



RealCareer™
Employability
Skills Program

WELDING CAREER
SCENARIO CARDS

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Suggested uses for Scenario Cards:

5-minute icebreaker activity

1. Begin your class with a quick 5-minute workplace scenario challenge. Pick one scenario and read it to the class. You could also show it on a document projector.
2. Get students into small groups to discuss the workplace scenario, key questions and various points of view.
3. Have the class come back together and share answers to the key questions.

Journaling activity

1. Choose a Workplace Scenario Card.
2. Use the workplace scenario as a journal-writing prompt and have students answer the key questions in writing.

Pre- and post-assessment (for use with Employability Skills Program)

1. Choose the employability skill you wish to teach. Find the Workplace Scenario Card that matches that skill. Have students answer the key questions in writing.
2. Teach the lesson on the employability skill you have chosen.
3. After teaching the lesson, have students go back to the original Workplace Scenario Card and answer the key questions again using the new skills they have learned.

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Listening

Scenario: The company requires weekly toolbox safety meetings every Monday at the beginning of the shift. This week, the topic was face shield usage and the new company policy.

“When using any abrasive grinding equipment of any form, all employees shall wear a face shield in conjunction with their safety glasses.”

After the meeting, all employees were issued face shields, including management, cell supervisors, quality inspectors, and maintenance. The final statement of the meeting was, “THERE WILL BE NO EXCUSES!” Within the first week, you observe your manager running a grinder without a face shield. Thinking he just forgot his, you grab yours and run over to offer it to your manager. The manager promptly begins to yell at you, telling you to get back to work and to mind your own business.

Points of view to consider

- Your manager
 - You
 - Your coworkers
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Key questions

- What is the most critical thing that you should be listening to as an employee?
- How do you respond to your manager?
- Would you report this to HR?

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Respect

Scenario: You work for a company that doesn't require you to clock out for lunch if you do not leave the facility. Your lunch break is 30 minutes long and you choose to bring your own lunch every day. Your coworker David, however, leaves daily for lunch. You notice that he does not clock out when he leaves and often returns from lunch no more than 5 minutes late. After walking in late yet again, David comments, "What the boss doesn't know doesn't hurt him. Do 5 minutes really matter? I mean, it isn't like they pay me enough anyways!"

Points of view to consider

- You
 - Your coworker David
 - Your company
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Key questions

- Do 5 minutes really matter?
- How might you approach your coworker and encourage them to follow the policy?
- How does this show respect to the policies put in place at the company?
- How would you handle your boss coming by and asking where David is? Would you cover for him, explain what he has been doing, or just try to stay out of the whole situation?
- Is this unethical as an employee? How should you show respect in this situation for your company?

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Responsibility

Scenario: The guys you work with keep talking about fringe benefits of the job and how they are the only way they can stay employed due to the wages in the area. You notice that some work on art projects to sell on the side. Others collect scrap materials to sell, while others go as far as cutting parts for smokers and trailers to build at home. You are sure that the company knows of these activities, but you feel like asking would single you out within the group. What is your responsibility to the company?

Points of view to consider

- You
 - Your company
 - Your coworkers
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Key questions (Review the definition of responsibility)

Responsibility – A duty or task that you are required or expected to do; something that you should do because it is morally right, legally required, etc.

- Do you turn a blind eye because it doesn't really hurt anyone and the bosses don't look like they are hurting for money?
- Is there an ethical issue being presented here?
- What if the company is okay with it and you just don't know? How do you go about finding out the rules of the fringe benefits?

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Patience

Scenario: The work order Mike is working on requires 350 parts. Each part has a call out for 3/16" fillet welds and a total of 24" of total weld length. Recently, Mike had a meeting where his manager told him that the Quality Assurance team had found that all his parts were over-welded. He was going too fast and things need to change, or they will begin rejecting them. While Mike understands the weld callout, he feels like it is easier and quicker to just put in 1/4" fillet welds. It might be quicker, but how could this impatience actually cost the company more money?

Points of view to consider

- Mike
 - Mike's manager
 - Quality Assurance
 - Company
-

Key questions

- Is it your responsibility as an employee to worry about over-welding?
- What other issues can come up if you are not being patient with your welding?
- What cost considerations, in the overall picture of things, can being patient and doing a project as instructed help?
- How might the extra weight affect the company's other manufacturing or shipping processes?

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Presentation Skills

Scenario: There are two shifts at the company you work for. You have been asked to present to the other shift how you have made cleanup and quality standards a priority during your shift. The first shift stall workers don't seem to pull their weight when it comes to cleaning up the welding booth. It is common to come in and find the floor not swept, tools not put away, and the electrode empty. You will be doing a presentation to both shifts but, knowing that you don't want to point out any single shift, you have decided to do presentation slides of "best practices" of keeping the shop clean. How should you explain and present to your coworkers the best practices of keeping a clean shop?

Points of view to consider

- You
 - First shift worker
 - Manager
-

Key questions

- What types of things should you put into your presentation slides to give clear expectations of what is expected of both shifts?
- What pushback might you get from your presentation of how to get things cleaned up at the end of shift?
- How might it be best to present your thoughts? Pictures, activities, etc?
- How can this presentation be used in the future to help new hires for the company?

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Using Technology

Scenario: Blake signed a social media policy when he started working for his company. This included not using cell phones to take pictures of any projects or weldments that were done within the facility. Recently, it has been observed that there have been pictures posted of Blake's work across social media. Due to this, Blake was fired.

Points of view to consider

- Blake, the employee
 - The company
 - Future employers
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Key questions

- With the saturation of social media in modern society, how would you handle being tempted to use your cell phone?
- For future jobs, how would Blake explain being fired for violating this company's social media policy?
- If you were running a company, what would your policy be for social media? Do you feel like this company's policy is out of date? Why or why not?
- With the possibility of future companies searching social media, how do you feel about this?

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Problem-solving

Scenario: You just started working for a small company building agricultural equipment. Gary has worked for the company since the 90s and is considered one of the veterans of the shop. You have been placed to train with him for four weeks. The first week is great as you learn a tremendous amount of new stuff. Gary also challenges you by making you interpret the blueprints, load the jigs and fixtures, and explain how you would assemble the parts he is working on. During down times, you practice your welding to prove your skills to Gary. On week two, you begin welding on production parts, and Gary tells you to disregard the weld callouts on the blueprints and just weld everything solid and that “big welds are better than those dumb engineers and their small welds.” Later that day, your boss pulls you aside and tells you, “Learn everything you can from Gary, but disregard what he tells you about welding. We know you went to school, so you know what to do.”

Points of view to consider

- You
 - Your boss
 - Gary
-

Key questions

- How do you handle the next three weeks of training that you will be going through with what the boss just told you?
- Should you seek further clarification from your boss?
- After you move into your own welding area, do you think you will disregard Gary's advice? Will this cause conflict when Gary stops in to check on how you are doing? How might you handle this situation?

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Negotiation

Scenario: The company you work for provides all safety gear for welding as required by OSHA. They have an area where they set out boxes of gloves, safety glasses, cover plates, and other gear you might need. There is an inventory system, but there is no sign-in sheet or anything to tell what someone has taken. Sometimes, this results in things that you need not being available. The common practice in the shop is to take 2-3 pair of gloves so you are not out of the needed gear. Recently, one of your coworkers was saying how they wished the new gloves would show up, as they need a couple of new pairs. How would you work to negotiate getting an inventory system put in place? Some people like the current way of doing it, even if you have to go without equipment sometimes. Others feel that this doesn't technically go against OSHA regulations.

Points of view to consider

- Yourself
 - Coworkers
 - Company
-

Key questions

- While the company is required to provide safety equipment, how might they better control the inventory of it?
- Discuss some ideas of why it would be in the company's best interest to implement an inventory system.
- Looking at the other standpoint that the company expects the safety gear supplied to be used on the job, discuss the issues currently caused by employee practices.

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Networking

Scenario: Donnie has welded on the pipeline for years and decided that he wants to come back off the road. He applies at a local fabrication company, completes the interview process, does well on the weld test, completes the pre-employment health screening, and secures a job with the company. He quickly settles into the job, but soon finds himself missing his old job. One day, he complains about an injured back and is sent in for a medical evaluation, where he is sent home for seven days of rest. After the first week he calls in and says he cannot return yet, needing 3-4 more days. The company doesn't hear from him again until the 4 days have passed, when he returns to load his stuff up and quits. He tells his coworkers he got a job back on the pipeline and walks out the door.

Points of view to consider

- The company
 - Donnie
 - Coworkers
-

Key questions

- Now that Donnie has left the company hanging like this, how might it affect future hiring for traveling welders that want to come in off the road? Should the actions of one affect the future of others? Explain your reasoning.
- Donnie claimed that he had injured his back, but due to being new at the job he had not accumulated vacation yet. With the lag in pay of starting a new job, discuss the ethical ramifications associated with the possibility of Donnie playing the system and finding a way to turn a quick cash job back out on the pipeline.
- Discuss the networking issues associated with showing up and just leaving a job in a production facility. How could this backfire for getting future employment?
- Discuss how the sudden loss of a coworker can impact the rest of the workforce in workload and morale.

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Self-confidence

Scenario: You went to welding school and did quite well. You took every opportunity to compete in Skills USA and other local contests, placing 1st and 2nd in almost all of them, even going as far as nationals for Skills USA. You started your first welding job about 6 weeks ago with an aerospace company doing GTAW after surprising the supervisor and passing their weld test. You have been placed with a welder who worked his way up through the ranks. Since the day you began, the coworker has called you “weld school,” “contest,” “two-year.” Additionally, he has taken to finding things you didn’t learn in school and making an example of you, and mentions how dumb it was to attend welding school. You try to talk to your boss about it, but your boss seems uninterested in listening and tells you that perhaps school just made you thin-skinned.

Points of view to consider

- You, the employee
 - Your coworker
 - Your boss
 - The company
-

Key questions

- Is this just a rite of passage or is this a form of harassment in the workplace?
- What responsibilities does your boss have to listen to your concerns?
- What other options do you have to handle the situation differently?
- How would these interactions cause you to reconsider your ability and your choices? What would you do to keep positive and self-confident?