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Lesson Structure

Each lesson begins with an 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 overview is following by the actual lesson, which will contain some of the sections described below. Most lessons are designed to be completed within 45 minutes.

- **FOCUS**

Every lesson begins with a FOCUS activity intended to capture students' 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, students are introduced to the topic of the lesson.

- **LEARN**

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

- **SUMMARIZE**

The majority of lessons end with a SUMMARIZE activity intended to briefly review the lesson's key messages or main points; or, if it is the last lesson in the unit, the SUMMARIZE activity will serve as the unit formative assessment. Participant scores on these short assessments will help you determine what concepts or skills may need reinforcement or review.

Lesson – Preparing for a Job Interview



Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about various types of interviews and how to prepare for and experience a mock interview.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Understand the purpose of an interview
- Identify different types of interviews
- Prepare for and successfully experience a mock interview
- Be able to write a thank you letter

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate class time
FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whiteboard and markers• <i>Types of Job Interviews</i> handout	1. Print/photocopy the <i>Types of Job Interviews</i> – one per student	15 minutes
LEARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Stages of a Job Interview Graphic Organizer</i> handout• <i>Tips for Preparing for a Job Interview</i> handout• List of sample interview questions• Paper for the recorder• Job postings• <i>Job Interview Preparation Guide</i> handout	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Print/photocopy the <i>Job Interview Graphic Organizer</i> – one per student2. Print/photocopy the <i>Tips for Preparing for a Job Interview</i> handout – one per student3. Internet search for sample interview questions (optional) OR4. Type of a master list of interview questions based on the group exercise completed in class and distribute to students	<p>Part 1 – 45 minutes</p> <p>Part 2 – 45 minutes</p> <p>Part 3 – 45 minutes</p>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Print/photocopy <i>the Job Interview Preparation Guide</i> – one per student 6. Contact local HR professionals to participate in mock interviews 7. <i>Mock Interview Evaluation Rubric</i> – one per student for the interviewer to complete 	
REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thank You Letter Template</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print/photocopy the <i>Thank You Letter Template</i> – one per student 	45 minutes

Lesson – Preparing for a Job Interview

FOCUS: Class Discussion

15 minutes

Purpose:

High schools students will soon be graduating and need to find a job or pursue post-secondary education. Good interview skills are essential to both. In the previous lesson, students created personal resumes as well as practiced completing job applications. Students will explore the purpose of an interview and various types of interviews.

Materials:

- White board and marker
- *Types of Job Interviews* handout

Facilitation Steps:

1. Begin by asking students the following questions in a class discussion:
 - Have you ever competed against other people, or classmates to be chosen for a group, sport or activity? What did you do to get ready? Did you do anything special to make yourself stand-out or apart from the others?
 - Have you ever participated in a job interview before? If so, what did you do to

get ready? Did you say or do anything to make yourself stand out or apart from the other candidates in order to get hired?

Explain that a job interview is similar to trying out for something. You need to be prepared and put forth your best effort.

2. Ask the following question, “What is the purpose of a job interview?” Record student answers on a whiteboard.
3. Explain that the primary purpose of an interview is for a company or organization to take a closer look at you and your skills. It is their opportunity to ask you questions about your experience and see if you would be a good fit for the position. However, the interview is also YOUR chance to take a closer look at prospective employer. You also get to ask questions about the position, the organization and see if you believe it is a good fit for you.
4. Ask students to brainstorm different types of interviews that they could be asked to participate in when applying for a job. Write these on the whiteboard. Give students the *Types of Job Interviews* handout and review each one on the list. Did the class brainstorming list include any that aren’t on the handout?

Types of Job Interviews

This is a list of different types of job interviews that candidates may participate in. This is not a complete list but includes some of the more common types of interviews.

One-on-One – This is the most tradition type of interview. Many times the interviewer will ask all candidates the same questions for comparison sake. They are looking for candidates who give good, complete answers and also have no answers inconsistent with their resume or application. Many times applicants will have the opportunity to ask questions of the employer as well.

Screening Interview by Telephone – This type of interview is usually done after a candidates completes an application. The goal is to decide which candidates will make the first cut.

Screening Interview in Person – This type of interview is commonly done at job fairs or employment ‘open house’ type events. The company or organization takes application on the spot at the event and will have interviewers there to speak briefly to interested candidates. Those who are qualified may be invited for a full interview.

Panel or Committee – This type of interview usually consists of a panel from different departments within an organization. It usually involves an HR representative, the manager of the department where the position is, potential coworkers or other departments that interact with the position being hired for.

Group – This type of interview involves many applicants being interviewed simultaneously. It allows the interviewer to compare candidates against each other. You will be judged on your professionalism, leadership, communication and reasoning. It may be with a single interviewer or a panel.

Behavioral – During this type of interview, the candidates will be asked a series of questions related to specific job skills that apply. Questions may relate to conflicts, problem-solving, scenarios, leadership examples etc.

Working Interview (i.e. audition) – This type of interview is appropriate for very specific types of jobs such as performers (singers/dancers), sales people, technology position, or any position that would allow the interviewer to see or sample the work of the candidate.

Follow-up – This is sometimes known as a ‘second’ or serial interview. The company has narrowed the list of prospects down and wants to have another look at those top potential candidates. You may be asked many of the same questions again. You may also be interviewed by the same people, or a blend of the same and new. This gives the interviewer a chance to listen for consistency in answers.

Interview via a meal (i.e. lunch or breakfast) – In this setting, the interview takes place over a meal. It may appear less formal, however it is still an interview. Candidates will be judged by their answers as well as etiquette and communication ability.



Informal – This type of interview has a less ‘structured’ feel and flow. The interviewer may change their mind about the questions they will ask once they see where the conversation goes. This will give the interviewer the chance to communicate skills, rapport and personality fit for the organization. This could happen in a meal format or as a screening.

Structured/formal – This type of interview is opposite of informal. The interviewer will have a prepared list of questions based on job requirements. The same questions will be asked of each candidate. This may be done as a one-on-one interview or a panel.



Lesson – Preparing for a Job Interview

LEARN: Preparation and Mock Interview

135 minutes (3 – 45 minute classes)

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to have participants learn about the key phases of a job interview. They will learn how to successfully prepare for and participate in a job interview.

Materials:

- *Stages of a Job Interview* graphic organizer
- *Tips for Preparing for a Job Interview* handout
- List of sample interview questions
- Job postings
- *Job Interview Preparation Guide* handout
- *Mock Interview Evaluation Rubric*

Facilitation Steps:

Part 1 – Stages of a Job Interview

- Give students the *Stages of a Job Interview* graphic organizer. Review each of the stages and the importance of each step in the process. Have students complete the graphic organizer as you review the information.

Instructor Information:

Introductory Stage: The candidates make their first impression. The interviewer will establish rapport and form an opinion based on your handshake, appearance and demeanor. They may discuss the interview format. You may also offer a copy of your resume to the interviewer if they do not have one.

Information Stage: The interviewer may provide more information about the position and the company or organization. They may explain why they are hiring, more about the department or

structure, typical day on the job etc. You may already have some information from the employer if there has been a phone interview or from your own research. If there is information shared during this time that you want to explore further later on the interview, make a note of it.

Background and Probe Stage: This is the point where you will be asked a wide range of questions. At this point they will be asking you about your work history and other information from your resume or application. Be prepared to answer questions about yourself, the organization, industry or field, and the position. Focus on positive information and what you can offer. Be concise but give thorough and thoughtful answers. Make yourself stand out from other candidates.

Matching Stage: The interviewer will give the candidate an opportunity to ask question at this point. Be prepared with a list of questions or it will look like you are not prepared. Show that you have some knowledge about the organization. The interviewer is trying to determine if there is a match in your qualifications and requirements of the position.

Conclusion: The interviewer may have some final questions at this time that may determine if you advance to the next level or lead to an offer. You should also understand what the next steps are in the hiring process for that position. If you do not understand, ask! The employer should also let you know if there is anything else expected of you and when/how the next point of contact will be. Thank the interviewer for the consideration and be professional.

Follow Up: Make sure to complete anything the interviewer has asked of you. This may be to



provide additional information, complete a job-related task, provide a work sample, provide references, complete a drug-screening etc. It is important to write a thank you note promptly and send it out!

- Now that students understand the types of interviews and the typical stages of an interview, they need to learn how to prepare for one. Tell students that in this scenario, they are preparing to be interviewed by Nike for a sales position. What should they do in order to prepare for the interview? Do this as a class discussion and write student answers on the board.
- Give students the *Tips for Preparing for a Job Interview* handout. Review each tip with them, explaining the relevance and importance of each.

Part 2 – Interview Questions

- One of the most important things a person can do to prepare for a job interview is practice answering questions. If you do an Internet key word search on “interview questions” you will find hundreds of websites that have lists already put together that you can use to practice from. In this group exercise, students will work together to create a master list of interview questions.
- Divide your class into small groups of three or four students. Give each group one category of questions to brainstorm and write down. Each group should assign a recorder. The categories for each group are:

Questions to ask candidates

About education and training
About skills
Behavioral questions/scenarios

Questions to ask interviewers

About the organization
About the position
About employee benefits and compensation

Have each group present their list of questions to the class. Create a master list of practice questions, putting together a list from each group in the class. Make a practice list available for students.

- Have students go online and choose a job to apply for from a local company. Students should print out the job posting. They will use this to go through the steps for preparing for an interview, including answering the list of practice questions.
- Have students refer to the list of *Tips for Preparing for a Job Interview* handout. They should complete the *Job Interview Preparation Guide* handout – This could be assigned as homework.

Part 3 – Mock Interview

- Give students the master list of interview questions. They should prepare answers to these frequently asked interview questions.
- Schedule a mock interview. Contact local Human Resources professionals and invite them into your class to conduct 10 minute interviews with each student. Contact enough HR professionals to be able to get through all of the students in one class.
- Divide the class into small groups with one HR professional assigned to each group. While each student participates in their mock interview, the other students will observe. This will give students a chance afterward to discuss what went well and what they could improve upon. Students should give the HR professional the job description of the position and the name of the company they prepared for. The students should make sure that they also come prepared to the interviewer questions.
- Give each interviewer the *Mock Interview Evaluation Rubric* to use as part of the student assessment for this lesson. Check the box in each row that is appropriate. Total the points at the bottom of the table.

Stages of a Job Interview

Here are the stages of a typical interview. In the space provided, write the most important information you need to know about each stage of a job interview.

Introductory Stage	
Information Stage	
Background and Probe Stage	
Matching Stage	
Conclusion	
Follow Up	



Tips for Preparing for a Job Interview

Here are a list of suggested tips that you can use for preparing for a job interview. Never go into an interview without taking the time to research the organization beforehand and arm yourself with information.

- Do your homework. Research the company beforehand by going to their website, or doing Internet searches on the organization. See what you can learn about the history and current focus.



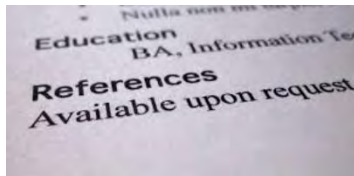
- Look at various social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. See what they are talking about and what is of interest to the organization.
- Prepare a list of relevant questions that showcase your newfound knowledge of the organization, but also show interest and understanding of the position.
- Map your route. Make sure you know where you are



going and how to get there. Also know how long it will take you to get there so you are not late. Investigate where to park. Make sure you plan to leave early enough in case something unexpected happens. It is also a good idea to have the contact information for the interviewer with you in case you need to reach them.

- Practice, Practice Practice. Find or prepare a list of questions you expect to be asked and write down your answers. There are hundreds of websites that have lists of interview questions to get you started. Rehearse your answers out loud to help commit them to memory. Ask a friend to do a mock interview with you to get even more practice.

- Contact your references.
Decide who you'd like to use as a reference and contact them beforehand to make sure it is okay with that person.
Make sure you have the current contact information for each reference and their preferred method of contact so that the employer can reach them if needed. Have a hard copy of your references available at the interview so you have it if asked for it.



- Find any needed documentation requested.
You may be asked to bring in documentation such as a driver's license, Social Security card, passport, insurance information or other relevant employment records. You may also need additional resumes or your work



portfolio for reference as well.

- Dress for success.
Make sure you decide what you are going to wear ahead of time so it is clean and pressed. It is better to dress too conservatively than casual. Even if the position you are applying for is casual in nature, dress professionally to make the best impression possible. Make sure you are clean and neatly groomed, including hair and nails.
- Arrive early. Keep this quote in mind: "Early is on time, on time is late, and late is unacceptable!" A good rule of thumb is not to arrive more than 15 minute early.



Job Interview Preparation Guide

As you prepare for your job interview, write your research notes and information in the space provided below.

Interview Date and Time:

Interview Location:

Documentation I Need to Bring:

What I Will Wear:

Company/Organization Research:

References:



Mock Interview Evaluation Rubric

Name: _____ Date: _____

	5 points	3 points	1 point
Introductory Stage	Your first impression is professional. You are dressed appropriately. Your handshake is firm and greeting is appropriate. Your demeanor is enthusiastic and engaging. You have required documentation with you.	Your first impression is average but not outstanding. You are dressed nicely but could be more professional. Your handshake is a bit limp and your greeting is appropriate. Your demeanor is courteous but guarded. You have some documentation but forgot something.	Your first impression is not professional. You are not dressed appropriately for an interview. You forget to shake hands and your greeting lacks enthusiasm. You are not energetic but lethargic. The interviewer wonders why you are here. You have no documentation with you.
Background and Probe Stage	You are knowledgeable about the organization and it is obvious you have researched beforehand. You give good complete answers about your work history and information on your resume. You are positive and give good clear examples of how your experience will benefit the organization.	You are knowledgeable about the position but are not very familiar with the organization. You have a small amount of knowledge but could have researched more. You display confidence and your answers are positive. You do not clearly state how your experience relates to the position and what you can offer.	You are not knowledgeable about the organization nor the position. It is obvious you spent little to no time preparing for the interview. You are not confident and your answers are rambling. You do not relate how your skills and experience apply to the position.
Matching Stage	You ask many very good and thoughtful questions. Your questions show that you have good knowledge about the organization. Your qualifications are a good match for the position.	You ask some good questions but other questions are a bit vague. Your questions show that you have some knowledge about the organization. If it is unclear whether your experience is a good match for position.	You do not have many questions prepared ahead of time. You show no knowledge about the organization in your questions. You clearly are not a good match for the position and it is unlikely you would be hired.
Conclusion	You successfully show your interest in the position. You clearly understand the next steps in the process. You thank the interviewer for her time and consideration.	You successfully show some interest in the position. You think you understand the next steps in the process but aren't totally clear. You thank the interviewer.	You show little interest in the position. You do not understand what comes next in the process nor do you ask any questions. You do not thank the interviewer.
Interview Skills and Techniques	You have excellent eye contact. Your speech is appropriate. You speak at a comfortable tone and rarely use words 'um,' 'and,' or 'like.'	You have acceptable eye contact. Your speech is adequate. You sometimes speak a bit too slow or fast. You say 'um,' 'and,' or 'like' a few times.	You do not make eye contact with the interviewer. Your speech is not appropriate. You speak way too fast or too slow for comfortable conversation. You frequently say 'um,' 'and,' or 'like.'
Total			

Lesson – Preparing for a Job Interview

Review: Writing a Thank You Letter

45 minutes

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to have participants learn about standard format to writing a thank you letter and write an appropriate one for their interviews.

Materials:

- *Thank You Letter Template*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Introduce thank you letters. Tell students that an important part of the job interview process is sending a thank you letter to your interviewer. A good rule of thumb is to send it within two days of the interview. This will give you a chance to reiterate your interest and qualifications as well as anything else you forgot to mention during the interview.

Review the standard parts of a thank you letter with students:

- Heading

- Date
- Recipient Information
- Salutation
- Body Paragraphs
- Closing and Signature

This should be written like a standard business letter and follow the above flow including each of these parts.

2. Give each student the *Thank You Letter Template* to help with the initial draft.
3. After each student has completed an initial draft, each student should have another peer edit their initial thank you letter draft. Peer editors should follow the template and make sure that each part is included in the draft, along with spelling and grammar checks.
4. Have students prepare the final thank you letter and turn it in as part of their grade for this lesson.

Thank You Letter Template

When writing a thank you letter, follow the format below. Use the space in the boxes to draft your letter or use the space on the back of this page.

Heading (About you)

Name
Street Address
City, State, ZIP
Phone Number
Email Address

Skip 1 line

Date

Skip 2 lines

Name of the Interviewer

Interviewer's Job Title
Department the Interviewer Works Within (if applicable)
Name of the Company/Organization
Street Address
City, State Zip

Skip 2 lines

Salutation

(Dear... - use the person's formal title and a colon at the end)

Skip 1 line

Body Paragraphs

Thank the interviewer for the opportunity including the name of the specific position for which you interviewed. Summarize your qualifications and why you feel you are the best candidate for the position. Include any additional information that may have been requested during the interview. In the last paragraph, thank the interviewer again and mention that you look forward to speaking with them again about the job. Include a specific time frame you will follow-up within about the position. The body paragraphs should not exceed 3 paragraphs.

Skip 1 line

Sincerely,

Skip 3 lines

Your Typed Name (Handwritten Signature Above)



Lesson – Effective Communication Skills



Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about various types of communication and how important effective communication is in the workplace.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Understand the definition of communication
- Identify different types of communication
- Successfully practice written, verbal and non-verbal communication skills

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate class time
FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whiteboard and markers	1. None	15 – 20 minutes
LEARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Using Clear Verbal Communication</i> handout• <i>Images for Directors</i> handout• <i>Drawing Space for Creators</i> handout• <i>Business Letter Block Format</i> handout• <i>Effective Written Communication on the Job - Business Letter Scenarios</i> handout• <i>Business Letter Assessment Rubric</i>• <i>Non-verbal Communication Brainstorming Activity</i> handout	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Print/photocopy the <i>Using Clear Verbal Communication</i> – one per student2. Print/photocopy the <i>Images for Directors</i> handout – one copy with images cut apart3. Print/photocopy the <i>Drawing Space for Creators</i> – one per group4. Print/photocopy the <i>Business Letter Block Format</i> handout – one per student5. Print/photocopy the <i>Effective Written Communication on the Job – Business Letter Scenarios</i> – one per student	<p>Part 1 – 30 minutes</p> <p>Part 2 – 60 minutes</p> <p>Part 3 – 30 minutes</p>

		6. Print/Photocopy the <i>Business Letter Assessment Rubric</i> – one per student for the instructor assessment 7. Print/photocopy the <i>Non-verbal Communication Brainstorming Activity</i> handout – one per group	
REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	1. None	10 minutes

Lesson – Effective Communication Skills

FOCUS: Class Discussion

15 - 20 minutes

Purpose:

Good communication skills, both verbal and written, are important to have on the job. This lesson will give students a chance evaluate effective communication and how they can improve their own communication skills.

Materials:

- White board and marker

Facilitation Steps:

1. Begin by introducing the definition of communication to the class. Communication is the exchange of information between a sender and a receiver. Communication involves speaking, listening, reading and writing. To be an effective communicator you need to be clear and direct. Ask students what types of communication occur. Some answers might be written, verbal or nonverbal.

2. Divide the class into small groups of three or four students. Assign a recorder to write down the group answers to the following question:

How do you use communication skills at school?

Give groups 5 minutes to brainstorm.

3. Call the class back together and have each recorder share their groups answers. Are there some that were on everyone's list?

Some responses might be:

- Talking in class
- Writing a report
- Making a class presentation

- Answering a question

4. Tell students that good communication is a key skill that employers need in the workplace. Now that they have identified a few ways they are using and developing their communication skills in school, discuss ways they may use communication skills in the workplace.

5. Have each student choose one occupation (it can be anything) and give one example of how communication is used in that position. (See below for examples)

Doctor – verbal communication explaining treatment to a patient

Journalist – writing an news article for a magazine or newspaper

Wait staff or server at a restaurant – verbal communication explaining daily specials to a customer

Marketing associate – writing a blog about a new product

6. Now that students have an understanding of what communication is and how it is used on the job, ask each student to answer the following question: Why are good communication skills important in the workplace? (Hint: Think about what can happen when communication is poor.)
7. Ask each student to share their answer to the question. Answers could include – so that tasks are carried out accurately, so customers get the information they need, to get things done in an efficient manner.

Lesson – Effective Communication Skills

LEARN: Active Practice

120 minutes

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to have participants actively practice effective communication in a series of different activities. To develop effective communication skills, students need practice just like any other skill.

Materials:

- *Images for Directors* handout
- *Drawing Space for Creators* handout
- *Using Clear Verbal Communication* handout - one for each group

Facilitation Steps:

Activity 1 – Using Clear Verbal Communication (30 minutes)

1. Divide the class into groups of four. If you do not have an even number of students, add one extra to various groups, making no group more than five.
2. Assign each person in the group one of the following roles:
 - Director
 - Manager
 - Creator
 - Observer(s)
3. Hand out the *Using Clear Verbal Communication* handout to each group. Review

the job of each of the roles in the group. Make sure students understand what they are to do in this exercise.

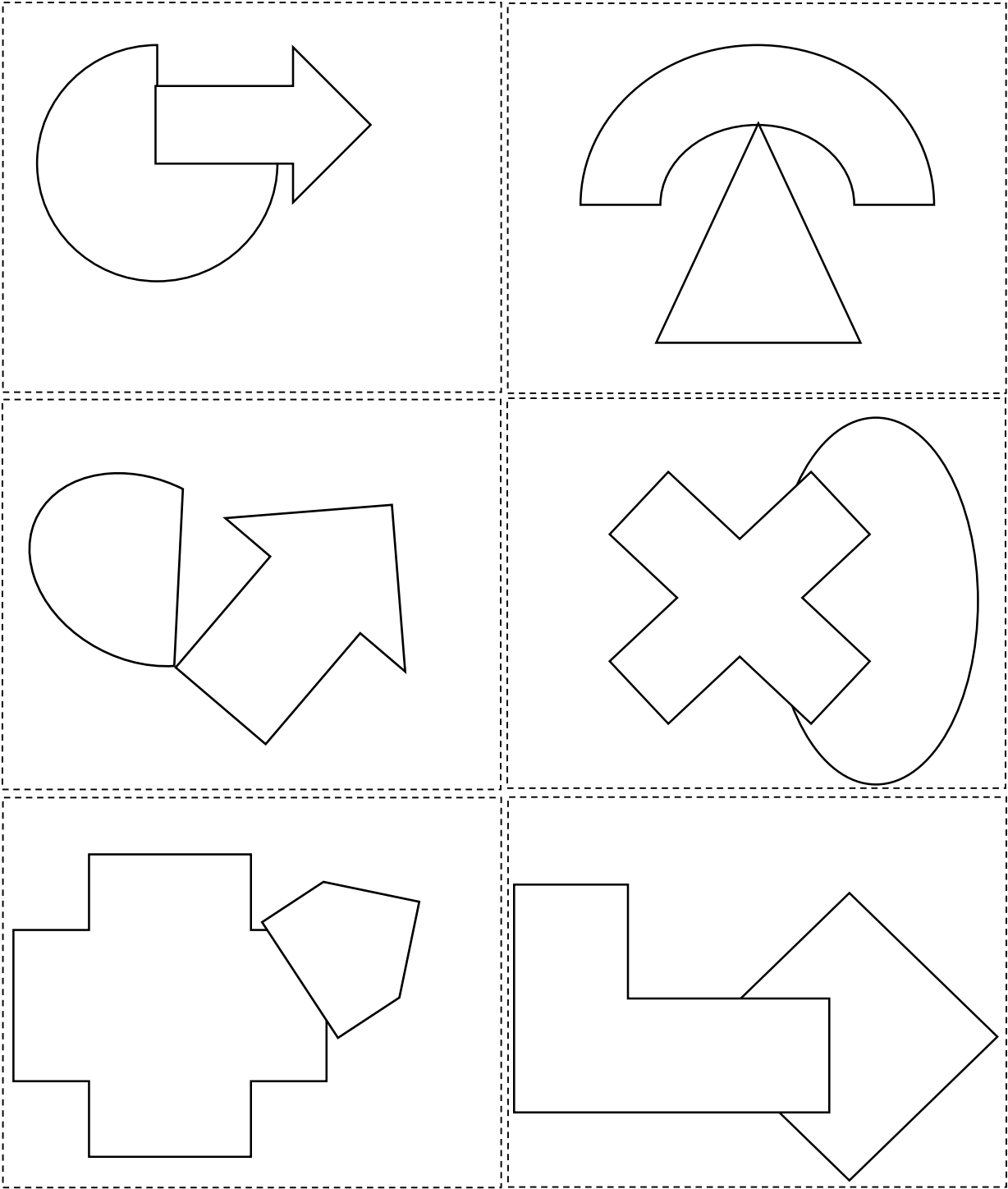
4. Give each Director the picture of their object. Ensure no other team members can see it. Give each Creator a blank sheet of paper and make sure they have a pencil and/or eraser. Observers should have paper for note taking. The Creators are to sit in the opposite corner of the classroom away from the Directors. They should not be able to hear the conversation between the Director and the Manager. Observers should be free to move where they need to in order to watch each step of the activity.
5. Have each group follow the written instructions on the handout.
6. Give each group five to ten minutes to complete the activity. When the time is up, call the class back together. Have each group share the original picture of the Director's object and the final product of the Creator. While comparing the before and after results, have the Observers share what worked, what didn't and how everyone reacted under pressure. Have them share anything they believe could have done differently and perhaps in a clearer way. This will provide a way for each group to reflect on how successful their communication was as a group.

Using Clear Verbal Communication Activity

1. Assign one person to perform each of the following roles in this activity. If you have more than four people, have two people act as observers.
 - Director – Give clear verbal instructions to the Manager so that the Creator can make an exact copy of the original.
 - Manager – Listen to the Director's instructions and then go to the other part of the room to where Creator is and pass on the instructions.
 - Creator – Recreate the image from the verbal instructions given by the Manager.
 - Observer(s) – Watch and make detailed notes about what worked, what didn't and how each person reacted under pressure.
2. Instructions for activity:
 - a. The Director is given a picture of an image and this person is the only one allowed to see the picture.
 - b. The Director gives instructions to the Manager, explaining what the image looks like so that the Manager can give good instructions to the Creator. During this part of the activity, the Creator is located across the room so that they cannot see or hear the instructions as the Director gives them to the Manager.
 - c. The Manager then goes over to the Creator and verbally passes on the instructions from the Director as clearly as possible.
 - d. The Creator is given the Drawing Space for Creators handout and attempts to draw the image as instructed by the Manager.
 - e. The Observer(s) silently watch the entire activity and make notes about what has worked well, what has not worked well and how each person has performed under pressure. Write down suggestions for a different way to communicate the instructions if you believe there is a better way than observed.
3. Compare the Director's picture of the image with the end result.

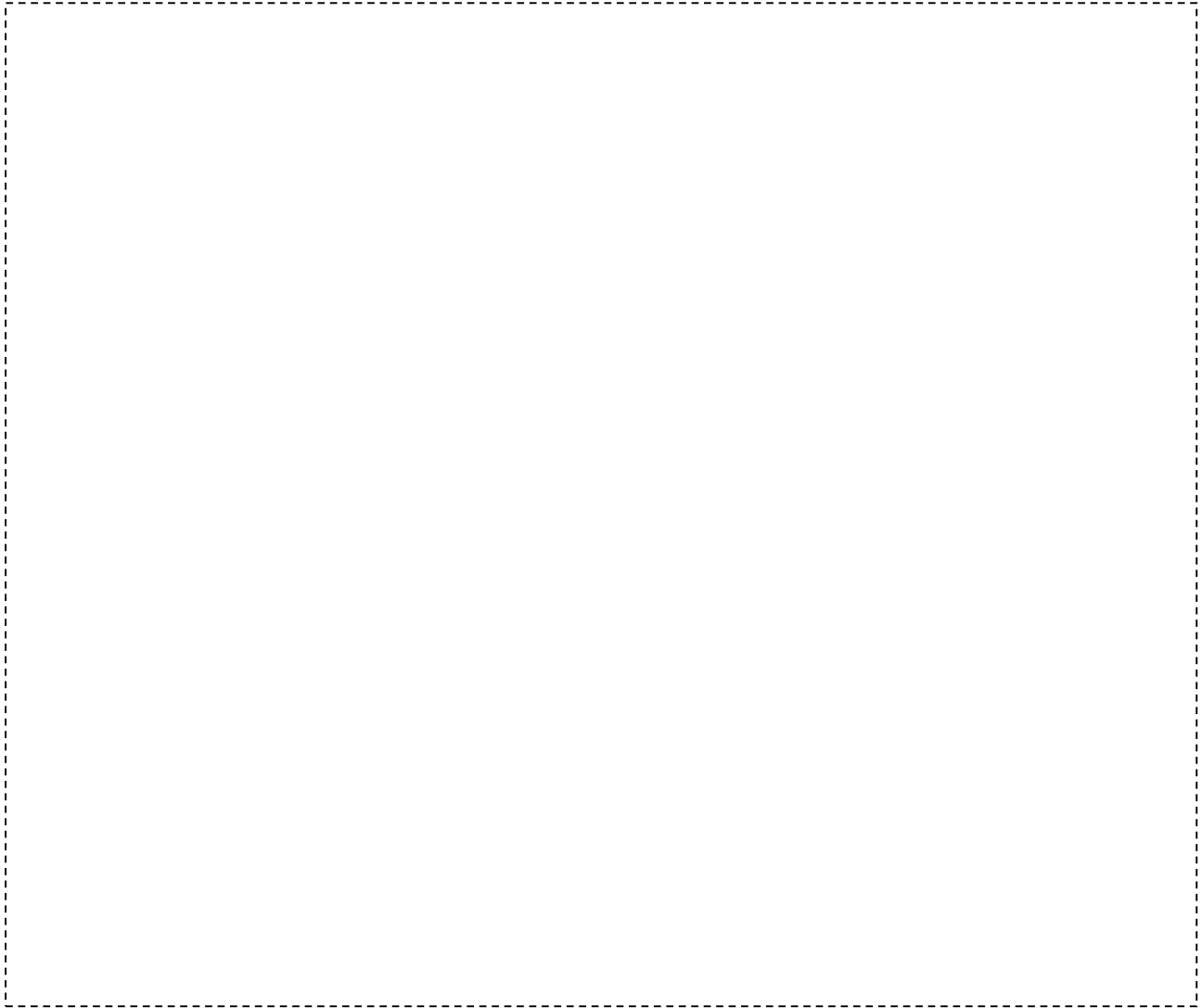
Images for Directors

Cut each of the following images apart and give one to each Director. Make sure that the Director is the only one to see the image in the group.



Drawing Space for Creators

Draw your image in the box provided below. Follow the instructions from the Manager as closely as possible. Good luck!



Activity 2 – Writing a Business Letter (60 minutes)

1. Introduce business letters. Tell students that an important skill in many job setting is to know how to write a proper business letter. One of the easiest and most widely used business letter formats is called the Block Format.
2. Give each student the *Business Letter Block Format* handout. Review the standard parts of a business letter with students:
 - Heading
 - Date
 - Inside Address
 - Subject
 - Salutation
 - Body Paragraphs
 - Closing and Signature
 - Enclosure
3. Give each student the *Effective Written Communication on the Job – Business Letter Scenarios*. Students should choose one of the scenarios on the handout and write a business letter to address the situation. They should follow the block style format.
4. After each student has completed an initial draft, each student should have another peer edit their initial business letter draft. Peer editors should follow the template and make sure that each part is included in the draft, along with spelling and grammar checks.
5. Have students prepare the final business letter and turn it in as part of their grade for this lesson. Use the attached *Business Letter Assessment Rubric* for your convenience.

Effective Written Communication on the Job – Business Letter Scenarios

Choose one of the following scenarios and write an appropriate and professional business letter. You can invent the name of the person you are writing to, and the address and/or business name if needed.

Scenario A: You work in the customer service department for Walmart. You receive a complaint regarding a customer's experience in the electronics department of a local store. The customer was felt that they were disrespected.

Scenario B: You work in a sporting goods store. A customer has written to you asking if you have a product in your store called the Fitbit. Your store does carry it along with other competitive products.

Scenario C: You work in the marketing department for a cell phone company. You were recently approached in a phone call from an advertising firm asking if you would like to purchase pens with your company's logo on it from them.

Scenario D: You are the Human Resources director at a large law firm. You need to send a letter to a candidate who interviewed but did not get the job.

Scenario E: You are a fifth grade teacher at Heritage Elementary School. You need to write a letter to your district superintendent informing her about an upcoming fundraiser you are doing to raise money for a field trip to Washington, D.C.

Scenario F: You are a manager at a local fast food restaurant. A customer recently contacted you via email to tell you that they found a piece of plastic in a hamburger. They are not happy about it and are threatening to sue.



Business Letter Block Format

When writing a business letter, follow the format below.

Heading – Your Address Name Street Address City, State, ZIP	Skip 1 line
Date	Skip 2 lines
Inside Address Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr. Full name of Recipient Job Title of Recipient (if applicable) Name of the Company/Organization (if applicable) Street Address City, State, ZIP	Skip 1 line
Subject:	Skip 1 line
Salutation (Dear Ms./Mrs./Mr. and Last Name and a colon at the end)	Skip 1 line
Body Paragraphs This is the content of the letter. The paragraphs should be single spaced with one line skipped between each paragraph. Body Paragraph 1 Body Paragraph 2 Body Paragraph 3	Skip 1 line
Closing (Sincerely,) Your Typed Name (Handwritten Signature Above) Your Typed Title	Skip 3 lines
Enclosure Use this if your letter includes another document other than the letter itself. If it is more than one, you would type "Enclosures."	Skip 1 line

Business Letter Assessment Rubric

Name: _____

Topic (Weight)	1	2	3	4
Return Address & Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return address or letterhead is missing. Date is missing. 4 or more spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return address or letterhead is missing some information. Date is there but format is incorrect. 3 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return address or letterhead is complete & accurate. Date is complete & positioned correctly. 1-2 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return address or letterhead is complete & accurate. Date is complete & positioned correctly. No spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.
Inside Address & Salutation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside address is missing. Salutation is missing. Subject line is missing. More than 3 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside address is missing information. Salutation is inappropriate. Subject line information is misleading. 3 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside address is complete & accurate. Salutation is appropriate but incomplete. A subject line needed or added correctly. 1 - 2 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inside address is complete & accurate. Salutation is appropriate & complete. A subject line needed or added correctly. No spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.
Content Organization & Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No organization pattern is apparent. Paragraph order does not follow suggested format. Message has enough missing or incorrect information to be ineffective in meeting the writer's goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization is not appropriate to the writer's purpose. Paragraph order is close to the suggested model. Two pieces of information are missing or incorrect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization is appropriate to the writer's purpose. Paragraph order is close to the suggested model. One piece of information is missing or incorrect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization is appropriate to the writer's purpose. Paragraph order follows the suggested model. Message is complete and correct.
Closing, Signature, & other End Matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than two pieces are missing or inaccurate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two pieces are missing or inaccurate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One piece is missing or inaccurate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing is appropriate. Written & typed signatures are present. Reference initials & enclosure reminder are included if needed.
Word Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choice is unprofessional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choice is inappropriate for audience. Writer sometimes uses action verbs. Too much use of passive voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choice is mostly appropriate for audience. Writer uses action verbs. Use of passive voice ONLY as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word choice is appropriate for audience. Writer uses action verbs. Use of passive voice ONLY as needed.
Sentences Fluency, Paragraphs, & Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 2 sentence fragments. Message is lost in poor construction. Paragraphs do not follow suggested format. Spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors make message unclear. Grammar & usage errors makes message unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two sentence fragments. Message is there, but underdeveloped. Awkward paragraph construction clouds the message. 3-4 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 3 - 4 grammar & usage errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some variation in sentence length. One fragment. Paragraph divisions are somewhat effective. Main purpose of the message is clear. 1-2 spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. 1-2 grammar & usage errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete sentences of varying length. Paragraph divisions are effective. Number of paragraphs fits suggested format. Main purpose of the message is clear. No spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors. Grammar & usage are correct.

Source: <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/176703>



Activity 3 – Using Nonverbal Communication (30 minutes)

1. Introduce nonverbal communication
Play an abbreviated version of charades. Pick three students and stand them at the front of the room. Tell them to pretend that they are all about to interview for a very important job and are waiting in a conference room for the interviewer. Have the rest of the class comment on what the students' postures convey to them. Change the scenarios and choose three new students for each of the following or come up with some of your own. Tell them they are just hanging out at home playing video games with a group of friends, or about to give a presentation to a group of 5000 conference attendees, or meeting their girlfriend or boyfriend's parents for the first time. Once you have gone through various scenarios, have everyone share their opinions on how body language affects the way others see you.
2. Form small groups of three to four students. Give them the *Non-Verbal Communication Brainstorming Activity* handout. Have small groups complete the handout brainstorming all of the non-verbal ways in which people communicate. Have students complete the rest of the handout giving them about 10 minutes to complete the activity.
3. Gather the class back together and have each group share some of items they brainstormed for non-verbal communication. Next have each group share one example for each category of how non-verbal communication may be perceived in the workplace.
4. Here are three tips for improving your non-verbal communication skills:
 - Body movements include using gestures to illustrate the message you are trying to convey verbally. Use good eye contact and appropriate gestures. Have good posture and do not send mixed messages.
 - Voice quality also is important. It's not always what we say, but how we say it. Be careful of your tone when you speak. It has the power to take a simple sentence meant with no ill intent and turn it into a chaotic mess. We also want to consider the volume at which we speak.
 - Space and personal boundaries are especially important in nonverbal communication. In order to communicate effectively, we have to be aware of our space as well as the space of others.

Non-verbal Communication Brainstorming Activity

Consider the many non-verbal ways in which people communicate. As a group, brainstorm and list all of the different non-verbal ways you communicate thoughts and feelings. (Example: crossed arms)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.



Consider how your non-verbal communication may be perceived in a workplace setting. What messages could you be sending to coworkers with your body language? Write a brief statement of how each of the following could be perceived by a coworker. (Example: Slouched posture may show you are not interested. Or minimal eye contact may signal lack of confidence)

Eye contact:

Facial expression:

Posture:

Handshake:

Personal space:

Vocal tone:



Lesson – Effective Communication Skills

Review: The Importance of Clear Communication on the Job

10 minutes

Purpose:

The purpose of this discussion is to have participants examine how they communicate differently when the setting or group of people change. Everyone needs to learn to adjust their communication appropriately.

Materials:

- *None*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Ask participants to consider how they communicate with their friends. Then ask how they communicate with family members. Finally, ask how they are likely to communicate with an employer at a job interview. Ask for volunteers to describe each way of communicating and interacting.
2. Discuss the differences and similarities in the students' responses. Ask:
 - Why is each situation different?
 - What are the expectations of each person?
 - What would happen if you greeted your friends in the way you greeted an interviewer?
 - What would happen if you greeted an interviewer the same way you greet your friends?
3. Knowing how to communicate with people in the right context for a given situation is an important skill, as there are often unspoken rules and standards that are just expected.

Lesson – Effective Teamwork in the Workplace



Lesson Overview

In this lesson, participants will learn about the importance of teamwork on the job. Students will identify the skills needed to be an effective team member as well as the criteria of a highly effective team.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Understand the benefits of effective teamwork for the individual and the employer
- Identify characteristics of effective teams
- Successfully practice working as a member of a team as well as a leader of a team
- Identify teamwork skills that they need to strengthen

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate class time
FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the benefits of effective teamwork?</i> handout (one per student) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print/photocopy the <i>What are the benefits of effective teamwork?</i> – one per student 	15 – 20 minutes
LEARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Index cards • <i>Characteristics of an Effective Workplace Team</i> handout – (one per student) • <i>Team Leadership Scenarios</i> handout (one per group) • <i>Teamwork Survival Scenario</i> handout (one per student) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print/photocopy the <i>Characteristics of an Effective Workplace Team</i> – one per student 2. Print/photocopy the <i>Team Leadership Scenarios</i> handout (one per team) and cut them apart. 3. Print/photocopy the <i>Teamwork Survival Scenario</i> handout (one per student) 	Part 1 – 20 minutes Part 2 – 60-90 minutes Part 3 – 60 minutes
REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Apollo 13</i> movie clip – <i>Fitting a Square Peg in a Round Hole</i> • <i>Apollo 13</i> movie clip – <i>Duct Tape and Cardboard</i> • <i>Teamwork Skills Self Inventory</i> handout (one per student) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have movie clips ready to play on the computer 2. Print/photocopy the <i>Teamwork Skills Self Inventory</i> handout (one per student) 	20 minutes

Lesson – Effective Teamwork in the Workplace

FOCUS: Benefits of Teamwork

15 - 20 minutes

Purpose:

A team is defined as a group of people working together to reach a common goal. There are many benefits for team members and for employers. This activity will help students identify the benefits of effects teamwork for all parties involved.

Materials:

- *What are the benefits of effective teamwork?* handout

Facilitation Steps:

1. Begin by introducing the definition of a team to the class. A team is a group of people working together to reach a common goal. We will be focusing on teamwork in the workplace setting.
2. Give students the *What are the benefits of effective teamwork?* handout. Give them five minutes to identify as many benefits as they can by writing them in the spaces provided.
3. Call the class back together and have students share benefits that they have identified. Write this list on a white board. Some potential benefits could be:
 - Increased performance in work production
 - A bond or sense of camaraderie
 - Job satisfaction
 - Increased creativity

- Easier to communicate faster
- Mentorship or learning from one another

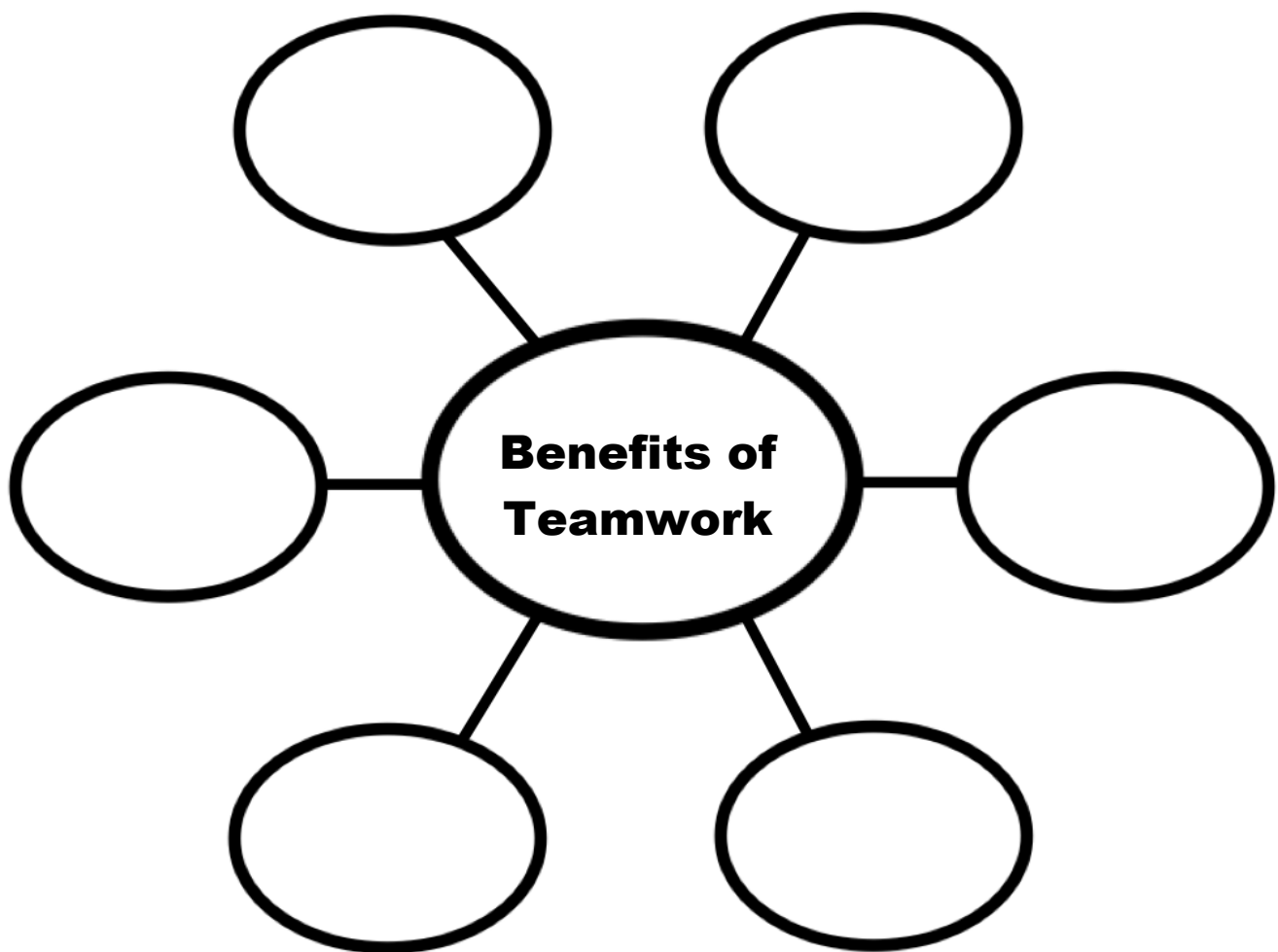
Here are the three most common types of work teams:

- **Project team:** A *project team* is a group of people brought together to accomplish a particular project. (Sometimes project teams are referred to as *steering committees* or *task forces*.) Typically, when the project ends, the team ends.
- **Cross-functional team:** A cross-functional team is made up of employees from different departments or areas of the business.
- **Self-directed work team:** Like a project team, a *self-directed work team* is a team that determines how it will get a job done and has the authority, and often the budget, to carry out decisions.

A team can also be managed by assigning a leader. A leader guides, directs and influences team members. An effective leader will give clear direction to a team. To be an effective team you should set clear goals, assign roles and communicate regularly with team members.

What are the benefits of effective teamwork?

Think about the benefits that good teamwork has for the employer and employees in the workplace. Write them in the spaces provided. Add circles if you need additional space.



Lesson – Effective Teamwork in the Workplace

LEARN: Active Practice

140-170 minutes

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to have participants actively practice being an effective team member in a series of different activities. To develop effective teamwork skills, students need practice just like any other skill.

Materials:

- Index cards
- *Characteristics of an Effective Workplace Team* handout
- *Team Leadership Scenarios* handout
- *Team Survival Scenario* handout

Facilitation Steps:

Activity 1 – Individual vs. Team Solutions (20 minutes)

1. Give each student three blank index cards. Place a few on a table in the classroom in case students come up with more than three ideas. Explain to the class that this is going to be a brainstorming session where they will have to identify solutions individually.
2. Tell students that there are no wrong or right answers in this activity. You are going to read a scenario to them and they are going to have five minutes to write down as many solutions to the problem as possible. They should write each

solution on a separate index card. If they identify more than three solutions, invite them to get additional cards.

3. Read the following scenario to the class:

You work in a restaurant that also caters special events. A customer calls the morning of an anniversary party that the restaurant has agreed to cater that evening, to make sure everything is all set. You find that the order was taken by an employee who is no longer employed there and she didn't let anyone else know about this event. What options does the restaurant and catering staff have to solve this problem?

4. Once the five minutes is up, pick up all of the index cards and shuffle them. Read through them and as a class choose the top five by show of hands.
5. Distribute the *Characteristics of an Effective Workplace Team* handout. Review each of the eight characteristics of an effective team.
6. Tell students to think back to the problem scenario they just worked with. How would this activity have been easier if they had worked in teams to identify solutions?

Characteristics of Effective Teams

Think about the characteristics that teams should have in order to be effective. Here are eight to consider. What other characteristics would you add to this list?

1 The team must have a clear goal.

2 The team must have competent, knowledgeable team members.

3 The team must be collaborative, with all members being honest, open and respectful of other members.

4 The team must have a unified focus and commitment.

5 The team should have a results-drive structure.

6 The team must have high expectations that are understood by everyone.

7 The team should receive support and encouragement from external sources.

8 The team must have an effective leader who works for the good of the team.

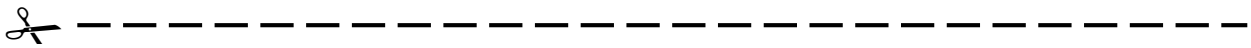
Activity 2 – Effective Team Leadership (60-90 minutes)

1. Review number eight from *Characteristics of an Effective Workplace Team* handout which was: “The team must have an effective leader who works for the good of the team.”
2. What does “effective” mean? What attributes or qualities make an effective team leader? Get suggestions from the class and write them down on a white board.
3. Tell students that there are many different lists that identify the qualities of an effective team leader. Here are ten to consider.
 - Clear communicator
 - Strong organizational skills
 - Confident in his or her abilities
 - Respectful of team members
 - Treats team members fairly
 - Has integrity
 - Influential to team members
 - Shares leadership through delegation
 - A strong facilitator
 - Uses negotiation skills to achieve results
4. Tell students that in this activity they will each have the opportunity to lead a small group through an activity. Divide the class into groups of four students. If there are additional students left, add one to each group but no more than five per group.
5. Each group will participate in four or five leadership scenarios. Each student will lead one activity/discussion. Give each student a sealed envelope. Inside of the envelope is the scenario that the student has been assigned to lead. Assign one person to be the observer who takes notes and gives feedback to the group. The remaining team members will work with the leader on the activity/discussion.
6. Each leader will have seven minutes to present their scenario and have the team solve the problem. The observer will be given three minutes to give feedback on what they saw. Each leadership task will take ten minutes.
7. Get the class back together again and ask students to answer the following questions as a reflection exercise:
 - What kind of a leader were you? What characteristics of an effective leader do you possess? What leadership qualities would you like to improve upon?

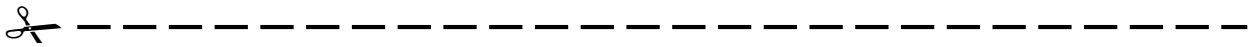
Team Leadership Scenarios

Note to the instructor: Photocopy this sheet, one for each group, and give one scenario to each student.

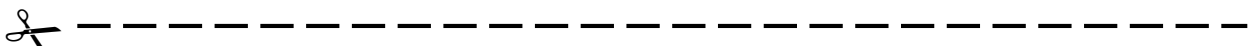
Scenario A: Your team is lost in the wilderness on a camping trip. The leader must ensure that the group is safe for the night and have a plan to get them back to their base camp in the morning. Discuss with your team about what needs to be done to make this happen. The team members are experienced campers and have tents and food along.



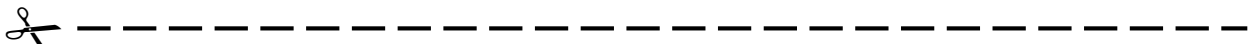
Scenario B: The company you work for has a great idea for a new cell phone that has five times the battery life of the closest competitor. The leader needs the team to come up with a name for the product that fits with the company logo of “We Connect the World.”



Scenario C: You work in the marketing department for a clothing company. You were recently approached by a customer who would like a special t-shirt designed for a fundraiser they are hosting. The fundraiser is to raise money for a local food pantry. The name of the food pantry is “Everyone’s Kitchen.” Your team must design the t-shirt for this fundraiser.



Scenario D: You are the director of a childcare center. Recently a three year old at your center found a way to leave the center during recess time and was found wandering two blocks away. You and your team of childcare teachers need to come up with a solution to ensure that this doesn't happen ever again.



Scenario E: You are the captain of the local high school track team. Your coach tells you about several teammates who have behaved like poor sports after losing a race recently. As captain, you need to work with your track team to put together a policy on sportsmanship including some basic behavioral guidelines and consequences.

Activity 3 – Teamwork Survival Exercise (60 minutes)

1. Introduce the activity to the class. Explain that today they will be working in small teams making decisions on a survival scenario. They will read the scenario together as a group. The goal is to choose the 12 most useful items to survive. First they will make their own individual list. Then they will create a team list based upon the contents of all individual lists. Finally they will discuss the choices, make rankings and then come to a group consensus.
2. Give each student the *Teamwork Survival Scenario* handout. They should read through it and write down all of the items they would want to have in order to survive.
3. Divide the class into small teams of four or five students. The teams should begin by sharing each of their individual lists and then compiling one master list that they will use for their discussion and rankings.
4. During the discussion with their team, remind them that they will need to come to a consensus. This will require some give and take in order to move forward towards a solution. Try not to vote or average. Try to reason and come together avoiding conflicts. Tell students they will have 30 minutes to come up with their master list of the top 12 items they will need to survive the scenario. They should also rank their final list in order of importance with one being most important to 12 being the least.
5. Some of the items on the list could include flares, spear, fishing pole, tent, matches, lighter, antibiotics, bucket, rope, ham radio, sunscreen, solar powered generator etc.
6. Have each team present their top 12 list.
7. Debrief by asking the class the following questions:
 - Did team members listen to each other?
 - How did you reach your final decision?
 - How could the decision-making process have been easier or more effective? What could you have done differently as a team?
 - How was conflict or differences of opinion managed?
 - How did everyone feel about the final list? Did anyone feel that they weren't listened to? Did anyone feel like they just 'gave in'?
 - Did someone assume the role as the leader of the team?
 - What situations at home/work/school do you think are similar to this activity?

Team Survival Scenario



Read through the following scenario:

Your work team was given a trip as a reward for exceeding your sales goals last year. You all boarded the S.S. Super Clipper for a relaxing luxury week long cruise in the Pacific Ocean. You encountered a bad storm and the clipper ship limped to shore and partially sank. Only the top is still visible off the north tip of the island. You are all now stranded on an uninhabited island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The storm basically ruined most things on board, leaving very few useful items.

Your task is choose the 12 most useful items to help you survive on this deserted island. First, write a list of 12 items on the back of this sheet of paper that you would individually like to have on hand to survive on the island.

Next, work with your team to create a master list of items to choose from. Your next task is to work together with your team to come up with a list of the 12 most important items you feel would help the group survive on this island for the next 6-12 months. Rate the final list of 12 with 1 being the most important item through 12 being the least important item on your list.

For example, one item you may wish to have on hand is matches or a lighter.

Lesson – Effective Communication Skills

Review: Self Inventory of Teamwork Skills

20 minutes

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to have participants take an inventory of their teamwork skills. They will identify their strengths and also plan how they can improve skills that they think may need to be strengthened.

Materials:

- *Apollo 13 Movie Clip – Fitting a Square Peg in a Round Hole* 1:34
- *Apollo 13 Movie Clip – Duct Tape and Cardboard* 3:01
- *Teamwork Skills Self Inventory* handout (one per student)

Facilitation Steps:

1. Show the movie clip from Apollo 13 (1995) where the NASA Team has to fix the broken ventilation system on the space shuttle. It is a life or death task as the CO2 levels are reaching dangerous levels on the shuttle. Team members are tasked with figuring out how to fit a 'square peg in a round hole' using only the items found aboard the shuttle. The clip can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2YZnTL596Q>

Or you can do an internet search for Apollo 13 movie clip square peg round hole.

2. Think back to the list of *Characteristics of Effective Teams* handout and lesson. What characteristics did this team have from this list?

- The team must have a clear goal.
- The team must have competent, knowledgeable team members.
- The team must be collaborative with all members being honest, open and respectful of all team members.
- The team must have a unified focus.
- The team should have a results-drive structure.
- The team must have high expectations that are understood by everyone.
- The team should receive support and encouragement from external sources.
- The team must have an effective leader who works for the good of the team.

3. Show the movie clip from Apollo 13 that shows the solution that the team came up with. The clip can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zm5nUEG5Bjo>

Or you can do an Internet search for Apollo 13 movie slip duct tape and cardboard.

Were they able to solve the problem?

4. Give each student the *Teamwork Skills Self Inventory* handout. They should complete it honestly and return it to you with the final question answered on how they can improve teamwork skills.

Teamwork Skills Self Inventory

Skills are learned behaviors and abilities. There are many different types of skills that are relevant to career development. Effective teamwork skills are very important. What do you think makes a good team member? Do you have the teamwork skills it takes to be a good team member? Take this self-inventory rating your strengths and areas you'd like to improve upon. Check the box that matches how you rate each skill.

Skill	Strong	Average	Needs Improvement
Willing to Listen – you listen to and respect various points of view			
Self-Motivated – you are responsible and dedicated to completing the task at hand			
Honest – you are fair and willing to share openly with others			
Reliable and Trustworthy – you can be counted on			
Effective Communicator – you clearly express your thoughts and ideas			
Organized – you are prepared and ready to participate and contribute			
Cooperative – you enjoy working with other team members to reach a common goal			
Flexible – you embrace change and aren't afraid to try new things			
Problem Solver – you can identify the issue and find a solution			

What are ways you can strengthen the skills in the 'needs improvement' column?

