity means to them. After the discussion, you can move on to the next slide of the presentation.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMpLtJUte2c>

Slide 4: What Is Creativity in the Workplace?

Creativity in the workplace refers to the ability to generate new and innovative ideas, work processes, or solutions to problems.

It involves thinking freely and approaching tasks or challenges in a unique and original way. Creative thinking can lead to improved productivity, increased job satisfaction, and a more positive work environment.

Many employers value creativity in their employees and encourage them to think creatively to help drive their organization’s success.

Slide 5: Why Is Creativity an Essential Employability Skill?

Creativity is an essential employability skill for several reasons. First, it allows individuals to think freely and develop innovative solutions to problems. This is especially important in today’s fast-paced and constantly changing work environment.

Second, creativity helps individuals to stand out in a crowded job market. Employers are always looking for candidates who can bring fresh perspectives and ideas to the table.

Finally, creativity can lead to increased job satisfaction and engagement. When individuals can express themselves creatively, they are more likely to feel fulfilled and motivated in their work.

Slide 6: What Are the Benefits of Creativity in the Workplace?

Creativity in the workplace can have numerous benefits for both the employees and the organization. First, it can lead to increased innovation and problem-solving abilities, as employees are encouraged to think outside the box and generate new and unique solutions. This can lead to improved efficiency and productivity, as well as a competitive edge in the market. In addition, fostering creativity can also lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation among employees.

When employees are given the freedom to express their ideas and creativity, they feel more valued and engaged in their work, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and a lower turnover rate. Finally, creativity can also improve the overall workplace culture and atmosphere. When employees are encouraged to be creative and think outside the box, it can lead to a more open and collaborative work environment, where everyone feels comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions.

This can lead to a more positive workplace culture, where employees feel supported and respected, ultimately leading to improved morale and employee retention.

Slide 7: How to Show Creativity at Work
There are many ways to show creativity at work, such as:

- Collaborate with others. By effectively collaborating with your team, listening to their ideas, and then sharing your own, you can demonstrate your creative-thinking and teamwork skills.

- Be open to taking risks. Creative employees are not afraid to tackle a challenge and take risks. Instead of worrying about failure, creative thinkers are inspired to find creative ways to succeed.
- Show comfort with the unknown. Creative individuals are comfortable with situations where there is more than one solution to a problem or a clear path to success. This allows creative thinkers to consider unusual or out-of-the-box solutions.
- Be involved in innovative problem solving. When faced with a challenge at work, devise innovative solutions. This involves using your imagination to brainstorm possible solutions to the problem while visualizing the outcome. You may have ideas no one else has even thought of.
- Share ideas for new processes. While most organizations have processes and procedures in place for how the workplace operates and functions, there can sometimes be room for improvement. If you have an idea for improving a process, respectfully share it with your manager or team to get their input.
- Work independently. The first way we discussed to show creativity in the workplace is to collaborate with others. However, it is equally important to be able to work independently without supervision. Your creativity will shine when you show that you can generate ideas and problem-solve without the input of other team members.

Slide 8: 5 Steps to Becoming More Creative at Work

1. Surround yourself with creative people
2. Use your imagination
3. Organize your creative thoughts
4. Ask questions
5. Volunteer for projects

These will be covered more in-depth on the following slides.

Slide 9: Step 1: Surround Yourself with Creative People

Surrounding yourself with creative people can inspire you and help you generate new ideas. Creative people tend to have different perspectives and ways of thinking than others, and being around them can help you expand your own thinking and approach problems in new ways.

Additionally, creative people often have a lot of energy and enthusiasm for their work, which can be contagious and help motivate you to pursue your own creative endeavors.

Finally, being part of a creative community can provide you with feedback and support for your own projects, which can be invaluable in helping you grow and improve your skills.

Slide 10: Step 2: Use Your Imagination

Using your imagination means being open-minded to different possibilities and ways of thinking. When you use your imagination, you are not limited by preconceived notions or conventional thinking, which can lead to fresh ideas and new approaches.

Additionally, using your imagination can help you see things from different perspectives, which can be helpful when working in teams or trying to understand the needs of others.

Using your imagination can also help you be more flexible, adaptable, and creative, all which are valuable skills in the workplace.

Slide 11: Step 3: Organize Your Creative Thoughts

Organizing creative thoughts can help you become more creative by providing a clear structure to work within. When thoughts are scattered and disorganized, it can be difficult to focus on the task at hand and develop new and innovative ideas.

By organizing thoughts into a structured format, such as a **mind map** or an **outline**, it becomes easier to see connections between different ideas and to identify areas for further exploration.

This can lead to a more focused and productive creative process, allowing for more effective problem solving and idea generation.

Additionally, organizing thoughts can help to reduce stress and anxiety, which can be a barrier to creativity. By clearing your mind and creating a sense of order, you may find it easier to think creatively.

Slide 12: Step 4: Ask Questions

Asking questions can help you gain a better understanding of a problem or situation, which in turn can lead to more creative solutions.

By asking questions, you might uncover new information, challenge assumptions, and approach problems from different perspectives.

Additionally, asking questions can encourage collaboration and communication, which can lead to even more creative ideas.

Slide 13: Step 5: Volunteer for Projects

Volunteering for projects at work can expose you to new ideas and perspectives that you may not have encountered in your current work environment.

Volunteering for projects can help broaden your thinking and expand your creative horizons. Working on projects outside of your usual responsibilities can challenge you to think outside the box and find innovative solutions to problems.

You may also have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from different departments or backgrounds, which can lead to new insights and approaches.

Volunteering for projects can be a great way to keep your creativity flowing and develop new skills.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have students do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Creative Writing

To enhance participants' creative writing skills, have them write at least a one-page story using one of the following writing prompts in their student workbook.

Activity 2: Creativity Brainstorm

Scenario: At a team meeting, you are asked to come up with creative ideas for new skincare products or services that the company could offer to customers.

Have participants come up with as many creative ideas as possible. They should use the space in their student workbook to create your brainstorming idea list.

Activity 3: Mind Map

Have participants structure the information from their brainstorm activity into a mind map. A mind map is way of organizing the ideas into categories.

Lesson Sixteen – Creativity

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Creativity Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a creativity scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Creativity Quiz*
- *Creativity Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Creativity Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.

3. Display the Creativity scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' creativity skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Creativity Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does volunteering for projects at work make you more creative?
 - a. It exposes you to new ideas and perspectives
 - b. When volunteering, your mind is more open
 - c. It allows you to take your time to think
 - d. When volunteering, you are in less of a hurry to come up with ideas
2. What can be used to organize creative thoughts?
 - a. An assistant
 - b. Time management software
 - c. A project manager
 - d. A mind map
3. Which of the following is **not** a way to show creativity at work?
 - a. Collaborate with others
 - b. Be involved in non-innovative problem solving
 - c. Work independently
 - d. Share ideas for new processes
4. Creativity is an essential employability skill as it allows individuals to think outside the box and develop ____ solutions to problems.
 - a. Innovative
 - b. Extreme
 - c. Non-innovative
 - d. Inconclusive
5. Why does creativity in the workplace lead to increased job satisfaction?
 - a. When employees feel they can be creative at work, they have more time to doodle and work on art projects
 - b. When employees are allowed to use creative skills at work, they are less likely to call in sick
 - c. When employees can express themselves creatively, they are more likely to feel fulfilled and motivated in their work
 - d. When employees are allowed to be creative, they have more time to daydream while at work

Creativity Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does volunteering for projects at work make you more creative?
 - a. It exposes you to new ideas and perspectives**
 - b. When volunteering, your mind is more open
 - c. It allows you to take your time to think
 - d. When volunteering, you are in less of a hurry to come up with ideas
2. What can be used to organize creative thoughts?
 - a. An assistant
 - b. Time management software
 - c. A project manager
 - d. A mind map**
3. Which of the following is **not** a way to show creativity at work?
 - a. Collaborate with others
 - b. Be involved in non-innovative problem solving**
 - c. Work independently
 - d. Share ideas for new processes
4. Creativity is an essential employability skill as it allows individuals to think outside the box and develop ____ solutions to problems.
 - a. Innovative**
 - b. Extreme
 - c. Non-innovative
 - d. Inconclusive
5. Why does creativity in the workplace lead to increased job satisfaction?
 - a. When employees feel they can be creative at work, they have more time to doodle and work on art projects
 - b. When employees are allowed to use creative skills at work, they are less likely to call in sick
 - c. When employees can express themselves creatively, they are more likely to feel fulfilled and motivated in their work**
 - d. When employees are allowed to be creative, they have more time to daydream while at work

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Lesson Seventeen – Motivation

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about motivation in the workplace and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will explore the different types of motivation, the benefits of motivation in the workplace, strategies for overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation, and how to demonstrate motivation in various settings. Students will then role-play using the Motivation scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define motivation and why it is an essential employability skill
- Explore the different types of motivation and the benefits of motivation in the workplace
- Discover strategies for developing motivation and tips for overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation
- Learn how motivation impacts job performance and career growth and how to demonstrate motivation during job interviews and in the workplace

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Motivation Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Motivation Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Motivation Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Motivation</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Motivation</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Motivation Quiz</i> • <i>Motivation Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Motivation Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Motivation Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Motivation scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Motivation Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Seventeen – Motivation

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Motivation Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of motivation skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Motivation Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Motivation Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Motivation Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Motivation Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Motivation Introduction Scenario

Rachel and Destiny work at a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing education and resources to underprivileged communities. Rachel is the director of programs, responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of the organization's initiatives. Destiny is a program coordinator, working closely with Rachel to ensure that each project runs smoothly.

Despite their passion for the organization's mission, Rachel and Destiny have been feeling unmotivated lately. Since the pandemic, they have been forced to work from home, making it hard to collaborate and connect with their colleagues. Additionally, the organization's funding has been greatly impacted, leading to budget cuts and a reduction in staff.

Rachel is struggling to find new ways to keep herself and her team motivated, while also managing the day-to-day operations of the organization. Destiny is feeling overwhelmed with her workload and unsure of how to stay motivated in the face of these challenges. Together, Rachel and Destiny decide to schedule a virtual team-building workshop for the entire staff, aimed at boosting morale and encouraging everyone to stay motivated.

Rachel and Destiny plan a series of engaging activities, including virtual games and brainstorming sessions, to get everyone engaged and excited about the organization's mission.

REFLECT on the situation:

When you feel unmotivated to work on a project, what do you do to motivate yourself?

Do you think it will be hard to always stay motivated in the workplace? Explain your answer.

What are other ways that Rachel and Destiny can motivate themselves in the workplace?

What other employability skills were used in this scenario?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Motivation Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Rachel and Destiny work at a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing education and resources to underprivileged communities. Rachel is the director of programs, responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of the organization's initiatives. Destiny is a program coordinator, working closely with Rachel to ensure that each project runs smoothly.

Despite their passion for the organization's mission, Rachel and Destiny have been feeling unmotivated lately. Since the pandemic, they have been forced to work from home, making it hard to collaborate and connect with their colleagues. Additionally, the organization's funding has been greatly impacted, leading to budget cuts and a reduction in staff.

Rachel is struggling to find new ways to keep herself and her team motivated, while also managing the day-to-day operations of the organization. Destiny is feeling overwhelmed with her workload and unsure of how to stay motivated in the face of these challenges. Together, Rachel and Destiny decide to schedule a virtual team-building workshop for the entire staff, aimed at boosting morale and encouraging everyone to stay motivated.

Rachel and Destiny plan a series of engaging activities, including virtual games and brainstorming sessions, to get everyone engaged and excited about the organization's mission.

REFLECT on the situation:

When you feel unmotivated to work on a project, what do you do to motivate yourself?

Answers will vary by student.

Do you think it will be hard to always stay motivated in the workplace? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary by student.

What are other ways that Rachel and Destiny can motivate themselves in the workplace?

Set small, measurable goals for themselves, break larger goals into smaller ones, reward themselves for achieving goals along the way, stay positive, ask for help when needed, etc.

What other employability skills were used in this scenario?

Communication, analytical thinking, teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, work ethic, empathy, etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Seventeen – Motivation

LEARN: Motivation Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to motivation in the workplace, why it is an essential employability skill, and the benefits of motivation in the workplace.

Additionally, participants will discover ways to show motivation during job interviews and at work and learn five tips on overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation.

Materials:

- *Motivation* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Motivation

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is motivation.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define motivation and why it is an essential employability skill
- Explore the different types of motivation and the benefits of motivation in the workplace
- Discover strategies for developing motivation and tips for overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation
- Learn how motivation impacts job performance and career growth and how

to demonstrate motivation during job interviews and in the workplace

Slide 3: What Is Motivation?

Motivation is the psychological force that drives a person to act toward their goals or desires. Motivation can be intrinsic, meaning that the motivation comes from within a person, or extrinsic, meaning that the motivation comes from external factors such as rewards or recognition.

Motivation is important in achieving success and accomplishing tasks, as it provides the energy and direction needed to get things done.

Different people are motivated by different things, and understanding what motivates them can help them be more productive and successful.

Slide 4: Why Is Motivation an Essential Employability Skill?

Motivation is an essential employability skill because it drives individuals to work hard and take initiative in the workplace.

When employees are motivated, they are more likely to go beyond their job duties, take on new challenges, and strive for excellence.

This not only benefits the individual employee but also contributes to the success of the organization. Employers value motivated employees because they are more productive, engaged, and committed to achieving the company's goals. In addition, motivated employees are more likely to be adaptable to change, which is essential in today's fast-paced and ever-changing work environment.

Slide 5: Different Types of Motivation

There are several different types of motivation that can drive one's behaviors and actions, such as **extrinsic** motivation, which is driven by external rewards or pressures, and **intrinsic** motivation, which comes from within oneself.

Incentive motivation is focused on achieving a particular goal or reward, while **achievement** motivation is driven by a desire to succeed and improve oneself.

Adventure motivation arises from a desire for excitement and challenge, while **affiliation** motivation stems from a need for social connection and belonging.

Each type of motivation can have a powerful impact on our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and understanding these different types can help us better understand and manage our own motivations.

Slide 6: What Are the Benefits of Motivation in the Workplace?

Motivation is an essential element of a productive and successful workplace. It can have a profound impact on employees, teams, and organizations.

There are several benefits of motivation in the workplace, including increased productivity, improved job satisfaction, enhanced employee engagement, and reduced absenteeism and turnover rates.

Additionally, motivated employees are more likely to take on challenging tasks, learn new skills, and show initiative in their work, which can lead to career advancement and personal growth.

Slide 7: Video

Instructor Note: While this video is designed for leaders and how they can motivate employees, it still sends a good message and may be beneficial for participants who strive for a leadership position someday.

After the video, open the class for discussion and ask participants what kinds of things motivate them. Then, continue to the next slide.

Video link for reference:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_AnIaXaX0o

Slide 8: Strategies for Developing Motivation

Developing motivation can be a challenging task, but there are several strategies that can help. One strategy is to set clear and achievable goals. This can help provide direction and purpose, giving you a sense of accomplishment when the goals are achieved. Another strategy is to break down larger goals into smaller, more manageable steps. This can help prevent feeling overwhelmed and help you focus on progress. Additionally, finding ways to stay accountable, whether it is through tracking progress or sharing goals with others, can help maintain motivation.

Finally, it is important to celebrate successes along the way, no matter how small, as this can help maintain motivation and provide positive reinforcement. We will cover these more in-depth in the following slides with tips on overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation.

Slide 9: Tips for Overcoming Obstacles That Hinder Motivation

- Identify obstacles
- Break down goals
- Stay positive, ask for help when needed
- Learn from setbacks
- Celebrate along the way

These will also each be covered in greater detail on the following slides.

Slide 10: Tip #1: Identify Obstacles

Identifying obstacles is the first step towards overcoming them. When you identify the obstacles that are hindering your motivation, it becomes easier to develop a plan to tackle them.

Once you have identified the obstacles, you can analyze them and come up with strategies to overcome them. For instance, if you find that procrastination is a major obstacle to your motivation, you can break down tasks into smaller, more manageable parts, set deadlines for each part, and reward yourself for completing them.

By doing so, you can overcome your procrastination and boost your motivation to achieve your goals.

Slide 11: Tip #2: Break Down Goals
Breaking down goals into smaller, more manageable tasks is helpful because it allows you to focus on one step at a time.

When a goal seems too large or complex, it can be overwhelming and lead to procrastination or a lack of motivation. By breaking it down into smaller tasks, you can approach each one with a sense of accomplishment and progress, which can help boost motivation and prevent burnout.

Additionally, breaking down goals can help you to identify potential obstacles or roadblocks, allowing you to plan and stay on track towards achieving your goal.

Slide 12: Tip #3: Stay Positive, Ask for Help

Staying positive is important because it helps you maintain a hopeful outlook and a willingness to keep trying, even when faced with setbacks.

It can also help you maintain a more optimistic and productive mindset, which can make it easier to stay motivated and focused on your goals.

Asking for help when needed is important because it can provide you with new perspectives, solutions, and support. It can also help you avoid feeling overwhelmed or isolated, which can make it more difficult to stay motivated.

By staying positive and asking for help when needed, you can overcome obstacles and maintain your motivation over the long term.

Slide 13: Tip #4: Learn from Setbacks
Learning from setbacks is important to overcoming obstacles because it helps you develop a growth mindset. When you encounter a setback, it can be easy to feel discouraged and give up, but if you can learn from the experience and use it as an opportunity to improve, you'll be better equipped to handle future challenges.

By reflecting on what went wrong, you can identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to overcome obstacles in the future.

This can help you build resilience and increase your motivation to continue working towards your goals.

Slide 14: Tip #5: Celebrate Along the Way
Celebrating along the way can help by providing you with a sense of accomplishment and progress. When you celebrate small wins, you give yourself a boost in confidence and motivation, which can help you overcome any obstacles that may be holding you back.

Celebrating also helps you to stay focused on your goals and encourages you to keep moving forward. It can be as simple as rewarding yourself with a favorite treat or taking a break to enjoy some leisure time.

By doing so, you can maintain your motivation and keep making progress toward your goals.

Slide 15: How Motivation Impacts Job Performance and Career Growth
Motivation plays a crucial role in job performance and career growth. When an individual is motivated, they tend to be more engaged and productive in their work, resulting in better job performance.

Motivation also helps individuals set and achieve their goals, which is essential for career growth. On the other hand, a lack of motivation can negatively impact job performance and hinder career growth.

When an individual is not motivated, they may become disengaged, miss deadlines, and produce poor work.

Slide 16: How to Demonstrate Motivation in a Job Interview

Demonstrating motivation is crucial in job interviews. Here are some tips to help you highlight your motivation during an interview:

1. **Do Your Research:** Learn everything you can about the company, its mission, values, and the position you are interviewing for. This will demonstrate your interest and motivation for the role.
2. **Be Prepared:** Take copies of your resume, references, and any other relevant documents. This shows that you are organized and have prepared for the interview.
3. **Dress Appropriately:** Dress professionally and appropriately for the job you are applying for. This shows that you take the interview seriously and are motivated to make a good impression.
4. **Show Enthusiasm:** Employers want to hire candidates who are passionate about the job and the company. Show your enthusiasm by asking questions, expressing interest, and highlighting your relevant skills and experience.
5. **Be Confident:** Demonstrate your motivation by being confident and assertive in your answers. Speak clearly, maintain eye contact, and be positive and enthusiastic.

Slide 17: How to Demonstrate Motivation in the Workplace

There are several ways to demonstrate motivation in the workplace.

1. You can set challenging goals for yourself and work towards achieving them with enthusiasm and

determination. This shows that you are willing to take on new challenges and are committed to improving your performance.

2. You can be proactive and take the initiative to identify and solve problems in your work environment. This shows that you are not afraid to take ownership of your work and are always looking for ways to improve processes.
 3. Show a willingness to learn and grow. This can be done by seeking out opportunities for training and development, asking for feedback on your performance, and taking on new responsibilities.
 4. Be a positive and supportive team member. This involves being willing to help others, being respectful and courteous in your interactions, and maintaining a positive attitude even in challenging situations.
2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Types of Motivation – What Speaks to You?

Have participants study the list of several types of motivation in their student workbook and find one that fits them best.

Participants should write a short journal entry about why they are motivated and inspired by that type of motivation. This will help participants discover why they might feel unmotivated in certain situations and change their way of thinking about motivation.

Activity 2: What Motivates You?

When participants go to a job interview, they may be asked the question, “What motivates you?” Most people cannot quickly and easily answer this question, so it is best for them to write down what motivates them in their student workbooks and practice answering it with a classmate, friend, or family member.

After participants practice with another person, they should ask for the other person’s honest feedback and keep working on answering the question until they feel comfortable with your response.

Activity 3: Motivation Self-Talk

Positive self-talk can boost your motivation and confidence when you are feeling unmotivated in your life. Positive self-talk can also reduce stress and anxiety.

Ask participants to think of a time when they felt unmotivated or had self-doubt. Then, have them write down a positive affirmation or statement that they can use when faced with that situation in the future.

If participants are feeling unmotivated, they can pull out that positive affirmation to boost their motivation and confidence. If they would like, they can share their positive affirmation with a friend, family member, or classmate and ask if they would add anything more to your statement.

Often, others see positive things about you that you might not see. This can be a great confidence booster.

Lesson Seventeen – Motivation

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Motivation Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a motivation scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Motivation Quiz*
- *Motivation Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Motivation Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Motivation scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' motivation skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Motivation Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does breaking down goals into smaller, more manageable tasks help you overcome obstacles that hinder motivation?
 - a. It exposes you to new ideas and perspectives you may not have thought of
 - b. When breaking down goals, it allows you to change your goal if needed
 - c. It allows you to focus on one step at a time
 - d. When breaking down goals, it is easier to see the bigger picture
2. What is the first step to overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation?
 - a. Identify the obstacles
 - b. Break down obstacles
 - c. Stay positive and ask for help when needed
 - d. Learn from setbacks
3. Which of the following is **not** a strategy for developing motivation?
 - a. Celebrate successes along the way
 - b. Find ways to stay accountable
 - c. Set clear and achievable goals
 - d. Share ideas for new processes
4. Motivation is an essential employability skill because it drives individuals to work hard and take _____ in the workplace.
 - a. Blame
 - b. Credit
 - c. Initiative
 - d. Accountability
5. What type of motivation stems from a need for social connection?
 - a. Incentive
 - b. Achievement
 - c. Affiliation
 - d. Adventure

Motivation Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does breaking down goals into smaller, more manageable tasks help you overcome obstacles that hinder motivation?
 - a. It exposes you to new ideas and perspectives you may not have thought of
 - b. When breaking down goals, it allows you to change your goal if needed
 - c. **It allows you to focus on one step at a time**
 - d. When breaking down goals, it is easier to see the bigger picture
2. What is the first step to overcoming obstacles that hinder motivation?
 - a. **Identify the obstacles**
 - b. Break down obstacles
 - c. Stay positive and ask for help when needed
 - d. Learn from setbacks
3. Which of the following is **not** a strategy for developing motivation?
 - a. Celebrate successes along the way
 - b. Find ways to stay accountable
 - c. Set clear and achievable goals
 - d. **Share ideas for new processes**
4. Motivation is an essential employability skill because it drives individuals to work hard and take ____ in the workplace.
 - a. Blame
 - b. Credit
 - c. **Initiative**
 - d. Accountability
5. What type of motivation stems from a need for social connection?
 - a. Incentive
 - b. Achievement
 - c. **Affiliation**
 - d. Adventure

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Lesson Eighteen – Flexibility

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about flexibility in the workplace and why it is an essential employability skill. Participants will explore the different types of flexible work arrangements, the benefits of having flexibility in the workplace, strategies for developing a flexible mindset, and how to be a flexible team member. Participants will then role-play using the Flexibility scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Learn the definition of flexibility and its importance in the workplace
- Understand why flexibility is an essential employability skill
- Identify the types of flexible work arrangements and the benefits of being a flexible employee
- Recognize how to develop a flexible mindset
- Discover five tips for being a flexible team member

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Flexibility Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Flexibility Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Flexibility Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Flexibility</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Flexibility</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Flexibility Quiz</i> • <i>Flexibility Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Print the <i>Flexibility Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Flexibility Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 3. Have the Flexibility scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the <i>Flexibility Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Eighteen – Flexibility

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Flexibility Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of flexibility skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Flexibility Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Flexibility Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Flexibility Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Flexibility Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Flexibility Introduction Scenario

Spencer is the manager of a restaurant and decides to let two of his servers go home early because it is unusually slow. He asks Karin and Tracy if they would like to leave, since they have more seniority than the other servers. They both agree and are told they can leave after finishing their side work, which includes folding the linen napkins, refilling the salt and pepper shakers, and cleaning the coffee pots.

Karin and Tracy decide to go out after their shift to meet some friends and go dancing, and they change in the employee dressing room after they finish their side work. They're excited because they are not only coworkers but best friends and roommates. After clocking out and saying their goodbyes, Spencer approaches Karin and Tracy with a worried look on his face.

Spencer said he just got a reservation for a party of 25, and they will arrive in 30 minutes. He asks both servers if they would be willing to clock back in, change into their uniforms, and serve the large party when they arrive. They both look at each other, shrug, and tell Spencer they would be happy to help out.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Karin or Tracy, would you have responded the same way? Why or why not?

What do you think would have happened if the servers refused to stay and help with the large party?

What are other ways that Karin and Tracy can show flexibility in the workplace?

What other employability skills were used in this scenario?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Flexibility Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Spencer is the manager of a restaurant and decides to let two of his servers go home early because it is unusually slow. He asks Karin and Tracy if they would like to leave, since they have more seniority than the other servers. They both agree and are told they can leave after finishing their side work, which includes folding the linen napkins, refilling the salt and pepper shakers, and cleaning the coffee pots.

Karin and Tracy decide to go out after their shift to meet some friends and go dancing, and they change in the employee dressing room after they finish their side work. They're excited because they are not only coworkers but best friends and roommates. After clocking out and saying their goodbyes, Spencer approaches Karin and Tracy with a worried look on his face.

Spencer said he just got a reservation for a party of 25, and they will arrive in 30 minutes. He asks both servers if they would be willing to clock back in, change into their uniforms, and serve the large party when they arrive. They both look at each other, shrug, and tell Spencer they would be happy to help out.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Karin or Tracy, would you have responded the same way? Why or why not?

Answers will vary by participant.

What do you think would have happened if the servers refused to stay and help with the large party?

Answers will vary by participant.

What are other ways that Karin and Tracy can show flexibility in the workplace?

Offer to cover other server's shifts when needed, help out other servers who have a larger workload, be willing to have a flexible schedule, work holidays and weekends, etc.

What other employability skills were used in this scenario?

Communication, teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, work ethic, empathy, etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Eighteen – Flexibility

LEARN: Flexibility Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to flexibility in the workplace, why it is an essential employability skill, and the benefits of flexibility in the workplace.

Additionally, participants will recognize how to develop a flexible mindset and discover five tips for being a flexible team member.

Materials:

- *Flexibility* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Flexibility

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is flexibility.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Learn the definition of flexibility and its importance in the workplace
- Understand why flexibility is an essential employability skill
- Identify the types of flexible work arrangements and the benefits of being a flexible employee
- Recognize how to develop a flexible mindset
- Discover five tips for being a flexible team member

Slide 3: How is Flexibility an Employability Skill?

Flexibility is an employability skill that refers to an individual's ability to adapt to new or unexpected situations in the workplace.

This includes being open to change, willing to learn new skills, and being able to work effectively in different environments or with different people.

Employers value this skill because it enables employees to manage challenging situations and adapt to changes in the workplace. In today's rapidly changing work environment, companies must be able to respond quickly to new opportunities and challenges.

Employees who are flexible and adaptable can help their organizations remain competitive by quickly adapting to changing business needs.

Additionally, flexible employees are often able to take on new responsibilities and learn new skills, which can make them more valuable to their employers over time.

Slide 4: Why Is Flexibility Important in the Workplace?

Being flexible in the workplace is important for several reasons.

1. Flexibility allows employees to adapt to changing business conditions and new challenges. This can help them remain effective and productive even in uncertain or rapidly changing environments.
2. Flexibility can help employees develop new skills and competencies, which can enhance their job performance and make them more valuable to the company.

3. Being flexible can help employees build stronger relationships with their colleagues and managers. They can collaborate more effectively and respond to others' needs more readily.
4. Flexibility can lead to increased job satisfaction and a better work-life balance, which can positively impact employees' mental health and overall well-being.

Slide 5: Video

Instructor Note: After this video, ask participants when they have had to be flexible in their lives. After having a class discussion, continue on to the following slide.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwBY7QWFhcc>

Slide 6: Types of Flexible Work

Arrangements in the Workplace

Flexibility can also have different meanings when not used as an employability skill. One meaning in the workforce that has become more common in recent years is a flexible work schedule or work arrangement. There are several types of flexible work arrangements you may see in the workplace, such as:

1. **Flexible Work Hours:** This refers to the employees' ability to set their own schedules or adjust their regular working hours to better suit their needs.
2. **Remote Work:** This involves allowing employees to work from home or another location, rather than coming into the office every day.
3. **Job Sharing:** This is when two employees share the responsibilities of one full-time position.
4. **Part-Time Work:** This is when employees work less than the standard 40-hour workweek.
5. **Compressed Workweek:** This involves compressing a full week's worth of work into fewer days, allowing employees to have longer weekends or more time off during the week.

After seeing the different types of work arrangements, you can see the importance of being a flexible employee and open to working an unconventional schedule.

Slide 7: Benefits of Being a Flexible Employee

There are many benefits of being a flexible employee.

1. It can help you adapt to changing circumstances, whether it be changes in job responsibilities, work locations, or organizational strategies.
2. Flexibility can aid in problem solving as it allows you to approach challenges from different angles and consider alternative solutions.
3. It can help foster collaboration as individuals who are flexible are often more open to compromise and working with others to achieve common goals.
4. Flexibility is a skill that can help you remain calm and composed in high-pressure situations, which is particularly important in fast-paced and dynamic work environments.

Slide 8: How to Develop a Flexible Mindset

Developing a flexible mindset in the workplace can help you navigate change and uncertainty more effectively. Here are some tips to help you develop a more flexible mindset in your professional life:

1. **Embrace feedback.** Feedback can be difficult to hear, but it is essential to growth. Embrace feedback with an open mind and use it as an opportunity to learn and improve.
2. **Be open to new ideas.** Being open to new ideas and ways of doing things can help you stay adaptable to change.
3. **Stay curious.** Keep learning and exploring new ways to expand your knowledge and skills. This can help you stay agile and adaptable.
4. **Practice active listening.** Active listening involves fully engaging with the person speaking and trying to understand their perspective. This can help you see things from a different point of view and become more flexible.

5. **Cultivate a growth mindset.** A growth mindset involves seeing challenges as opportunities for growth and believing that your abilities can be developed through hard work and dedication. This can help you approach work with a more open and adaptable attitude.

Remember, developing a flexible mindset takes time and effort but can help you thrive in the workplace and navigate change more effectively.

Slide 9: 5 Tips for Being a Flexible Team Member

These tips will help you become a more flexible team member when faced with a changing work environment:

1. Be open minded
2. Develop your skill set
3. Be optimistic
4. Stay calm
5. Plan ahead

Each of these steps will be covered more in-depth on the following slides.

Slide 10: Tip #1: Be Open Minded

In situations where you encounter workplace challenges that require flexibility, keeping an open mind can be incredibly beneficial.

It is important to evaluate the situation from different angles, taking into consideration alternative perspectives, and not solely relying on your own views.

Additionally, it is crucial to listen to the opinions of others, as their insights can provide valuable and new ideas to tackle the situation.

Slide 11: Tip #2: Develop Your Skill Set

Developing your skill set can help you become a more flexible team member because it allows you to take on a wider range of tasks and responsibilities.

When you have a diverse set of skills, you are better equipped to adapt to changing circumstances and take on new challenges.

This makes you a valuable asset to your team and helps ensure that you can contribute effectively to a variety of projects.

Additionally, developing your skills can help you stay up to date with industry trends and advancements, which can help you identify new opportunities for growth and innovation.

Slide 12: Tip #3: Be Optimistic

Being optimistic can help you become a more flexible team member in several ways.

1. An optimistic attitude helps you see challenges as opportunities to learn and grow, rather than as obstacles to overcome. This can make you more open to new experiences and ideas, which can make you more flexible in your approach to teamwork.
2. An optimistic mindset can help you stay positive and focused, even when faced with setbacks or failures. This can help you bounce back more quickly from setbacks, which can be especially important in fast-paced team environments where things can change quickly.
3. An optimistic attitude can help you build stronger relationships with your teammates by fostering a sense of trust and positivity. When you approach problems with a can-do attitude and a willingness to work together, you are more likely to build strong bonds with your colleagues and create a positive team culture.

Slide 13: Tip #4: Stay Calm

When you stay calm, you are better equipped to manage tricky situations with team members. Instead of reacting emotionally or defensively, you can take a step back and evaluate the situation objectively.

This can help you find a solution that works for everyone involved, rather than escalating the conflict further. Additionally, staying calm can help you communicate more effectively with your team members.

When you are not consumed by negative emotions, you are more likely to listen to what others have to say and respond in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

Slide 14: Tip #5: Plan Ahead

Planning can make you a more flexible team member in several ways. It allows you to anticipate potential issues or roadblocks and prepare contingency plans to address them.

This means that you can quickly adapt to changing circumstances and make informed decisions when unexpected situations arise.

Additionally, planning can help you manage your time more effectively. By mapping out your tasks and deadlines in advance, you can ensure that you have enough time to complete your work and that you are not caught off guard by unexpected deadlines or competing priorities. This can help you be more productive and efficient, which in turn can make you a more valuable member of your team. Overall, being able to plan and anticipate potential challenges can help you stay flexible and adaptable in the face of changing circumstances, which are important qualities for any team member to have.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the workbook.

Activity 1: Flexibility in the Workplace

Have participants read each of the scenarios in their student workbook that require flexibility in the workplace.

Then, they should write down how they would respond to each situation, showing that they have the skills needed to be flexible and adaptable.

Activity 2: Flexibility Quote

Have participants read the quote in their workbook and, in the space provided, explain what they think it means. “Stay committed to your decisions. But stay flexible in your approach.”

Activity 3: Flexibility Self-Reflection

Have participants reflect on a time when they had to be flexible and adapt to a situation that was more different than what they are used to.

Participants should write a journal entry about the situation, how they managed it, and what they learned from the experience.

Lesson Eighteen – Flexibility

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Flexibility Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a flexibility scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Flexibility Quiz*
- *Flexibility Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Flexibility Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Flexibility scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' flexibility skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Flexibility Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does planning ahead make you a more flexible team member?
 - a. It exposes you to new ideas and perspectives you may not have thought of
 - b. It allows you to anticipate potential issues or roadblocks and prepare contingency plans
 - c. It allows you to focus on one step at a time
 - d. It exposes you to different departments with colleagues who have creative ideas
2. How does developing your skill set help you become a more flexible team member?
 - a. It allows you to take on a wider range of tasks and responsibilities
 - b. It allows you to break down obstacles more effectively
 - c. It allows you to stay positive and ask for help when needed
 - d. It allows you to learn from your setbacks
3. Which of the following is **not** a tip for being a flexible team member?
 - a. Plan ahead
 - b. Stay calm
 - c. Be optimistic
 - d. Be close minded
4. Flexibility is an employability skill that refers to an individual's ability to ____ to new or unexpected situations in the workplace.
 - a. React
 - b. Adapt
 - c. Respond
 - d. Adhere
5. What type of work arrangement allows employees to work from home?
 - a. Flexible work hours
 - b. Compressed workweek
 - c. Job sharing
 - d. Remote work

Flexibility Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does planning ahead make you a more flexible team member?
 - a. It exposes you to new ideas and perspectives you may not have thought of
 - b. It allows you to anticipate potential issues or roadblocks and prepare contingency plans**
 - c. It allows you to focus on one step at a time
 - d. It exposes you to different departments with colleagues who have creative ideas
2. How does developing your skill set help you become a more flexible team member?
 - a. It allows you to take on a wider range of tasks and responsibilities**
 - b. It allows you to break down obstacles more effectively
 - c. It allows you to stay positive and ask for help when needed
 - d. It allows you to learn from your setbacks
3. Which of the following is **not** a tip for being a flexible team member?
 - a. Plan ahead
 - b. Stay calm
 - c. Be optimistic
 - d. Be close minded**
4. Flexibility is an employability skill that refers to an individual's ability to ____ to new or unexpected situations in the workplace.
 - a. React
 - b. Adapt**
 - c. Respond
 - d. Adhere
5. What type of work arrangement allows employees to work from home?
 - a. Flexible work hours
 - b. Compressed workweek
 - c. Job sharing
 - d. Remote work**

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Lesson Nineteen – Self-Confidence

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about self-confidence and its importance in the workplace. Participants will learn about the characteristics of a self-confident person, how to overcome obstacles and develop a positive self-image, and ways to maintain self-confidence. Participants will then role-play using the Self-Confidence scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define self-confidence and its importance in the workplace
- Learn about the characteristics of a self-confident person
- Explore how to develop a positive self-image
- Identify the role of effective communication and self-confidence
- Understand how to overcome obstacles to self-confidence
- Discover five ways to maintain self-confidence

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario – Answer Key</i> • <i>Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Self-Confidence</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Self-Confidence</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Self-Confidence Quiz</i> • <i>Self-Confidence Quiz – Answer Key</i>	1. Print the <i>Self-Confidence Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Self-Confidence Quiz – Answer Key</i> available for reference. 3. Have the Self-Confidence scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access <i>the Self-Confidence Scenario</i> in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Nineteen – Self-Confidence

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Self-Confidence Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of self-confidence skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key
- *Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario* worksheet before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario* – Answer Key available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario

Alaina is a software engineer who works for a tech company. She's been working for the company for a year and has always been known for her expertise in coding and programming. One day, her boss, Peter, approaches her and asks if she could present their latest project to the team of investors that are coming in that afternoon.

Alaina becomes nervous and tells Peter that she's not comfortable with public speaking and isn't confident in her presentation skills. Peter tells Alaina that he believes in her and trusts that she can do it. He reminds her that she is the expert on this project and that no one knows it better than she does. He also assures her that he and the team will be there to support her and that it is an opportunity for her to display her skills and talents to the investors.

Alaina takes a deep breath and agrees to do the presentation. She spends the next few hours preparing and rehearsing her presentation, making sure she knows everything inside and out. When it is time for the presentation, Alaina feels nervous but also excited. She delivers her presentation with confidence, answering questions from the investors and impressing everyone with her knowledge and expertise.

After the presentation, Peter approaches Alaina with a big smile on his face and congratulates her on a job well done. He tells her the investors were impressed with her presentation and are considering investing in the project. Alaina feels proud of herself and grateful for Peter's support and encouragement.

Alaina realizes that she had the skills and knowledge all along, but it was her lack of self-confidence that was holding her back. From that day on, Alaina is more willing to take on new challenges and believes in herself and her abilities.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Alaina, would you have felt confident presenting to the investors? Explain your answer.

What do you think would have happened if Alaina refused to present the project?

What are other ideas for Alaina to improve her self-confidence?

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Employability Skills Self-Confidence Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Alaina is a software engineer who works for a tech company. She's been working for the company for a year and has always been known for her expertise in coding and programming. One day, her boss, Peter, approaches her and asks if she could present their latest project to the team of investors that are coming in that afternoon.

Alaina becomes nervous and tells Peter that she's not comfortable with public speaking and isn't confident in her presentation skills. Peter tells Alaina that he believes in her and trusts that she can do it. He reminds her that she is the expert on this project and that no one knows it better than she does. He also assures her that he and the team will be there to support her and that it is an opportunity for her to display her skills and talents to the investors.

Alaina takes a deep breath and agrees to do the presentation. She spends the next few hours preparing and rehearsing her presentation, making sure she knows everything inside and out. When it is time for the presentation, Alaina feels nervous but also excited. She delivers her presentation with confidence, answering questions from the investors and impressing everyone with her knowledge and expertise.

After the presentation, Peter approaches Alaina with a big smile on his face and congratulates her on a job well done. He tells her the investors were impressed with her presentation and are considering investing in the project. Alaina feels proud of herself and grateful for Peter's support and encouragement.

Alaina realizes that she had the skills and knowledge all along, but it was her lack of self-confidence that was holding her back. From that day on, Alaina is more willing to take on new challenges and believes in herself and her abilities.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Alaina, would you have felt confident presenting to the investors? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary by participant.

What do you think would have happened if Alaina refused to present the project?

She might receive a poor employee performance review, she would not have increased her self-confidence, she might not be offered opportunities for professional growth in the future, etc.

What are other ideas for Alaina to improve her self-confidence?

Practice self-care; make small, achievable goals; surround herself with positive people; find a mentor; etc.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Nineteen – Self-Confidence

LEARN: Self-Confidence Slide Presentation and Activities

30 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to self-confidence in the workplace, the characteristics of a self-confident person, and how to overcome obstacles and develop a positive image.

Additionally, participants will discover five ways to maintain self-confidence.

Materials:

- *Self-Confidence* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Self-Confidence

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is self-confidence.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define self-confidence and its importance in the workplace
- Learn about the characteristics of a self-confident person
- Explore how to develop a positive self-image
- Identify the role of effective communication skills and self-confidence

- Understand how to overcome obstacles to self-confidence
- Discover five ways to maintain self-confidence

Slide 3: What Is Self-Confidence?

Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief and trust in their abilities, qualities, and judgment. It is the feeling of being capable and competent and having a positive attitude toward oneself.

Self-confidence is important for personal growth and success, as it allows individuals to take risks, face challenges, and overcome obstacles with a sense of assurance and belief in themselves.

Self-confidence developed through various experiences and interactions and can be improved through practice and positive reinforcement.

Slide 4: Why Is Self-Confidence Important in the Workplace?

Self-confidence is important in the workplace for many reasons.

1. It helps individuals to believe in their abilities and take on challenges without fear of failure. This can lead to greater productivity and innovation, as employees are more likely to take risks and think creatively.
2. Self-confident individuals tend to be more assertive and better communicators, which can help them build stronger relationships with coworkers and clients.
3. Self-confidence is often seen as a key leadership trait. It inspires trust and respect from others and can help individuals take charge and make decisions with conviction.

Slide 5: The Characteristics of a Self-Confident Person

There are many characteristics of a self-confident person, including:

- A strong belief in themselves and their abilities
- Willingness to take risks to achieve their goals
- Positive attitude towards themselves and life in general
- Ability to manage criticism and failure
- Empathy towards others
- Good listening skills
- Keen sense of self-awareness
- Comfortable in their own skin

Slide 6: Video

Instructor Note: After this short video, open the class for discussion. Ask participants how they feel self-confident people present themselves, and what they can do to develop a positive self-image, which is covered on the following slide.

Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ifKg0ruDtM>

Slide 7: How to Develop a Positive Self-Image

Developing a positive self-image is an important aspect of personal growth. One way to achieve this is to identify your strengths and focus on them rather than dwelling on weaknesses.

Self-confidence is also necessary to challenge negative thoughts and replace them with positive affirmations. Practicing assertiveness can also boost your self-image by helping you express yourself confidently and respectfully.

Celebrating your achievements, no matter how small, can also help you develop a positive self-image. Finally, don't hesitate to ask for feedback from others to gain insight into how they perceive you and to identify areas of improvement.

Slide 8: Communication Skills and Self-Confidence

Communication skills and self-confidence are linked. Effective communication is key to building strong relationships, achieving success in personal and professional life, and boosting self-esteem.

When we communicate effectively, we convey our thoughts, ideas, and feelings with clarity and confidence. This not only helps us be better understood but also enables us to establish healthy boundaries and negotiate our needs effectively. On the other hand, poor communication skills can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, and a lack of confidence in our abilities. One important aspect of effective communication is striking a balance between being assertive and aggressive.

While assertiveness helps us to express our opinions and needs in a clear and confident manner, aggression can come across as confrontational and intimidating.

Assertiveness involves communicating with confidence, while also being respectful of others' feelings and opinions. It involves stating our needs and desires in a clear and direct manner, while also listening to others' perspectives. It allows for open and constructive dialogue that can lead to positive outcomes for all parties involved.

Aggression, on the other hand, involves using forceful language, tone, and body language to dominate and control a conversation or situation. This can be damaging to relationships and can erode self-esteem and confidence.

Slide 9: How to Overcome Obstacles to Self-Confidence

If you feel you lack self-confidence, here are some ways to overcome those obstacles:

1. **Identify the source of self-doubt.**
Identify what is causing you to doubt yourself and your abilities. It could be a past experience, negative feedback from others, or a lack of skills or knowledge.

2. **Address the issues.** Once you have identified the source of your self-doubt, work on addressing it. This could mean seeking therapy, self-reflection, or feedback from trusted sources.
3. **Practice positive self-talk.** Replace negative self-talk with positive affirmations. This can help you to feel more confident and capable.
4. **Practice self-care.** Take care of your physical and mental health. This can include getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and exercising regularly.
5. **Set achievable goals.** Set goals that are achievable and realistic. Achieving these goals can help you feel more confident and motivated.
6. **Celebrate small wins.** Celebrate small successes along the way. This can help you to stay motivated and feel more confident.
7. **Focus on progress, not perfection.** Remember that self-confidence is a journey, and setbacks are a natural part of the process.

By implementing these strategies, you can overcome obstacles to self-confidence and develop a powerful sense of self-worth.

Slide 10: 5 Ways to Maintain Self-Confidence

The ways you can maintain your self-confidence have similar characteristics to overcoming obstacles to self-confidence. Here are five ways to maintain your self-confidence:

1. **Practice self-care.** Taking care of yourself physically and mentally can help boost your self-confidence. This includes getting enough sleep, exercising regularly, eating a healthy diet, and practicing relaxation techniques like meditation or yoga.
2. **Set achievable goals.** Setting challenging but achievable goals can help build confidence in your abilities. Break down larger goals into smaller, more manageable ones, and celebrate your progress along the way.

3. **Focus on your strengths.** Instead of dwelling on your weaknesses, focus on your strengths and what you do well. This can help boost your confidence and give you a more positive outlook.
4. **Surround yourself with positive people.** Being around positive, supportive people can help you feel more confident and motivated. Seek out friends and mentors who encourage and believe in you.
5. **Learn from setbacks.** Everyone experiences setbacks from time to time. Instead of giving up or getting discouraged, use these experiences as opportunities to learn and grow. By focusing on what you can learn from failure, you can become more resilient and confident in your abilities.

We will cover each of these in greater detail on the following slides.

Slide 11: #1: Practice Self-Care

Practicing self-care can help you maintain your self-confidence in several ways. When you take time to care for yourself, such as by eating healthy, exercising, getting enough sleep, and engaging in activities you enjoy, you are sending a message to yourself that you are worthy of care and attention. T

his can help boost your self-esteem and confidence. Additionally, when you take care of your physical and mental health, you may feel more energized, focused, and positive, which can also contribute to greater self-confidence.

Finally, self-care can help you manage stress and anxiety, which can often undermine your confidence and self-assurance.

Slide 12: #2: Set Achievable Goals

Setting achievable goals can help you maintain your self-confidence because it allows you to experience success and progress towards your objectives.

By breaking down larger goals into smaller, more manageable steps, you can set yourself up for success and feel a sense of accomplishment as you reach each milestone.

This can help you build confidence in your abilities and feel motivated to continue working towards your goals. Additionally, achieving smaller goals can help you stay focused and motivated, which can further boost your confidence and help you maintain a positive mindset.

Slide 13: #3: Focus on Your Strengths
Focusing on your strengths can help you maintain self-confidence because it allows you to recognize and appreciate your abilities and talents.

When you feel confident in your abilities, you are more likely to take on challenges and approach tasks with a positive and optimistic attitude.

This can lead to greater success, which boosts confidence even further. If you focus too much on your weaknesses or limitations, you may start to doubt your abilities and feel less confident overall.

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge your weaknesses and improve them, but it is equally important to celebrate and build upon your strengths.

Slide 14: #4: Surround Yourself with Positive People
Surrounding yourself with positive people can significantly impact your self-confidence. Positive people tend to be supportive, encouraging, and uplifting.

They believe in you and your abilities, which can help boost your own belief in yourself. When you spend time with positive people, you are more likely to hear positive feedback and constructive criticism, which can help you grow and improve. Additionally, positive people tend to have a growth mindset, which can rub off on you and help you adopt a similar approach to life. All these factors can contribute to a higher sense of self-confidence.

Slide 15: #5: Learn from Setbacks
Learning from setbacks can help you build self-confidence in several ways. First, it allows you to see challenges as opportunities for growth rather than failures, which can help you approach future tasks with a more positive outlook.

Second, it helps you develop resilience and adaptability, which are key traits of confident individuals. Finally, by learning from setbacks and overcoming obstacles, you prove to yourself that you are capable of handling difficult situations, which can boost your self-esteem.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Self-Confidence Top 10
During job interviews, you will often be asked about your strengths and weaknesses. It is a good idea to write down your strengths and weaknesses before your interview so you can articulate your thoughts clearly.

Since we are working on self-confidence in this lesson, we will focus on your strengths in this activity. Have participants make a list of their top 10 strengths and why they chose them.

Activity 2: Self-Confidence Self-Assessment

There are many characteristics of a self-confident person. Have participants do a self-assessment, rating each of the traits in their student workbooks (1 for low on the scale of possessing this trait and 5 as the highest).

Have participants look at each of these characteristics, highlighting the characteristics that they rated the lowest

Then, they should write down small goals for each of the lowest rated traits to improve their self-confidence.

Lesson Nineteen – Self-Confidence

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Self-Confidence Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a self-confidence scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Self-Confidence Quiz*
- *Self-Confidence Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Self-Confidence Quiz* to participants and give them two to three minutes to complete it.
2. Have students self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Self-Confidence scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have the participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants' self-confidence skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having participants read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Self-Confidence Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does learning from setbacks help maintain your self-confidence?
 - a. It exposes you to fresh ideas you may not have thought of
 - b. It exposes you to challenging situations you may never have been exposed to in the past
 - c. It allows you to see challenges as opportunities for growth
 - d. It proves to yourself that you are incapable of handling difficult situations
2. What is the first step to overcoming obstacles to self-confidence?
 - a. Address the issues
 - b. Practice positive self-talk
 - c. Celebrate small wins
 - d. Identify the source of self-doubt
3. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to develop a positive self-image?
 - a. Identify weaknesses
 - b. Practice assertiveness
 - c. Identify strengths
 - d. Challenge negative thoughts
4. Which of the following is a true statement regarding self-confident individuals?
 - a. They tend to be less assertive and better communicators
 - b. They tend to be more assertive and better communicators
 - c. They tend to be more aggressive and better communicators
 - d. They tend to be less outspoken and better communicators
5. Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief and trust in their abilities, ____, and judgment.
 - a. Complexities
 - b. Rationalization
 - c. Skills
 - d. Qualities

Self-Confidence Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. How does learning from setbacks help maintain your self-confidence?
 - a. It exposes you to fresh ideas you may not have thought of
 - b. It exposes you to challenging situations you may never have been exposed to in the past
 - c. It allows you to see challenges as opportunities for growth**
 - d. It proves to yourself that you are incapable of handling difficult situations
2. What is the first step to overcoming obstacles to self-confidence?
 - a. Address the issues
 - b. Practice positive self-talk
 - c. Celebrate small wins
 - d. Identify the source of self-doubt**
3. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to develop a positive self-image?
 - a. Identify weaknesses**
 - b. Practice assertiveness
 - c. Identify strengths
 - d. Challenge negative thoughts
4. Which of the following is a true statement regarding self-confident individuals?
 - a. They tend to be less assertive and better communicators
 - b. They tend to be more assertive and better communicators**
 - c. They tend to be more aggressive and better communicators
 - d. They tend to be less outspoken and better communicators
5. Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief and trust in their abilities, ____, and judgment.
 - a. Complexities
 - b. Rationalization
 - c. Skills
 - d. Qualities**

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Lesson Twenty – Stress Management

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about stress and the importance of stress management in the workplace. Participants will learn about the different types of stress, common workplace stressors, the signs and symptoms of stress, and how to reduce stress. Participants will then role-play using the Stress Management scenario card. The accompanying student workbooks are designed for independent study or as a homework assignment.

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, participants will:

- Define stress and the importance of stress management in the workplace
- Learn about the different types of stress
- Identify common workplace stressors and the signs and symptoms of stress
- Explore how to quickly reduce stress
- Understand how to maintain a healthy work-life balance
- Discover five stress management techniques

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate Class Time
FOCUS	• <i>Stress Management Introduction Scenario</i> – Answer Key • <i>Stress Management Introduction Scenario</i>	1. Print/photocopy <i>Stress Management Introduction Scenario</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the answer key available for reference.	10 minutes
LEARN	• <i>Stress Management</i> slide presentation • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook	1. Prepare the <i>Stress Management</i> slide presentation for viewing. 2. Access student workbook activities.	30-60 minutes
REVIEW	• Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards • Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook • <i>Stress Management Quiz</i> • <i>Stress Management Quiz</i> – Answer Key	1. Print the <i>Stress Management Quiz</i> (one per participant). 2. Have the <i>Stress Management Quiz</i> – Answer Key available for reference. 3. Have the Stress Management scenario card available for display or reference. 4. Have participants access the Stress Management Scenario page in their student workbook.	20 minutes

Lesson Twenty – Stress Management

FOCUS: Developing Awareness of Stress Management Skills in the Workplace

10 minutes

Purpose:

Help participants develop an awareness of stress management skills in the workplace.

Materials:

- *Stress Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key*
- *Stress Management Introduction Scenario*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Stress Management Introduction Scenario* before or at the beginning of class.
2. Have the *Stress Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key* available.
3. Have participants read the information and complete the worksheet independently.
4. Have participants pair up after completion and share answers from the worksheet.

Stress Management Introduction Scenario

Samson and Olivia work at an automobile manufacturing plant. They are both part of a team working on a crucial project with a tight deadline. As the deadline gets closer, tensions are high, and the stress levels of the team members increase. Olivia, a seasoned project manager, and Samson, a recent hire, find themselves facing mounting pressure.

Samson has a splitting headache and is irritable, while Olivia maintains a calm, peaceful attitude. As the project manager, Olivia encourages her team to take short breaks and to get outside and move to help reduce stress. Despite these suggestions, Samson still feels overwhelmed and unmotivated. He feels as if he is going to let down the team and is questioning if he is cut out for this type of work.

Sensing Samson's unhappiness, Olivia has a talk with him and listens to his concerns. She listens attentively and suggests prioritizing his work into smaller pieces and practicing deep breathing exercises throughout the day. After following Olivia's suggestions, Samson finds his stress levels diminishing, and he is able to focus more clearly on his work.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Olivia, what else would you have suggested to Samson to help manage stress?

What do you think would have happened if Samson's stress went unchecked?

List five other employability skills used in this scenario.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Stress Management Introduction Scenario – Answer Key

Samson and Olivia work at an automobile manufacturing plant. They are both part of a team working on a crucial project with a tight deadline. As the deadline gets closer, tensions are high, and the stress levels of the team members increase. Olivia, a seasoned project manager, and Samson, a recent hire, find themselves facing mounting pressure.

Samson has a splitting headache and is irritable, while Olivia maintains a calm, peaceful attitude. As the project manager, Olivia encourages her team to take short breaks and to get outside and move to help reduce stress. Despite these suggestions, Samson still feels overwhelmed and unmotivated. He feels as if he is going to let down the team and is questioning if he is cut out for this type of work.

Sensing Samson's unhappiness, Olivia has a talk with him and listens to his concerns. She listens attentively and suggests prioritizing his work into smaller pieces and practicing deep breathing exercises throughout the day. After following Olivia's suggestions, Samson finds his stress levels diminishing, and he is able to focus more clearly on his work.

REFLECT on the situation:

If you were Olivia, what else would you have suggested to Samson to help manage stress?

Answers will vary by student. However, some ideas include suggesting the importance of a healthy work-life balance, taking a day off work to become refreshed, listening to music, taking a break with a coworker, or meeting with a therapist or counselor if the stress becomes overwhelming.

What do you think would have happened if Samson's stress went unchecked?

He could develop chronic stress, become physically sick, have low productivity, experience burnout, and negatively impact his coworkers with his irritability.

List five other employability skills used in this scenario.

Communication, empathy, problem solving, active listening, and critical thinking, among others.

SHARE your thoughts with a peer when it is discussion time.

Lesson Twenty – Stress Management

LEARN: Stress Management Slide Presentation and Activities

30-60 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will receive a thorough introduction to stress management in the workplace, common workplace stressors, the signs and symptoms of stress, and ways to reduce stress.

Additionally, participants will discover five stress management techniques.

Materials:

- *Stress Management* slide presentation
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook

Facilitation Steps:

1. Share the following information as you show the slide presentation.

Slide 1: Stress Management

Employability skills, also known as soft skills, refer to a set of skills and personal characteristics highly valued by employers and are essential for success in the workplace.

There are many employability skills that employers look for in an employee. The one we will cover in this lesson is stress management.

Slide 2: Goals

The goals of this presentation are to:

- Define stress and the importance of stress management in the workplace
- Learn about the different types of stress
- Identify common workplace stressors and the signs and symptoms of stress
- Explore how to quickly reduce stress
- Understand how to maintain a healthy work-life balance
- Discover five stress management techniques

Slide 3: What Is Stress?

Stress is a physical, mental, and emotional response to a challenging situation. It can be caused by both positive and negative events and is a natural part of life.

Good stress, also known as **eustress**, can motivate and energize us, while bad stress, also known as **distress**, can be harmful and lead to negative health consequences.

The key is to manage stress effectively so that it doesn't become overwhelming or detrimental to our health.

Slide 4: Video

Instructor Note: After this short video on stress, you can open the class for discussion, asking participants what causes them stress, or continue to the next slide. Video link for reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZTc8FwHGM>

Slide 5: Why Is Stress Management Important in the Workplace?

Managing stress at work is important for several reasons:

1. High levels of stress can lead to decreased productivity, poor decision-making, and decreased job satisfaction.
2. Prolonged exposure to stress can lead to burnout, which is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion that can have long-term effects on an individual's well-being.
3. Stress can also negatively impact your personal life and relationships outside of work.

By implementing stress management strategies, such as taking breaks, practicing mindfulness, and seeking support when needed, you can improve your overall well-being and be more effective in your work.

Slide 6: The Different Types of Stress

There are several types of stress, including these top four:

1. **Acute:** This type of stress is short-term and usually caused by a sudden event or situation that requires immediate attention. For instance, a deadline or an argument with a loved one.
2. **Episodic Acute:** This type of stress is experienced by people who are constantly under pressure and tend to worry excessively. It can ultimately lead to burnout and chronic stress.
3. **Chronic:** This type of stress lasts for a prolonged period and is often caused by ongoing problems, such as financial difficulties or a toxic work environment.
4. **Emotional:** Emotional stress affects your emotions to a deep level and hinders your normal functioning. It can occur when you feel overwhelmed by anxiety or fear, lose a loved one, have relationship problems, or get fired from your job.

Slide 7: Common Workplace Stressors

While there can be more, here are the top 10 causes of stress in the workplace:

1. Heavy workload and deadlines
2. Conflicts with coworkers or managers
3. Long work hours or inflexible schedules
4. Inadequate compensation or benefits
5. Poor communication within the workplace
6. Job insecurity or fear of layoffs
7. Lack of support or resources for job tasks
8. High-pressure or high-stakes job expectations
9. Discrimination or harassment in the workplace
10. Tedious or repetitive job tasks

Slide 8: Signs and Symptoms of Stress

Stress can present itself in several ways, both physically and emotionally. Some common signs and symptoms of stress include:

- Headaches
- Muscle tension or pain
- Fatigue
- Trouble sleeping
- Increased or decreased appetite
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Depression

It is important to recognize these signs and take steps to manage stress before it becomes overwhelming. After the next slide, we will cover how you can quickly reduce stress whenever you have any of these associated signs or symptoms.

Slide 9: Psychological Signs of Stress

In addition to the signs and symptoms on the previous slide, additional psychological signs of stress include:

- Low mood
- Inability to switch off from work
- Poor decision-making
- Low productivity
- Nervousness and feeling “on edge”
- Distrust in coworkers and/or managers
- Defensiveness

Slide 10: How to Quickly Reduce Stress

Reducing stress is crucial to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Here are some tips to help you quickly reduce stress at work:

1. **Take a deep breath.** Take a few deep breaths to calm your mind and body. You can do this at your desk or in a quiet place.
2. **Stretch.** Stand up from your desk and stretch your arms, neck, and back to release tension in your muscles.
3. **Take a break.** Take a short break to walk around or grab a snack, which can help you clear your mind.
4. **Prioritize tasks.** Make a to-do list and prioritize your tasks for the day. This

can help you feel more organized and focused.

5. **Communicate.** If you are feeling overwhelmed, don't be afraid to communicate with your manager or coworkers. They may be able to help you find a solution or provide support.

Remember, it is important to take care of yourself and your mental health, even during busy workdays. If you do not find the support you need talking to your coworkers or managers, many businesses offer employee assistance programs (EAPs) where you can schedule an appointment to talk with a professional therapist or counselor.

Slide 11: How to Maintain a Work-Life Balance

Maintaining a work-life balance is important to ensure that you are giving your best to both your personal and professional life.

Here are some tips that can help you maintain a healthy balance:

1. **Prioritize your work.** Make a list of tasks that are important and urgent and focus on completing them first.
2. **Set boundaries.** Set clear boundaries between your work and personal life. Avoid checking work emails or taking work calls during your personal time.
3. **Take breaks.** Take short breaks during the day to recharge your batteries. This will help you stay focused and productive.
4. **Schedule personal time.** Schedule time for your personal activities, such as exercise, hobbies, or spending time with family and friends.
5. **Learn to say no.** Don't take on more work than you can handle. Learn to say no when you feel overwhelmed.
6. **Get enough sleep.** Make sure you get enough sleep to keep your mind and body fresh.

Remember, maintaining a work-life balance is important for your physical and mental well-being, so don't hesitate to make it a priority.

Slide 12: Video

Instructor Note: After this short video on maintaining work-life balance by setting and communicating boundaries, open the class for discussion. Ask participants if they have suggestions for managing this situation differently. Then, move on to the next slide. Video link for reference:

https://youtube.com/shorts/tO2-KHl_Obw?si=K5UKQ2nzAO9zvki

Slide 13: 5 Stress Management Techniques

Stress management is an important skill to develop, as stress is a natural part of life and can significantly impact your health and happiness.

Here are five proven stress management techniques:

1. Identify the source of stress
2. Eliminate unhealthy stress-reduction techniques
3. Practice the four A's of stress management
4. Engage in physical activity
5. Spend time with others

Each of these techniques will be covered in greater detail in the following slides.

Slide 14: #1: Identify the Source of Stress

The first step in managing stress is identifying the source of stress. While it sounds easy to identify, such as starting a new job or going through a breakup, chronic stress can be harder to pinpoint.

To identify the real source of stress, you need to examine how your thoughts, behaviors, attitudes, and feelings contribute to it. For example, if you are constantly stressed because you fail to meet deadlines, look at how you contribute to that problem.

When you look at the issue more in-depth, you might find that you fail to meet deadlines because you procrastinate. Then, you can address your procrastination issue to reduce your stress levels.

Slide 15: #2: Eliminate Unhealthy Stress-Reduction Techniques

Many people fall back on unhealthy and unproductive ways to manage stress. While they may offer a short-term solution, overall, they can cause more harm than good. This includes:

- Binge eating junk food
- Mindlessly watching TV or your phone for hours
- Withdrawing from family, friends, and social activities
- Sleeping too much
- Taking out your stress on others in a threatening way
- Abusing alcohol or drugs

If you use any of these techniques to manage stress, try replacing them with healthier alternatives, such as exercise, deep breathing techniques, mindfulness activities, meditation, or participating in fun social activities with friends and family.

Slide 16: #3: Practice the 4 A's of Stress Management

While stress is an automatic response within your body, some stressors happen at predictable times, such as family gatherings, when giving a presentation, or attending a job interview.

When managing these predictable stressful situations, you can either change the situation or how you respond by practicing the four A's of stress management, which are:

1. **Avoid:** Avoid unnecessary stress by identifying triggers and finding ways to eliminate or reduce them.
2. **Alter:** Alter the situation by changing the way you communicate or interact with others, or by changing your environment.

3. **Adapt:** Adapt to the stressor by reframing your perspective and accepting the things you cannot change.
4. **Accept:** Accept the things you cannot change and focus on what you can control, such as your reaction to the stressor.

Slide 17: #4: Engage in Physical Activity
While exercising when you feel stressed out isn't usually at the top of your mind, engaging in physical activity is a proven stress reliever.

When you engage in physical activity, your body releases **endorphins**, which are "feel good" hormones. This can be in the form of:

- Going for a walk, run, or hike
- Dancing
- Playing with a pet
- Going to the gym
- Practicing yoga

Whatever you do, you will notice your stress decrease when participating in some form of physical activity.

Slide 18: #5: Spend Time with Others

When you are stressed out, spending time with those who "get" you will help calm you down and decrease your stress levels.

This could be a sibling, friend, or family member who makes you feel understood. The person or people you spend time with don't necessarily need to fix your stress, but they need to be good listeners and someone you feel comfortable opening up to.

Sometimes, all we need is to vent our frustrations, be acknowledged, and feel that stress melt away.

2. Have participants access the student workbook pages for each of the following activities. Depending on the time you have, you may choose to do all the activities in class or assign some for outside of class time to be completed.

Alternatively, you may choose one activity if you have a shorter class period. If you wish to do a deeper dive into this soft skill, you could have participants do all the related activities in the student workbook.

Activity 1: Stress Management Guided Meditation

Have participants learn and practice mindful breathing. They should watch a video on mindful breathing or guided meditation to help reduce stress.

Have participants sit in a quiet place, close their eyes, and take deep breaths. This will help them anytime they are feeling stressed out and need to clear their mind.

Here are a few videos to choose from:

[Calm Your Mind, 20 Minute Guided Meditation for Stress & Anxiety \(youtube.com\)](#)

[10-Minute Meditation For Stress \(youtube.com\)](#)

[10 Min Guided Meditation to Release Stress and Anxiety \(youtube.com\)](#)

Activity 2: Gratitude Journal

Have participants start a gratitude journal. Gratitude journaling is an excellent way to shift your focus from negative thoughts that lead to stress to positive ones.

Participants should write down everything they are grateful for today. Then, continue this practice for one week. This will help them appreciate the good things in their life and reduce their stress levels.

Activity 3: Stress Management Triggers

This activity will help participants identify triggers for stress. Have them write down situations, people, or things that cause them stress.

When managing these predictable stressful situations, participants can either change the situation or how they respond by practicing the four A's of stress management, which are:

1. **Avoid:** Avoid unnecessary stress by identifying triggers and finding ways to eliminate or reduce them.
2. **Alter:** Alter the situation by changing the way you communicate or interact with others, or by changing your environment.
3. **Adapt:** Adapt to the stressor by reframing your perspective and accepting the things you cannot change.
4. **Accept:** Accept the things you cannot change and focus on what you can control, such as your reaction to the stressor.

Once participants have determined how they will manage their triggers, they should find these situations, people, or things less stressful.

Lesson Twenty – Stress Management

REVIEW: Practice and Assessment of Stress Management Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

This brief quiz provides an assessment to show knowledge gained in the lesson. Participants will also apply what they have learned in a stress management scenario.

Materials:

- Middle School Employability Skills Scenario Cards
- Middle School Employability Skills Student Workbook
- *Stress Management Quiz*
- *Stress Management Quiz – Answer Key*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Distribute the *Stress Management Quiz* to students and give participants two to three minutes to work on it.
2. Have participants self-check their answers as you share from the answer key.
3. Display the Stress Management scenario card and/or have participants access this page in their student workbook. There are a few different ways you could choose to use this scenario for assessment.
 - a. Have participants pair up and role-play the main characters in the scenario, read the scenario, and answer the key questions while in their role. You can assess participants stress management skills during their interactions and offer suggestions if necessary.
 - b. You can use the student workbook page as a written activity, having students read the scenario and answer the key questions independently.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Stress Management Quiz

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What are the 4 A's of stress management?
 - a. Acute, abide, alter, accept
 - b. Act, abide, alter, abate
 - c. Address, accept, avoid, admonish
 - d. Avoid, alter, adapt, accept
2. Which of the following is an unhealthy stress-reduction technique?
 - a. Spending time with friends
 - b. Practicing positive self-talk
 - c. Sleeping too much
 - d. Practicing mindfulness exercises
3. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to maintain a work-life balance?
 - a. Take breaks
 - b. Schedule personal time
 - c. Learn to say yes
 - d. Set boundaries
4. What type of stress lasts for a prolonged period?
 - a. Chronic
 - b. Acute
 - c. Episodic acute
 - d. Emotional
5. There is good stress and bad stress. What is good stress called?
 - a. Prestress
 - b. Eustress
 - c. Destress
 - d. Distress

Stress Management Quiz – Answer Key

Instructions: Select the best answer to the following multiple-choice questions.

1. What are the 4 A's of stress management?
 - a. Acute, abide, alter, accept
 - b. Act, abide, alter, abate
 - c. Address, accept, avoid, admonish
 - d. **Avoid, alter, adapt, accept**
2. Which of the following is an unhealthy stress-reduction technique?
 - a. Spending time with friends
 - b. Practicing positive self-talk
 - c. **Sleeping too much**
 - d. Practicing mindfulness exercises
3. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to maintain a work-life balance?
 - a. Take breaks
 - b. Schedule personal time
 - c. **Learn to say yes**
 - d. Set boundaries
4. What type of stress lasts for a prolonged period?
 - a. **Chronic**
 - b. Acute
 - c. Episodic acute
 - d. Emotional
5. There is good stress and bad stress. What is good stress called?
 - a. Prestress
 - b. **Eustress**
 - c. Destress
 - d. Distress

Sources

1. Hesler, Brian. (2023, February 21). *5 Tips to Manage Stress*. Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/5-tips-to-manage-stress>
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Employability Skills Summative Assessment

Instructions: Circle the best answer to each of the following questions.

1. Which best describes nonverbal communication?
 - a. Communication through written form
 - b. Communication achieved through body language and gestures
 - c. Communication by speaking words
 - d. Communication achieved with visual aids
2. What type of communication uses displays and presentations to help communicate a message?
 - a. Written communication
 - b. Nonverbal communication
 - c. Verbal communication
 - d. Visual communication
3. When actively listening to someone speak, how many communication skills are typically used?
 - a. 2
 - b. 1
 - c. 0
 - d. 3
4. Mindful listening is also known as _____.
 - a. Meditative listening
 - b. Attentive listening
 - c. Active listening
 - d. Engaged listening
5. What can happen if your resume and cover letter have spelling or grammatical errors?
 - a. The employer will ask you to rewrite your resume and cover letter
 - b. The employer will send you back to school to improve your spelling and grammar
 - c. The employer will feel sorry for you and hire you immediately
 - d. The employer will pass you over for another candidate
6. What employability skill is primarily used to identify and solve problems?
 - a. Work ethic
 - b. Common knowledge
 - c. Problem solving
 - d. Reliability

7. What is the last step to problem solving?
 - a. Develop solutions to the problem
 - b. Identify the problem
 - c. Implement the solution
 - d. Evaluate the solution
8. How many steps are there in the problem-solving process?
 - a. 6
 - b. 8
 - c. 4
 - d. 7
9. Problem-solving skills are specifically used in what type of profession?
 - a. They are only used in manufacturing professions
 - b. They are only used in the medical profession
 - c. They are used in every type of profession
 - d. They are only used in engineering professions
10. What is the minimum number of people needed to develop solutions to a problem?
 - a. 2
 - b. 5
 - c. 1
 - d. 3
11. Which of the following employability skills addresses how you communicate and interact with others?
 - a. Business skills
 - b. Life skills
 - c. Work ethic skills
 - d. Interpersonal skills
12. The ability to perceive, interpret, and control emotions to communicate with others is known as _____.
 - a. Intelligent resonance
 - b. Intelligence quotient
 - c. Emotional intelligence
 - d. Extrasensory perception
13. Interpersonal skills are also known as “people skills” or “_____.”
 - a. Social skills
 - b. Customer skills
 - c. Employability skills
 - d. Extroverted skills

14. Studies have shown that people with excellent interpersonal skills have better ____ and more successful ____.
- Grades, health
 - Relationships, careers
 - Health, jobs
 - Coworkers, lives
15. Which of the following was **not** mentioned in the lesson regarding the types of communication skills required for interpersonal skills?
- Verbal
 - Visual
 - Nonverbal
 - Active listening
16. When you show up on time to work, you are described as ____.
- Predictable
 - Tardy
 - Punctual
 - Late
17. Why is responsibility important in the workplace?
- Responsibility increases productivity
 - Responsibility guarantees a promotion
 - Responsibility ensures you are an honest person
 - Responsibility increases employee morale
18. Being dependable, organized, and punctual is the definition of ____.
- Confidence
 - Morality
 - Responsibility
 - Intelligence
19. Why is it important to learn from your mistakes?
- So you can grow and improve
 - So you can stop blaming others for your mistakes
 - So you can stop hiding your mistakes
 - So you can advance in your career quicker
20. What is the term used when a person takes ownership over the results of their actions?
- Ethics
 - Accountability
 - Morals
 - Responsibility

21. Which of the following is the best definition of teamwork?
- a. Two or more people who interact with others to create a team
 - b. One or more people who exchange ideas to develop a solution to a problem
 - c. Three or more people who interact with others to develop ideas
 - d. Two or more people who interact independently with a common purpose
22. What does collaboration mean?
- a. Working hard towards a promotion
 - b. Writing down ideas for a project to submit to your boss
 - c. Working alone on a project
 - d. Working with others to create or produce something
23. Why is it best to review your weaknesses when improving your teamwork skills?
- a. It helps you offset your strengths
 - b. It helps you identify areas in which you excel
 - c. It helps you identify areas that need improvement
 - d. It helps you when delegating tasks to others
24. What is the term used to describe people who are open to different ideas and perspectives and are willing to adapt to changing situations?
- a. Flexible
 - b. Stubborn
 - c. Envious
 - d. Reliable
25. What is a key component of effective communication in a teamwork environment?
- a. Nonverbal cues
 - b. Active listening
 - c. Verbal cues
 - d. Passive listening
26. Which of the following is true regarding work ethic?
- a. Work ethic is the act of agreeing with someone so as not to cause an argument
 - b. Employees with a strong work ethic often far exceed their peers in achieving goals
 - c. Work ethic is the ability to be accepting of all cultures
 - d. Employees with a strong work ethic are not very driven individuals
27. How does being a hard worker show a strong work ethic?
- a. Through their persistence and determination to succeed
 - b. Through their favoritism with the manager or supervisor
 - c. Through their good luck and good fortune
 - d. Through their networking and communication skills

28. What is the term used for employees who are always on time?
- Persistent
 - Punctual
 - Pursuer
 - Popular
29. Which of the following does **not** apply to someone who is a team player?
- They put aside personal goals to benefit the team
 - They take credit for something they did not do
 - They help and receive help when needed
 - They have a reputation for getting along well with others
30. If someone dresses appropriately, has good hygiene, and remains calm under pressure, others perceive them as ____.
- Intimidating
 - Positive
 - Professional
 - Unusual
31. The act of listening without being fully invested in and tuned into the speaker is the definition of ____.
- Active listening
 - Receptive listening
 - Open listening
 - Passive listening
32. Which of the following is **not** used in active listening?
- Clarifying terms
 - Repeating or paraphrasing
 - Interrupting the speaker
 - Listening “between the lines”
33. When actively listening to someone, what does it mean to respond appropriately?
- You do not put the other person down
 - You judge the other person’s actions
 - You voice your opinions in an aggressive way
 - You are dishonest in your response
34. Why should you provide feedback after actively listening to someone speak?
- To show them you were listening
 - To show them you have opinions
 - To show them you have a solution to their problem
 - To show them you are intelligent

35. Which of the following does **not** show that you pay attention when others are speaking?
- a. You look the speaker in the eyes
 - b. You mentally prepare a rebuttal
 - c. You put aside distracting thoughts
 - d. You avoid being distracted by outside factors
36. Which of the following is **not** one of the reasons you want to think before you speak?
- a. It gives you a moment to reflect
 - b. It demonstrates that you are thoughtful and considerate
 - c. It gives you a chance to express yourself more clearly and effectively
 - d. It gives you time to come up with an excuse
37. When respecting differences in the workplace, which one of the following displays respect?
- a. You make assumptions about your coworkers
 - b. You make discriminatory comments about others
 - c. You stereotype others based on their age or culture
 - d. You use inclusive language
38. How can you demonstrate you are a respectful person in a job interview?
- a. You interrupt the interviewer when they are speaking
 - b. You shake the interviewer's hand when introduced
 - c. You look at your feet when conversing with the interviewer
 - d. You leave the interview without thanking the interviewer for their time
39. When a business creates a _____ in the workplace, it increases productivity, improves collaboration, and leads to better employee morale.
- a. Culture of reduction
 - b. Culture of respect
 - c. Culture of reticence
 - d. Culture of retention
40. When you have respect for someone, you have a _____ opinion of them.
- a. Bad
 - b. Good
 - c. Poor
 - d. Questionable
41. To improve your communication skills and make you a better critical thinker, engage in _____ discussions.
- a. Easy
 - b. Simple
 - c. Rational
 - d. Difficult

42. How can you foster analytical skills?
- a. Perform repetitive work
 - b. Take on new experiences
 - c. Debate your coworkers
 - d. Practice making educated guesses
43. When you train yourself to pay close attention to your surroundings, you help increase your _____ skills.
- a. Communication
 - b. Analytical
 - c. Responsibility
 - d. Observation
44. When thinking critically, which of the following would you do last?
- a. Identify ways to improve the solution
 - b. Organize your data
 - c. Identify the issue or problem
 - d. Develop and execute solutions
45. In today's technology-driven work environments, critical thinking skills enable employees to make _____ decisions.
- a. Bad
 - b. Mediocre
 - c. Correct
 - d. Unusual
46. What does the "R" represent in SMART goals?
- a. Responsible
 - b. Relevant
 - c. Reachable
 - d. Relatable
47. Which of the following was **not** mentioned as a prioritization technique?
- a. Eisenhower Matrix
 - b. ABC Method
 - c. 123 Technique
 - d. Pareto Principle
48. When referring to SMART goals, what does the "T" stand for?
- a. Time-bound
 - b. Time management
 - c. Time sensitive
 - d. Timely

49. Which would **not** be considered a time management tool?
- a. To-do lists
 - b. Calendars
 - c. Pomodoro timer
 - d. Eisenhower app
50. What does the “A” represent when talking about SMART goals?
- a. Achievable
 - b. Attractive
 - c. Advantageous
 - d. Available
51. Which is **not** considered when trying to improve your professionalism in the workplace?
- a. Show respect to your coworkers and superiors
 - b. Be proactive and take the initiative
 - c. Communicate effectively
 - d. Show up late to work, but with a good excuse
52. How does being professional in the workplace enhance your credibility?
- a. It shows you have demonstrated that you take your work seriously and are committed to achieving your goals
 - b. It shows you have demonstrated that you want to have fun at work and are committed to making your coworkers laugh
 - c. It shows you have demonstrated that you do not take your work seriously and have not set goals
 - d. It shows you have demonstrated that you are looking for another job that pays more and has better benefits
53. When an employee has a positive attitude towards work and their coworkers, it shows they are willing to contribute to the ____ ____.
- a. Pension fund
 - b. Team’s success
 - c. Charity fund
 - d. Work environment
54. If you are trying to demonstrate your professionalism to an employer, which of the following would you avoid?
- a. Show up to work on time
 - b. Dress appropriately
 - c. Communicate poorly
 - d. Perform duties to the best of your ability

55. What does professionalism refer to?
- a. The way you speak of others behind their back so as not to upset them
 - b. The way you conduct business without your employer knowing you have a side job
 - c. The set of behaviors, attitudes, and qualities expected of someone in a professional environment
 - d. The qualities below or contrary to the standards expected in a particular profession
56. What type of goal setting method involves breaking down complex or long-term projects into smaller, more manageable tasks?
- a. HARD goals
 - b. SMART goals
 - c. Visual goals
 - d. Micro goals
57. What does the “P” represent in the WOOP goal setting technique?
- a. Predict
 - b. Plan
 - c. Prognosis
 - d. Plot
58. What is the definition of goal setting?
- a. The process of telling others what you want to achieve so you can reach your goals with their help
 - b. The act of spending a long time working in a job so you can eventually receive a promotion
 - c. The process of taking active steps to achieve your desired outcome
 - d. The act of wishing for something better to happen in your life
59. What type of decisions are made on a regular basis by all employees and management in a workplace?
- a. Routine
 - b. Tactical
 - c. Strategic
 - d. Operational
60. What type of short-term decisions are made by lower-level management?
- a. Tactical
 - b. Strategic
 - c. Routine
 - d. Operational
61. What quote by Mark Twain was used in the slide presentation on honesty and integrity?
- a. “If you are honest, you do not need to lie.”
 - b. “If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember anything.”
 - c. “Do what is right, all the time.”
 - d. “Do the right thing, even when no one is watching.”

62. Which term describes someone who is honest and follows a moral compass?
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 - b. Arrogant
 - c. Cocky
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- a. It shows you are responsible and reliable and can be trusted to keep track of vital information
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 - b. The quality of being outspoken and a good communicator
 - c. The quality of being truthful and sincere
 - d. The quality of being calm and peaceful
65. Being honest requires ____, integrity, and a willingness to accept responsibility for your actions and decisions.
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- a. Adjourning
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 - The team works effectively
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 - Most people do not like confrontation and choose to ignore what is bothering them
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- The art of actively listening
 - Having patience when speaking with others
 - The ability to understand and share the feelings of others
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- a. Volunteer for projects
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- a. Creative people tend to have less energy, which allows you to focus on your thoughts
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 - c. Extrinsic
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82. Which of the following is **not** one of the reasons why employers value motivated employees?
- a. Motivated employees are more productive
 - b. Motivated employees are engaged
 - c. Motivated employees are committed to achieving the company's goals
 - d. Motivated employees take fewer sick days than others

83. What type of motivation comes from within a person?
- a. Extrinsic
 - b. Intrinsic
 - c. Affiliate
 - d. Achievement
84. Why is it important to identify obstacles that hinder motivation?
- a. So you can set new goals for success
 - b. So you can delegate tasks to coworkers
 - c. So you can develop a plan to tackle them
 - d. So you can enlist others to develop a solution to overcome the obstacles
85. What type of motivation is driven by a desire to succeed and improve oneself?
- a. Achievement
 - b. Adventure
 - c. Affiliation
 - d. Incentive
86. Why do employers value flexibility as an employability skill?
- a. It enables employees to dispute conflicting information in the workplace
 - b. It enables employees to manage challenging situations and adapt to changes in the workplace
 - c. It enables employees to be happy working in the same work environment day after day
 - d. It enables employees to set high expectations and professional standards
87. What is it called when two employees share the responsibilities of one full-time position?
- a. Remote work
 - b. Flexible work hours
 - c. Compressed workweek
 - d. Job sharing
88. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to develop a flexible mindset?
- a. Be open to new ideas
 - b. Stay curious
 - c. Practice passive listening
 - d. Embrace feedback
89. How does staying calm make you a more flexible team member?
- a. Your emotional intelligence increases when you are calm
 - b. You can take a step back and evaluate the situation objectively
 - c. You react emotionally when you are calm
 - d. You can take a step back and look at the situation subjectively

90. What type of work arrangement involves a full week's worth of work being completed in fewer days?
- a. Compressed workweek
 - b. Remote work
 - c. Part-time work
 - d. Job sharing
91. How does practicing self-care help maintain self-confidence?
- a. It helps you become more relaxed
 - b. It helps you sleep better
 - c. It helps you become more lethargic
 - d. It helps you feel more energized
92. What is the first step to maintaining your self-confidence?
- a. Practice self-care
 - b. Set achievable goals
 - c. Focus on your strengths
 - d. Learn from setbacks
93. What type of communication shows you have self-confidence?
- a. Aggressive
 - b. Assertive
 - c. Abrasive
 - d. Attentive
94. Which of the following is **not** a characteristic of a confident person?
- a. Willingness to take risks to achieve their goals
 - b. Good listening skills
 - c. Negative attitude towards themselves and life
 - d. Ability to manage criticism and failure
95. Self-confidence is developed through various experiences and _____ and can be improved through practice and positive reinforcement.
- a. Interactions
 - b. Guidance
 - c. Instructions
 - d. Teachings
96. What type of stress is short-term and usually caused by a sudden event or situation that requires immediate attention?
- a. Chronic
 - b. Acute
 - c. Emotional
 - d. Episodic acute

97. What is bad stress called?
- a. Eustress
 - b. Destress
 - c. Distress
 - d. Elstress
98. Which of the following is a type of stress experienced by people who tend to worry excessively?
- a. Emotional
 - b. Chronic
 - c. Acute
 - d. Episodic acute
99. What is the first step in managing stress?
- a. Identify the source of stress
 - b. Eliminate unhealthy stress-reduction techniques
 - c. Practice the four A's of stress management
 - d. Engage in physical activity
100. What is the first of the four A's of stress management?
- a. Alter
 - b. Avoid
 - c. Adapt
 - d. Accept

Employability Skills Summative Assessment – Answer Key

Instructions: Circle the best answer to each of the following questions.

1. Which best describes nonverbal communication?
 - a. Communication through written form
 - b. Communication achieved through body language and gestures**
 - c. Communication by speaking words
 - d. Communication achieved with visual aids

See Lesson 1, slide 2
2. What type of communication uses displays and presentations to help communicate a message?
 - a. Written communication
 - b. Nonverbal communication
 - c. Verbal communication
 - d. Visual communication**

See Lesson 1, slide 11
3. When actively listening to someone speak, how many communication skills are typically used?
 - a. 2**
 - b. 1
 - c. 0
 - d. 3

See Lesson 1, slide 9
4. Mindful listening is also known as _____.
 - a. Meditative listening
 - b. Attentive listening
 - c. Active listening**
 - d. Engaged listening

See Lesson 1, slide 9
5. What can happen if your resume and cover letter have spelling or grammatical errors?
 - a. The employer will ask you to rewrite your resume and cover letter
 - b. The employer will send you back to school to improve your spelling and grammar
 - c. The employer will feel sorry for you and hire you immediately
 - d. The employer will pass you over for another candidate**

See Lesson 1, slide 10

6. What employability skill is primarily used to identify and solve problems?

- a. Work ethic
- b. Common knowledge
- c. Problem solving**
- d. Reliability

See Lesson 2, slide 13

7. What is the last step to problem solving?

- a. Develop solutions to the problem
- b. Identify the problem
- c. Implement the solution

d. Evaluate the solution

See Lesson 2, slide 8

8. How many steps are there in the problem-solving process?

- a. 6**
- b. 8
- c. 4
- d. 7

See Lesson 2, slide 8

9. Problem-solving skills are specifically used in what type of profession?

- a. They are only used in manufacturing professions
- b. They are only used in the medical profession
- c. They are used in every type of profession**
- d. They are only used in engineering professions

See Lesson 2, slide 4

10. What is the minimum number of people needed to develop solutions to a problem?

- a. 2
- b. 5
- c. 1**
- d. 3

See Lesson 2, slide 11

11. Which of the following employability skills addresses how you communicate and interact with others?

- a. Business skills
- b. Life skills
- c. Work ethic skills

d. Interpersonal skills

See Lesson 3, slide 3

12. The ability to perceive, interpret, and control emotions to communicate with others is known as ____.

- a. Intelligent resonance
- b. Intelligence quotient
- c. Emotional intelligence**
- d. Extrasensory perception

See Lesson 3, slide 7

13. Interpersonal skills are also known as “people skills” or “____.”

- a. Social skills**
- b. Customer skills
- c. Employability skills
- d. Extroverted skills

See Lesson 3, slide 3

14. Studies have shown that people with excellent interpersonal skills have better ____ and more successful ____.

- a. Grades, health
- b. Relationships, careers**
- c. Health, jobs
- d. Coworkers, lives

See Lesson 3, slide 3

15. Which of the following was **not** mentioned in the lesson regarding the types of communication skills required for interpersonal skills?

- a. Verbal
- b. Visual**
- c. Nonverbal
- d. Active listening

See Lesson 3, slide 6

16. When you show up on time to work, you are described as ____.

- a. Predictable
- b. Tardy
- c. Punctual**
- d. Late

See Lesson 4, slide 3

17. Why is responsibility important in the workplace?

- a. Responsibility increases productivity**
- b. Responsibility guarantees a promotion
- c. Responsibility ensures you are an honest person
- d. Responsibility increases employee morale

See Lesson 4, slide 4

18. Being dependable, organized, and punctual is the definition of ____.

- a. Confidence
- b. Morality
- c. Responsibility**
- d. Intelligence

See Lesson 4, slide 3

19. Why is it important to learn from your mistakes?

- a. So you can grow and improve**
- b. So you can stop blaming others for your mistakes
- c. So you can stop hiding your mistakes
- d. So you can advance in your career quicker

See Lesson 4, slide 10

20. What is the term used when a person takes ownership over the results of their actions?

- a. Ethics
- b. Accountability**
- c. Morals
- d. Responsibility

See Lesson 4, slide 6

21. Which of the following is the best definition of teamwork?

- a. Two or more people who interact with others to create a team
- b. One or more people who exchange ideas to develop a solution to a problem
- c. Three or more people who interact with others to develop ideas
- d. Two or more people who interact independently with a common purpose**

See Lesson 5, slide 3

22. What does collaboration mean?

- a. Working hard towards a promotion
- b. Writing down ideas for a project to submit to your boss
- c. Working alone on a project
- d. Working with others to create or produce something**

See Lesson 5, slide 4

23. Why is it best to review your weaknesses when improving your teamwork skills?

- a. It helps you offset your strengths
- b. It helps you identify areas in which you excel
- c. It helps you identify areas that need improvement**
- d. It helps you when delegating tasks to others

See Lesson 5, slide 9

24. What is the term used to describe people who are open to different ideas and perspectives and are willing to adapt to changing situations?

- a. **Flexible**
- b. Stubborn
- c. Envious
- d. Reliable

See Lesson 5, slide 11

25. What is a key component of effective communication in a teamwork environment?

- a. Nonverbal cues
- b. **Active listening**
- c. Verbal cues
- d. Passive listening

See Lesson 6, slide 4

26. Which of the following is true regarding work ethic?

- a. Work ethic is the act of agreeing with someone so as not to cause an argument
- b. **Employees with a strong work ethic often far exceed their peers in achieving goals**
- c. Work ethic is the ability to be accepting of all cultures
- d. Employees with a strong work ethic are not very driven individuals

See Lesson 6, slide 4

27. How does being a hard worker show a strong work ethic?

- a. **Through their persistence and determination to succeed**
- b. Through their favoritism with the manager or supervisor
- c. Through their good luck and good fortune
- d. Through their networking and communication skills

See Lesson 6, slide 6

28. What is the term used for employees who are always on time?

- a. Persistent
- b. **Punctual**
- c. Pursuer
- d. Popular

See Lesson 6, slide 11

29. Which of the following does **not** apply to someone who is a team player?

- a. They put aside personal goals to benefit the team
- b. **They take credit for something they did not do**
- c. They help and receive help when needed
- d. They have a reputation for getting along well with others

See Lesson 6, slide 11

30. If someone dresses appropriately, has good hygiene, and remains calm under pressure, others perceive them as ____.
- a. Intimidating
 - b. Positive
 - c. Professional**
 - d. Unusual

See Lesson 6, slide 14

31. The act of listening without being fully invested in and tuned into the speaker is the definition of ____.
- a. Active listening
 - b. Receptive listening
 - c. Open listening
 - d. Passive listening**

See Lesson 7, slide 3

32. Which of the following is **not** used in active listening?
- a. Clarifying terms
 - b. Repeating or paraphrasing
 - c. Interrupting the speaker**
 - d. Listening “between the lines”

See Lesson 7, slide 7

33. When actively listening to someone, what does it mean to respond appropriately?
- a. You do not put the other person down**
 - b. You judge the other person’s actions
 - c. You voice your opinions in an aggressive way
 - d. You are dishonest in your response

See Lesson 7, slide 14

34. Why should you provide feedback after actively listening to someone speak?
- a. To show them you were listening**
 - b. To show them you have opinions
 - c. To show them you have a solution to their problem
 - d. To show them you are intelligent

See Lesson 7, slide 12

35. Which of the following does **not** show that you pay attention when others are speaking?
- a. You look the speaker in the eyes
 - b. You mentally prepare a rebuttal**
 - c. You put aside distracting thoughts
 - d. You avoid being distracted by outside factors

See Lesson 7, slide 10

36. Which of the following is **not** one of the reasons you want to think before you speak?

- a. It gives you a moment to reflect
- b. It demonstrates that you are thoughtful and considerate
- c. It gives you a chance to express yourself more clearly and effectively
- d. It gives you time to come up with an excuse**

See Lesson 8, slide 15

37. When respecting differences in the workplace, which one of the following displays respect?

- a. You make assumptions about your coworkers
- b. You make discriminatory comments about others
- c. You stereotype others based on their age or culture
- d. You use inclusive language**

See Lesson 8, slide 9

38. How can you demonstrate you are a respectful person in a job interview?

- a. You interrupt the interviewer when they are speaking
- b. You shake the interviewer's hand when introduced**
- c. You look at your feet when conversing with the interviewer
- d. You leave the interview without thanking the interviewer for their time

See Lesson 8, slide 6

39. When a business creates a _____ in the workplace, it increases productivity, improves collaboration, and leads to better employee morale.

- a. Culture of reduction
- b. Culture of respect**
- c. Culture of reticence
- d. Culture of retention

See Lesson 8, slide 5

40. When you have respect for someone, you have a _____ opinion of them.

- a. Bad
- b. Good**
- c. Poor
- d. Questionable

See Lesson 8, slide 3

41. To improve your communication skills and make you a better critical thinker, engage in _____ discussions.

- a. Easy
- b. Simple
- c. Rational
- d. Difficult**

See Lesson 9, slide 12

42. How can you foster analytical skills?

- a. Perform repetitive work
- b. Take on new experiences**
- c. Debate your coworkers
- d. Practice making educated guesses

See Lesson 9, slide 10

43. When you train yourself to pay close attention to your surroundings, you help increase your ____ skills.

- a. Communication
- b. Analytical
- c. Responsibility
- d. Observation**

See Lesson 9, slide 9

44. When thinking critically, which of the following would you do last?

- a. Identify ways to improve the solution**
- b. Organize your data
- c. Identify the issue or problem
- d. Develop and execute solutions

See Lesson 9, slide 7

45. In today's technology-driven work environments, critical thinking skills enable employees to make ____ decisions.

- a. Bad
- b. Mediocre
- c. Correct**
- d. Unusual

See Lesson 9, slide 5

46. What does the "R" represent in SMART goals?

- a. Responsible
- b. Relevant**
- c. Reachable
- d. Relatable

See Lesson 10, slide 10

47. Which of the following was **not** mentioned as a prioritization technique?

- a. Eisenhower Matrix
- b. ABC Method
- c. 123 Technique**
- d. Pareto Principle

See Lesson 10, slide 13

48. When referring to SMART goals, what does the “T” stand for?

- a. **Time-bound**
- b. Time management
- c. Time sensitive
- d. Timely

See Lesson 10, slide 11

49. Which would **not** be considered a time management tool?

- a. To-do lists
- b. Calendars
- c. Pomodoro timer
- d. **Eisenhower app**

See Lesson 10, slide 14

50. What does the “A” represent when talking about SMART goals?

- a. **Achievable**
- b. Attractive
- c. Advantageous
- d. Available

See Lesson 10, slide 5

51. Which is **not** considered when trying to improve your professionalism in the workplace?

- a. Show respect to your coworkers and superiors
- b. Be proactive and take the initiative
- c. Communicate effectively
- d. **Show up late to work, but with a good excuse**

See Lesson 11, slide 12

52. How does being professional in the workplace enhance your credibility?

- a. **It shows you have demonstrated that you take your work seriously and are committed to achieving your goals**
- b. It shows you have demonstrated that you want to have fun at work and are committed to making your coworkers laugh
- c. It shows you have demonstrated that you do not take your work seriously and have not set goals
- d. It shows you have demonstrated that you are looking for another job that pays more and has better benefits

See Lesson 11, slide 10

53. When an employee has a positive attitude towards work and their coworkers, it shows they are willing to contribute to the ____ ____.

- a. Pension fund
- b. Team's success**
- c. Charity fund
- d. Work environment

See Lesson 11, slide 8

54. If you are trying to demonstrate your professionalism to an employer, which of the following would you avoid?

- a. Show up to work on time
- b. Dress appropriately
- c. Communicate poorly**
- d. Perform duties to the best of your ability

See Lesson 11, slide 4

55. What does professionalism refer to?

- a. The way you speak of others behind their back so as not to upset them
- b. The way you conduct business without your employer knowing you have a side job
- c. The set of behaviors, attitudes, and qualities expected of someone in a professional environment**
- d. The qualities below or contrary to the standards expected in a particular profession

See Lesson 11, slide 4

56. What type of goal setting method involves breaking down complex or long-term projects into smaller, more manageable tasks?

- a. HARD goals
- b. SMART goals
- c. Visual goals
- d. Micro goals**

See Lesson 12, slide 11

57. What does the "P" represent in the WOOP goal setting technique?

- a. Predict
- b. Plan**
- c. Prognosis
- d. Plot

See Lesson 12, slide 9

58. What is the definition of goal setting?

- a. The process of telling others what you want to achieve so you can reach your goals with their help
- b. The act of spending a long time working in a job so you can eventually receive a promotion
- c. The process of taking active steps to achieve your desired outcome**
- d. The act of wishing for something better to happen in your life

See Lesson 12, slide 5

59. What type of decisions are made on a regular basis by all employees and management in a workplace?

- a. Routine**
- b. Tactical
- c. Strategic
- d. Operational

See Lesson 12, slide 4

60. What type of short-term decisions are made by lower-level management?

- a. Tactical
- b. Strategic
- c. Routine
- d. Operational**

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61. What quote by Mark Twain was used in the slide presentation on honesty and integrity?

- a. "If you are honest, you do not need to lie."
- b. "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."**
- c. "Do what is right, all the time."
- d. "Do the right thing, even when no one is watching."

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- b. Functional
- c. Multidisciplinary**
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See Lesson 14, slide 6

71. When following the five steps to conflict resolution, what step is “follow up”?

- a. 1
- b. 3
- c. 5**
- d. 2

See Lesson 15, slide 13

72. Which of the following is true regarding identifying a solution in conflict resolution?

- a. All parties must identify and agree upon a solution**
- b. Only one party can identify and agree upon a solution
- c. Neither party can identify and agree upon a solution
- d. A supervisor must identify and agree upon a solution

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73. When working through the steps of conflict resolution, one of the steps is to talk to the involved party or parties. Where should this talk take place?

- a. In one of the parties involved offices
- b. In the employee breakroom when other staff members are taking their break
- c. In the employee restroom
- d. In a safe and neutral environment**

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- a. Most people like confrontation and enjoy conflict
- b. Most people do not like confrontation and choose to ignore what is bothering them**
- c. Most people enjoy disagreeing with others and like a good fight
- d. Most people do not like confrontation but choose to address any problems quickly

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- a. **Volunteer for projects**
- b. Take art classes
- c. Watch videos on becoming more creative in the workplace
- d. Daydream and doodle when you have free time at work

See Lesson 16, slide 13

77. Why should you surround yourself with creative people when trying to become more creative at work?

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- b. Creative people tend to think inside the box, which allows you to think more freely
- c. Creative people tend to have less enthusiasm than others, which allows you to think more critically

- d. **Creative people tend to have different perspectives than others, which allows you to expand your own thinking**

See Lesson 16, slide 9

78. To organize your creative thoughts, you can use a mind map or ____.

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- b. **Outline**
- c. Imagery
- d. Graph

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- a. **Higher turnover rate**
- b. Increased innovation and problem-solving abilities
- c. Improved workplace culture and morale
- d. Improved efficiency and productivity

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80. What does creativity in the workplace refer to?

- a. **The ability to generate new and innovative ideas, work processes, or solutions to problems**
- b. Thinking linearly, focusing on generating as many solutions to problems as possible
- c. The ability to generate generic ideas, work processes, or solutions to problems
- d. The thought that creative employees are generally less enthusiastic but have better ideas

See Lesson 16, slide 4

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- b. Intrinsic
- c. Extrinsic**
- d. Adventure

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- a. Motivated employees are more productive
- b. Motivated employees are engaged
- c. Motivated employees are committed to achieving the company's goals
- d. Motivated employees take fewer sick days than others**

See Lesson 17, slide 4

83. What type of motivation comes from within a person?

- a. Extrinsic
- b. Intrinsic**
- c. Affiliate
- d. Achievement

See Lesson 17, slide 3

84. Why is it important to identify obstacles that hinder motivation?

- a. So you can set new goals for success
- b. So you can delegate tasks to coworkers
- c. So you can develop a plan to tackle them**
- d. So you can enlist others to develop a solution to overcome the obstacles

See Lesson 17, slide 10

85. What type of motivation is driven by a desire to succeed and improve oneself?

- a. Achievement**
- b. Adventure
- c. Affiliation
- d. Incentive

See Lesson 17, slide 5

86. Why do employers value flexibility as an employability skill?

- a. It enables employees to dispute conflicting information in the workplace
- b. It enables employees to manage challenging situations and adapt to changes in the workplace**
- c. It enables employees to be happy working in the same work environment day after day
- d. It enables employees to set high expectations and professional standards

See Lesson 18, slide 3

87. What is it called when two employees share the responsibilities of one full-time position?

- a. Remote work
- b. Flexible work hours
- c. Compressed workweek

d. Job sharing

See Lesson 18, slide 6

88. Which of the following is **not** one of the ways to develop a flexible mindset?

- a. Be open to new ideas
- b. Stay curious

c. Practice passive listening

- d. Embrace feedback

See Lesson 18, slide 8

89. How does staying calm make you a more flexible team member?

- a. Your emotional intelligence increases when you are calm

b. You can take a step back and evaluate the situation objectively

- c. You react emotionally when you are calm
- d. You can take a step back and look at the situation subjectively

See Lesson 18, slide 13

90. What type of work arrangement involves a full week's worth of work being completed in fewer days?

a. Compressed workweek

- b. Remote work
- c. Part-time work
- d. Job sharing

See Lesson 18, slide 6

91. How does practicing self-care help maintain self-confidence?

- a. It helps you become more relaxed
- b. It helps you sleep better
- c. It helps you become more lethargic

d. It helps you feel more energized

See Lesson 19, slide 11

92. What is the first step to maintaining your self-confidence?

a. Practice self-care

- b. Set achievable goals
- c. Focus on your strengths
- d. Learn from setbacks

See Lesson 19, slide 10

93. What type of communication shows you have self-confidence?

- a. Aggressive
- b. Assertive**
- c. Abrasive
- d. Attentive

See Lesson 19, slide 8

94. Which of the following is **not** a characteristic of a confident person?

- a. Willingness to take risks to achieve their goals
- b. Good listening skills
- c. Negative attitude towards themselves and life**
- d. Ability to manage criticism and failure

See Lesson 19, slide 5

95. Self-confidence is developed through various experiences and ____ and can be improved through practice and positive reinforcement.

- a. Interactions**
- b. Guidance
- c. Instructions
- d. Teachings

See Lesson 19, slide 3

96. What type of stress is short-term and usually caused by a sudden event or situation that requires immediate attention?

- a. Chronic
- b. Acute**
- c. Emotional
- d. Episodic acute

See Lesson 20, slide 6

97. What is bad stress called?

- a. Eustress
- b. Destress
- c. Distress**
- d. Elstress

See Lesson 20, slide 3

98. Which of the following is a type of stress experienced by people who tend to worry excessively?

- a. Emotional
- b. Chronic
- c. Acute
- d. Episodic acute**

See Lesson 20, slide 6

99. What is the first step in managing stress?

- a. **Identify the source of stress**
- b. Eliminate unhealthy stress-reduction techniques
- c. Practice the four A's of stress management
- d. Engage in physical activity

See Lesson 20, slide 14

100. What is the first of the four A's of stress management?

- a. Alter
- b. **Avoid**
- c. Adapt
- d. Accept

See Lesson 20, slide 16