

Money Talks

Should I Be Working? Leader's Guide

ON THE JOB

This leader's guide is designed to accompany the *On the Job* teen guide. The leader's guide includes: learning objectives, background information, discussion questions, activities with accompanying handouts and visuals, a glossary, and a list of additional resources. The background information is meant to prepare instructors to both teach the unit and to provide lecture material to cover with the teens. It is recommended that each teen receives a copy of the teen guide and reads it *before* participating in the activities outlined in this guide.

The purpose of this unit is to show teens how to be *valuable* employees. Many people mistakenly think that once they are hired for a job, their "hard work" is done. What they fail to consider, however, is that those who are hired can always be fired. Keeping a job, let alone succeeding at it, requires a blend of effort and people skills. You have the opportunity as an instructor to share with teens the type of things employers value in their employees, as well as explain how to behave appropriately on the job.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

All employees are not created equal. There are those who do just enough to earn a paycheck and not get fired and those who want to be successful and do their job to the best of their ability each day. Some employees are pleasant to be around, while others are downright unpleasant to work with. Some don't care one way or the other about their jobs and are simply caught up in their own interests without any concern for others. While each employee may have his or her own strengths and weaknesses, the average employee is just that – average.

Overall Learning Objectives

Teens will:

- Learn about the characteristics of a valuable employee
- Know proper job etiquette
- Understand the importance of appearance on the job
- Know importance of effective communication at work
- Understand the impact body language can have on those around them
- Learn how to deal with conflict at work
- Understand the impact poor health can have at work



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Did You Know?

- Every year 200,000 teens are injured on the job in the U.S., 84,000 of them required emergency room treatment, 70 of them die. (Labor Occupational Health Program)

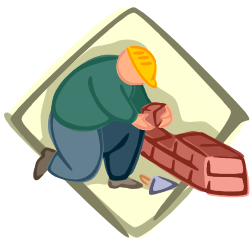
As jobs become more competitive, simply having the knowledge and skills to do a job is not enough to earn the title of “valuable employee.” After all, employers hire people they believe have what it takes to get the job done. Being able to perform job duties is expected. However, some employees put more thought and effort into *getting* their job than what they have to do to keep their job once they are hired.

What is a Valuable Employee?

A valuable employee is someone who not only performs his or her specific job duties well, but also knows how to handle themselves professionally at work and can relate well with others. Employees can be valuable in many ways including: boosting the morale of the office, accomplishing more work than the average person, being a good leader, bringing humor to the workplace, producing consistently high quality work, having a way of putting coworkers/customers at ease, being a team player that helps others for the sake of the company, etc. In other words, a valuable employee is someone that employers are glad to have on their payroll, a person that coworkers want to work with, and someone who customers find helpful.

Characteristics of Valuable Employees

Valuable employees share many of the same personal characteristics. These traits are the same regardless of an employee’s age, position, field, or profession. In fact, many of these traits are needed for a successful personal life as well.



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Characteristics of a valuable employee include:

Attention to Detail—Being thorough and paying attention to detail ensures quality work. Mistakes and inaccurate information on reports, projects, and documents are signs of employee incompetence and reflect badly on a company.

Communications Skills—The ability to communicate well with others is just as important as having the job skills needed to perform the duties of a job. Employers are often more willing to train someone with average credentials and good communication skills, than to hire someone who is highly qualified to do a job but has poor communication skills.

Cooperation—The ability to cooperate with others plays an important role in having good relationships with people at work. No one wants to work with someone who always has to have his or her way, or competes with coworkers. In addition, those who are team players can be more productive and successful than those who are not.

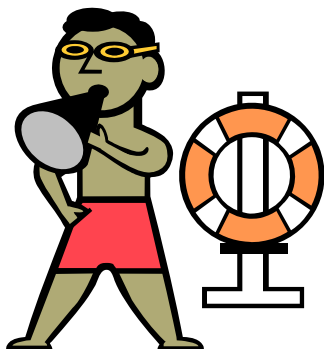
Dependability—Being a dependable employee makes scheduling and dividing up workloads much easier for employers. Employees that consistently show up to work on time, do quality work, meet deadlines, etc. are more likely to be given more responsibility and opportunity to move up than those who don't.

Desire to Learn—Employees who seek out opportunities to learn (e.g., training sessions, seminars, conferences and workshops) continue to develop and improve in the position. Most employers appreciate workers that make an effort to grow with their organization.

Did You Know?

- The Federal minimum wage is currently \$7.25/hour. (Labor Law Center, 2008)
- The California minimum wage is currently \$8.00/hour. (Labor Law Center, 2008)
- In some cases, employers can pay less than minimum wage during your first 160 hours of work, if you have no previous similar experience. Another example is food servers who may be paid less because they receive tips. For more information, call 888-ASK-WAGE (275-9243). (Labor Occupational Health Program, 2008)





Hard Work—Employees that work as hard as they can, no matter what the job, gain the respect of those they work with. Hard workers make employers feel like their money is being well spent.

Initiative—Employees who take initiative are self-motivated workers that hunt for ways to solve problems and make improvements—without being asked to do so. Employers have confidence in workers who they know will go above and beyond what is expected of them and are more likely to give this type of employee more responsibility or opportunities to advance.

Problem Solving Skills—Employees with good problem solving skills are able to work more independently and require less supervision than the average employee. Problem solvers can find answers to questions, solutions to challenges, and more efficient ways to get a job done without disturbing the productivity of other workers.

Professionalism—Employees with good manners and office etiquette reflect well on themselves and their organization. Professionals are able to work well with others and are viewed as conscientious, well-qualified, and skilled workers.

Self Discipline—Employees with self-discipline are able to tune out distractions (e.g., cell phones, the Internet, television, chatty employees, and personal issues) and focus their time, attention, and energy on job duties.

Trustworthiness—The success of an organization relies heavily on the integrity of its employees to do the work they are paid to do, not abuse company resources, not talk about confidential information, take responsibility for their actions, etc. Those with a reputation for being trustworthy often earn advancement and leadership opportunities within their company (Varcoe, 1998).

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Professional Job Etiquette

Different situations require different etiquette. For example, the language, clothes and behavior that are acceptable at a ballgame or BBQ may not be acceptable at school. The same is true for work. What is appropriate outside of the workplace may not be appropriate on the job.

A valuable employee understands that the workplace requires decent and professional behavior. Different organizations range in levels of formality; however, there are some universal guidelines for professional behavior that apply to just about any work environment. The following are professional etiquette tips relating to many aspects of a job:

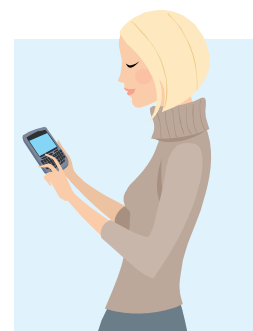
Attitude—*Keep a positive attitude.* Attitudes can be highly contagious in a work environment, so it is important to have a positive, “can do” attitude. Negative attitudes are easily recognized by others and no one wants to work around a person who is moody, complaining, and whiny.

Abuse of Job Resources—*Don't abuse job resources.* Taking a long lunch here and there, a few chats on the cell-phone each day, surfing the net for private matters, using the FAX machine for personal business, running an errand on company time, or taking home a pack of sticky notes is abuse of job resources. It is not professional to use company time, equipment, or supplies for personal use.

Cell Phones at Work—*Stay off the cell phone.* Personal cell-phone calls at work are not professional. Ideally, a cell phone will be left at home or in the car during work hours. However, employees that feel it is necessary to have their phone with them at all times should use a vibrate feature instead of a ring tone. If a cell phone call must be taken, employees should go where other people will not be disturbed, keep their voice low, and the conversation short.

Did You Know?

- There are laws that protect teens from doing dangerous work and from working too long, too late, or too early. (Labor Occupational Health Program, 2008)
- 71% of teens own a cell phone. (Pew Internet, 2009)





Credit to Others—*Give credit where credit is due.* Sharing the glory for a job-well-done with every one who helped with it can build trust between employees, encourage future team efforts and boost office morale.

E-mail—*Keep e-mails professional.* Work related e-mails should be viewed as business letters. It is important to include a greeting (even when the e-mail has been going back and forth several times). In addition, “emoticons” (the sideways smiling or winking faces made from colons and parentheses) are too cutesy for professional correspondence.

Gossip—*Refuse to participate in gossip.* One of the most unprofessional and unethical behaviors an employee can exhibit is gossiping. Employees who are known to gossip can quickly spoil both their image and their working relationships. Once an employee has the reputation of being a gossip, it is almost impossible to overcome.

Greetings—*Always give others a proper greeting.* It is both professional and considerate to greet others and make them feel welcome and appreciated. This includes not only coworkers and superiors, but subordinates as well. In business situations, when anyone is being introduced, employees should stand and shake hands. It doesn't matter who puts their hand out first.

Humor—*Have a sense of humor.* Humor can be used by employees to help them build relationships with coworkers, lighten-up their work environment, and maintain open communication with others. However, employees who push humor too far or gain a reputation of being the “office clown” may make others feel uncomfortable and be considered disruptive. It may also hurt their long term career because they are not taken seriously by others and demonstrate a lack of judgment about appropriate behavior.

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Some guidelines for humor at work include avoiding sarcasm, never joking at the expense of others, and using appropriate timing. It is also important for employees to consider the different personalities and backgrounds of those with whom they work and consider whether coworkers may be sensitive to some types of humor.

Inappropriate Behavior—Certain behaviors are never appropriate to do in public, let alone at work. It is never appropriate to use profanity at work, have emotional outbursts, or groom in public while working.

People Skills—*Focus on people skills.* People skills can make or break careers. Employers want employees that can get along with their coworkers, and will represent their organization well. Good people skills include giving respect to everyone regardless of their position; being sensitive to the feelings of others; staying in control of emotions; avoiding office politics; keeping ego in check; being happy, not envious, for the success of others; and never putting others down to make themselves look better.

Personal Space—*Respect the personal space of others.* Personal space is often limited in a work environment. Employees must often work within small areas with shared facilities (e.g., bathroom, kitchen, lounge, etc.). Employees show respect for their own space, as well as the space of others by:

- cleaning up messes in common areas (e.g., don't leave dirty dishes in the sink, crumbs on a table, rotten food in a fridge, supplies scattered in a workroom, scraps of paper on the floor, trash laying about, etc.)
- keeping personal work stations tidy, not infringing on the personal space of others (e.g., ask permission to enter a coworkers work space; be sure that plants, pictures, knick-knacks, etc. don't spill over into coworkers' space)



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- limiting the amount of noise that comes from their area (e.g., loud talking, laughing, humming, music, gum chewing, eating or drinking noises, etc.)
- respecting the privacy of others (e.g., do not ask personal questions, eavesdrop, or read other peoples faxes, e-mails, computer screens, mail, etc.)

Table Manners—*Always use good table manners.*

Employees often eat in the work environment—whether they’re having a snack in the break room, eating lunch at their desk, celebrating a coworker’s birthday, or attending a business dinner with clients. Table manners—or the lack of them—can leave a lasting impression on bosses, coworkers, and customers. Polite employees avoid burping, talking with their mouth full, pigging out on food or drink, getting intoxicated, and wiping hands on their clothes.

Telephone—*Be polite on the phone.* Many jobs require employees to interact with customers and coworkers on the phone. Polite phone manners include answering the phone with an appropriate greeting, using a considerate tone of voice, returning phone calls promptly, not eating on the phone, and not making people wait on hold for a long time.



Timeliness—*Always be on time.* The term “time is money” is especially true regarding employment. Employees short-change their organization by showing up late for work, taking long breaks and lunches, missing assignment deadlines, bringing their personal life to work, disregarding other peoples’ time (e.g., missing appointments, interrupting them, keeping them waiting), and missing work without letting their employer know (Flynn, 2004; Hodowanec, 2004; Sundararajan, 2007).

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Appearance on the Job

Despite the saying, “You can’t judge a book by its cover,” many people do. This is especially true regarding personal appearance. Professional employees understand that people often judge each other based on what they see and make an effort to appear professional by practicing good hygiene—which includes being clean (hair, body, and nails); brushing teeth, and using deodorant or antiperspirant; wearing clean, wrinkle-free clothes that fit well and are not too revealing; keeping fragrances to a minimum; styling hair neatly (including facial hair); and wearing natural looking make-up and hair styles (Varcoe, 1998).

Effective Communication

Communication skills are just as important as a person’s ability to perform specific job duties. With employees typically spending over 75% of their time at work interacting with others, it comes as no surprise that poor communication is at the root of many organizations’ problems (The Importance of Effective Communication, n.d.). The success of an employee or organization often boils down to communication skills.

Non-Verbal Communication

Communicating is not as simple as one person saying something and others understanding what he or she meant. This is because much of communication is “non-verbal”—communicating without words. In fact, studies show that over 90% of what we understand comes from non-verbal cues (The Importance of Effective Communication, n.d.).

Body language is one form of non-verbal communication. Body language includes facial expressions, eye movement, posture and gestures. Body language is a good indicator of how a person is really feeling.

Physical contact can communicate a lot about how one person feels about another. A handshake, pat on the back, squeeze of the arm, hug, or kiss can show different levels of formality, comfort and mood, and may not be appropriate in all situations. Similarly, how far apart a person stands from another when they communicate can also indicate these



Did You Know?

- 90% of our communication comes from non-verbal cues.
- Everyone has a “personal space” around them which they don’t like other people to enter. This personal space can be anywhere from 2 feet to 12 feet depending on how well we know the other person. (Northeastern University)





things. For some Americans, the “intimate zone” is about two feet, and is used by the closest of friends. The “personal zone,” from 2 to 4 feet, is reserved for family and friends. The “social zone,” from 4 to 12 feet, is where most business transactions take place. Although these zones can vary by individual and culture (The Importance of Effective Communication, n.d.).

Listening Skills

Effective communication is a two-way street that requires listening. A person can show someone they are actively listening by:

- looking at them and not interrupting them while they are speaking
- ignoring outside distractions,
- asking questions about, repeating, or rephrasing what was heard
- responding in an interested way to let the speaker know they were understood.

Additional active listening tips include:

- trying to understand the meaning behind the words being spoken (“reading between the lines” and observing non-verbal cues)
- not controlling the conversation and letting others speak without interruption
- not reacting to emotional words, and instead trying to understand their purpose
- fully understanding what is being said before passing judgment
- trying to be objective rather than getting defensive about what is said

Word Choice and Voice Tone

Effective communication requires thoughtful word choice. People who think before they speak are more likely to be understood correctly and avoid hurt feelings; can be clear and direct; are conscious of what they are saying, (using slang or improper grammar “like totally, ya know” can affect how the

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communicate a message without provoking or accusing others.

The tone and volume of voice is another form of body language that can affect the meaning of the words spoken. Tone and volume can express the emotion behind words—such as frustration, anger, sadness, satisfaction, joy, etc.

Conflict

There is always an opportunity for conflict when people are together for any amount of time. This is especially true for coworkers who may have very little in common and have different backgrounds, lifestyles, and ways of communicating. Problems that commonly arise in the workplace include:

- incompatible work styles and/or personalities
- extreme competitiveness
- feeling unappreciated or undermined by supervisors
- peer pressure
- bullying
- hostility
- gossip

The key to quickly and peacefully solving a lot of conflict in the workplace is communication. An employee with a problem should first try to speak directly with the person (people) involved. If nothing is resolved that way, the employee should then take the problem to his/her immediate supervisor. If the supervisor is unable to help, or if the conflict is with the supervisor, it is then appropriate to contact the organization's human resource department.

Supervisors and coworkers respect employees who deal with conflict as discreetly and professionally as possible. No matter what the conflict is, an employee should never discuss it with coworkers that are not involved. Not only can this damage relationships with coworkers, it can also magnify a problem that may have started out as a small issue and turn it into a much bigger, uncomfortable situation.



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For more information:

- Health & Safety—
Occupational Safety & Health, www.osha.gov
- Wages & Work Hours—
U.S. Dept. of Labor, www.wagehour.dol.gov
- Harassment or
Discrimination—
U.S. Equal Employment
Opportunity Commission, www.youth.eeoc.gov
- Injuries—
California Workers'
Compensation, www.dir.ca.gov/DWC

Opening Discussion Questions

- What makes an employee valuable to an employer?
- What is the most important characteristic of a good employee?
- What does “professional” mean?



Health and the Workplace

Valuable employees recognize the impact health can have on job performance. Health can affect work quality, job satisfaction, energy levels, and feelings of self-confidence and competence. In addition, employees that miss a lot of work due to illness are not only less productive, but often burden their coworkers with additional duties.

An employee who comes to work sick, makes coworkers and customers uncomfortable, or even resentful, to be exposed to germs. Only those who have made a full recovery should return to work. Employees can maintain a healthy lifestyle by:

- eating healthy foods
- drinking plenty of water
- getting plenty of rest
- exercising regularly
- not taking drugs, caffeine or nicotine
- avoiding excessive alcohol use

Worker Rights

There are many laws in place to protect the rights of young workers. Young people can access the “Are You a Working Teen?” publication from the Labor Occupational Health Program to learn more at: <http://www.youngworkers.org/downloads/pdf/ywfs2008.pdf>.

Preparing for Future Jobs

It is important for employees to keep track of their professional accomplishments as they are achieved. These may include merit or special recognition awards, the completion of additional job training or education, the successful completion of a particularly notable project, or a promotion. This information may be easily forgotten and is important to include on future resumes when looking for a new job, or to use as a tool when trying to get a promotion or pay raise within an organization.

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ACTIVITY ONE: CHARACTERISTICS OF A VALUABLE EMPLOYEE

Estimated Activity Time: 45 minutes

In this activity, teens will learn what it is to be a valuable employee. First, they will discuss what it means to be valuable at work. Then they will learn about characteristics found in valuable employees. Finally, teens will consider which of those characteristics they possess.

Getting Ready Checklist

- Make one copy of Handouts #1a and #1b for each teen
- Copy Visual #1 to display

Doing the Activity

1. Summarize the first two paragraphs of the background information on pp. 1–2 of the leader’s guide for teens. Be sure to mention that as jobs become more competitive, just having the skills and knowledge to do a job may not be enough. Employees who want to keep their jobs will need to put more thought and effort into their jobs to be considered valuable employees.
2. Ask teens, “What do you think it means to be a ‘valuable employee’?” Take time to listen to everyone’s answers and comments.
3. Display Visual #1 (*optional*). Go over the “What Is a Valuable Employee,” and “Characteristics of a Valuable Employee” sections on pp. 2–4 of the leader’s guide background information. Discuss the following:
 - A valuable employee is someone who not only performs his or her specific job duties well, but also

Learning Objectives

- Teens will learn what it means to be a valuable employee
- Teens will learn about the characteristics of a valuable employee
- Teens will identify which valuable employee characteristics they possess

Supplies Needed

- Visual #1 (p. 29)
- Handout #1a (p. 31)
- Handout #1b (p. 32)
- Answer Key for Handout #1a (p. 45)
- Answer Key for Handout #1b (p. 46)



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knows how to handle themselves professionally at work and can relate well with others.

- Valuable employees share many personal characteristics that are the same regardless of an employees' age, position, field, or profession.
- Characteristics include: attention to detail, communication skills, cooperation, dependability, desire to learn, hard work, initiative, problem-solving skills, professionalism, self discipline, and trustworthiness. (Visual #1, p. 29)

4. Have teens get into groups of two. Distribute Handouts #1a and #1b and explain to them that they will be considering which characteristics of a valuable employee are being demonstrated by the statements on Handout #1a and which characteristics are lacking on Handout #1b. (Handouts #1a and #1b, pp. 31–32)

5. Go over the answers to Handouts #1a and #1b as a class. Encourage teens to share any good or bad experiences they have had with employees demonstrating (or failing to demonstrate) any of the characteristics discussed. (Answer Key for Handout #1a and #1b, pp. 45–46)



6. Finally, on a separate sheet of paper, have each teen write down which personal characteristics they have that will make them a valuable employee. Which characteristics do they feel they need to develop most?

7. *Extend the Lesson—Making the Most of Your Job*
Teens who are currently working or have recent work experience can reflect upon “how to make the most of the job you have.” There are many ways to gain more from a job than just wages.

Select 2–5 teens from the group that have current or recent work experience and ask them to serve as an “expert panel”. Try to select teens that have different types of jobs (food service, retail, gardening, child care, tutoring, etc.).

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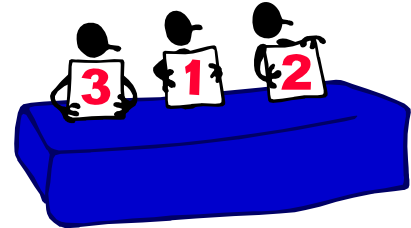
NOTE: If possible, meet with the teens on the “expert panel” ahead of time and explain the activity and brainstorm answers.

Explain to the entire group that there are many things that one can do to make the most of the job one currently has. To learn more about this topic teens from the group who have work experience will serve as an “expert panel” and share what they have done to make the most of their jobs.

Invite the ‘expert panel’ to the front of the room and pose the following questions:

- There are many benefits to working besides the pay. What benefits do you receive from working and how do you use them to make the most of the job you have? (Possible topics include: meeting people, on-the-job training, specialized training, opportunities for promotions, potential references, medical & retirement benefits, vacation and sick days, etc.)
- How do you challenge yourself at your job? (Some possible ideas include: learn new things, volunteer and ask for special assignments, suggest ways to improve customer service or productions, etc.)
- How do you effectively deal with “issues” related to working? (This could include issues at work such as getting along with co-workers, schedules, etc., or issues that arise in ones personal life because of working—time management, not enough time for homework, less time for friends, etc.)

Invite teens from the audience to ask questions of the “expert panel” and/or to add their own experiences.



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ACTIVITY TWO: WHO GOT IT RIGHT?

Estimated Activity Time: 20–45 minutes

In this activity, teens will learn about how to act on the job. They will spend the first part going over proper job etiquette. They will then spend time distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate behavior scenarios. Finally, teens will explore the importance of a professional appearance on the job.

Getting Ready Checklist

- Copy Handouts #2, #3a and #3b for each teen
- Copy Handouts #4a and #4b for half the class and Handouts #5a and #5b for the other half of class

Doing the Activity

1. Ask teens what behaviors are not acceptable while on the job and/or if they can think of past experiences they have had with an unprofessional employee. Take time to listen to the comments of each teen.
2. Go over the “Professional Job Etiquette” sections on pp. 5–8 of the leader’s guide background information. Discuss the following:
 - Different situations require different etiquette. What is appropriate outside of the workplace may not be appropriate on the job.
 - Valuable employees display professional behavior at work.
3. Distribute Handout #2 to each teen. Explain that they will be identifying which office behaviors are “dos” and which are “don’ts.” Then they connect the corresponding “dos” and “don’ts” together. (Handout #2, p. 33)

Learning Objectives

- Teens will know proper job etiquette

Supplies Needed

- Handout #2 (p. 33)
- Handout #3a (p. 35)
- Handout #3b (p. 36)
- Handout #4a (p. 37)
- Handout #4b (p. 38)
- Handout #5a (p. 39)
- Handout #5b (p. 40)
- Answer key for Handout #2 (p. 47)
- Answer key for Handout #3a (p. 49)
- Answer key for Handout #3b (p. 50)





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4. Go over the answers as a class. (Answer Key for Handout #2, p. 47)
5. Distribute Handouts #3a and #3b to each teen. Explain to them that they will be working in pairs or small groups to determine whether each statement is true or false of proper job etiquette, and to explain why those that are false are wrong. (Handouts #3a and #3b, pp. 35–36)
6. Go over the answers as a class. Discuss each answer and encourage teens to share similar personal experiences they have had on the job. (Answer Key for Handouts #3a and #3b, pp. 49–50)
7. Divide the class into 2–4 groups. Distribute to each teen either Handouts #4a and #4b or Handouts #5a and #5b, making sure that the members of each group have the same handouts. (Handouts #4a and #4b and Handouts #5a and #5b, pp. 37–40)
8. Have each group read and analyze the example job scenario which was given to them (Handouts #4a and #5a). Ask teens to identify as a group the negative job etiquette traits, and how they would have handled the situation differently if they were an employee in the same situation. (Handouts #4a and #5a, pp. 37 and 39)
9. After analyzing the example job situation, ask the groups to use Handouts #4b or #5b to create their own job scenario which will be acted out in front of the class. Groups need to be prepared to lead a class discussion identifying the negative job etiquette traits they portrayed through their group skit and what the employees in the skit need to change in order to be successful at their job. (Handouts #4b and #5b, pp. 38 and 40)

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ACTIVITY THREE: DRESS REHEARSAL

Estimated Activity Time: 45 minutes

In this activity, teens will explore the importance of a professional appearance on the job.

Getting Ready Checklist

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare art supplies |
|---|

Doing the Activity

- Go over the “Appearance On the Job” section on p. 9 of the leader’s guide background information. Let teens know that people often judge each other based on what they see and it is important to make an effort to appear professional on the job.
- Ask teens, “How important is personal appearance at work?” Then, ask them, “What do you think when you see an employee that is...”
 - Is wearing a tailored suit and carrying a briefcase?
 - Is in a work uniform?
 - Has on a dirty apron?
 - Has a lot of make-up on?
 - Is heavily tattooed or pierced?
 - Wears skimpy clothes?
- Split the class into groups of 2–4 teens. Give one group an occupation (see list in sidebar on p. 20) and ask them to “dress” a teen for work the appropriate way. Give another team the same occupation and ask them to dress a teen for work in an inappropriate way.

Learning Objectives

- Teens will understand the importance of appearance on the job

Supplies Needed

- Magazines
- Poster paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers/Colored pencils/Crayons
- Computers (optional)



Example Occupations

- Retail/department store clerk
- Restaurant host/hostess
- Waiter/waitress
- Grocery store bagger
- Pizza delivery person
- Fast food worker
- Tanning salon attendant
- Receptionist
- Construction worker
- Summer camp counselor
- Movie theater attendant
- Babysitter
- Golf assistant
- Pool assistant
- Life guard
- Gardener
- Alternative clothing store clerk
- Tattoo artist
- Music/video store clerk

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4. Continue with occupations until all groups have an occupation and assignment to dress a teen the appropriate or wrong way. Groups may use drawings, magazine pictures, the computer, or a group member model, to display their outfits.
5. Have the groups who have the same occupation (appropriate and wrong dress) present their designs and explain to the class why they dressed the teens as they did. Have the groups compare and contrast their "teens" for the entire group. Repeat until all groups have presented.



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ACTIVITY FOUR: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON THE JOB

Estimated Activity Time: 45 minutes

In this activity, teens will learn about communication on the job. They will begin by going over different types of communication. Then they will focus on body language and explore the impact it can have on others. Finally, teens will explore the topics of conflict and health in the workplace.

Getting Ready Checklist

- Copy Handout #6 for each teen
- Make one copy of Handouts #7a and #7b for activity. Cut up squares and put them in a hat
- Copy Visual #2 to display

Doing the Activity

1. Go over the “Effective Communication” section on pp. 9–11 of the leader’s guide background information. Make sure to include:
 - Communication skills are just as important as a person’s ability to perform job duties.
 - Much of communication is “non-verbal”—communicating without words. Studies show that over 90% of what we understand comes from non-verbal cues. Non-verbal communication includes: body language, tone of voice, touch, and proximity to others.
 - Effective communication requires listening skills.
 - Effective communication requires thoughtful word choice.

Learning Objectives

- Teens will learn how important it is to communicate effectively at work
- Teens will understand the impact body language can have on those around them
- Teens will learn how to deal with conflict at work
- Teens will understand the impact poor health can have at work

Supplies Needed

- Visual #2 (p. 30)
- Handout #6 (p. 41)
- Handout #7a (p. 43)
- Handout #7b (p. 44)
- Scissors
- Hat (bag, bowl, etc.) to put slips of paper in
- Answer key for Handout #6 (p. 51)



-The assessment tools provided as a separate document with each leader's guide are intended for the leaders to use at their discretion. Depending on the group of teens, the leaders may want to use the assessments as additional activities, homework, or as a means to determine a formal grade for completing the unit.



2. Display Visual #2 (*optional*). Distribute Handout #6 to each teen and explain that they will be writing down what they think is being said with non-verbal communication in each description they read. (Visual #2 and Handout #6, pp. 30 and 41)
3. Go over answers to Handout #6. (Answer Key for Handout #6, p. 51)
4. Next, tell teens that they will be doing another non-verbal communication activity. Explain that they will take turns drawing one slip of paper out of a hat and will be using non-verbal communication to show the emotion written on their paper while the rest of the class tries to guess what it is. (Handouts #7a and #7b, pp. 43–44)
5. Go over the “Conflict” section on p. 11 of the leader’s guide background information. Discuss the following:
 - There is always an opportunity for conflict when people are together for any amount of time.
 - The key to quickly and peacefully solving a lot of conflict in the workplace is communication.
 - An employee with a problem should first try to speak directly with the person involved, then his/her immediate supervisor, and lastly to the organization’s human resource department.
 - Conflict should be dealt with as discreetly and professionally as possible.
6. Go over the “Health and the Workplace” section on p. 12 of the leader’s guide background information. Discuss the following:
 - Health can affect work quality, job satisfaction, energy levels, and feelings of self-confidence and competence.
 - Sick employees get other employees sick.

Additional Resources

- *CareerPerfect.com* is the online division of Career Services Group, Inc., a leading career guidance firm and a pioneer in online career planning. It provides information and easy-to-use services and tools in the areas of career planning, professional resume writing, and interviewing.
<http://www.careerperfect.com/content/home-index/>
- *JobWeb* is a website of career development and job-search information for college students and new college graduates, owned by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). A “Resumes and Interviews” section on the site offers information that can be used during the job search process.
<http://www.jobweb.com/>
- *Money Talks* is a financial literacy website for teens available in both English and Spanish. It contains downloadable versions of money management teen guides, interactive games, simple exercises, videos and links to other financial websites. Teachers/leaders have access to a special section of the site containing leader’s guides for each unit, research articles, and additional links.
<http://moneytalks4teens.org>
- The *United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor and Statistics* website publishes information by occupation, including career information, employment levels and projections, and various types of data on earnings and working conditions.
<http://www.bls.gov/>
- *USA Today’s Job Center* is a website that provides information about jobs, including the job hunt. Topics covered include the job search, networking, writing cover letters and resumes, interviewing, and salary negotiation.
http://www.usatoday.com/money/jobcenter/jobhunt-index_x.htm
- *Youngworkers.org* from the California Resource Network for Young Workers’ Health and Safety, provides information for teens, parents, teachers, and employers explaining young workers’ rights and safety issues. Offers useful resources and lesson plans.
<http://www.youngworkers.org>

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On the Job Glossary

Active Listening Showing someone full attention when they are speaking by looking at them and not interrupting them while they are speaking; ignoring outside distractions; asking questions about, repeating, or rephrasing what was heard; and responding in an interested way to let the speaker know they were understood.

Body Language A form of non-verbal communication that includes facial expressions, eye movement, posture and gestures. (Cultural differences may affect how one's body language is interpreted.)

Initiative The ability to solve problems and make decisions without the help or advice of other people.

Job Etiquette The language, clothing, and behavior that is appropriate for a particular job.

Professionalism Employees that show good manners, office etiquette, work well with others, and are viewed as conscientious, well-qualified, and skilled workers.

Valuable Employee Someone who not only performs his or her specific job duties well, but also knows how to handle themselves professionally at work and can relate well with others.



This publication has been anonymously peer reviewed for technical accuracy by University of California scientists and other qualified professionals. This review process was managed by the ANR Associate Editor for Youth Development.

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Money Talks...Should I Be Working? is a series of four teen guides and leader's guides designed for teens. The goals of these teen guides and leader's guides are to assist teens in 1) identifying careers that may work with their job personality, 2) understanding the process of finding and keeping a job, and 3) recognizing the benefits and pitfalls of being an entrepreneur. Comments regarding these teen guides and leader's guides can be addressed to: Consumer Economics Department, University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), 135 Building C, Highlander Hall, Riverside, CA 92521. Authors: Patti Wooten Swanson, Brenda Roche, Karen Varcoe, Shirley Peterson, Keith Nathaniel, Margaret Johns, Charles Go, Susan Cortz and the UCCE Money Talks Workgroup. 2010

Characteristics of Valuable Employees

Problem-Solving Skills

Cooperation

Communication Skills

Initiative

Dependability

Professionalism

Attention to Detail

Desire to Learn

Self Discipline

Hard Work

Trustworthiness

What Can Body Language Say?

Affectionate **Excited** *Fed-Up*
Eager **Worried** *Goofy* **Attentive**
Proud *Cranky* **Frightened**
Embarrassed *Ashamed* **Irritable** *Lazy*
Confident *Shocked* *Devastated*
Angry **Relaxed** *Mean*
Cheerful **Frustrated**
Satisfied *Brave* **Uncertain**
Confused *Concerned* *Grouchy*
Happy *Unsure* *Hurt* *Sad*
Depressed **Laughing**
Grieving **Bored**
Relaxed *Jealous* **Anxious** *Selfish*
Peaceful
Hateful **Scared** *Sorry*
Interested **Guilty** *Silly* *Tired*

Characteristics of a Valuable Employee

Consider which valuable employee characteristic is demonstrated in the statements below. Write the corresponding letter next to each statement.

A - Attention to Detail

G - Initiative

B - Communication

H - Problem Solving Skills

C - Cooperation

I - Professionalism

D - Dependability

J - Self Discipline

E - Desire to Learn

K - Trustworthiness

F - Hard Work

1. Can stay on task in a busy environment. _____
2. Can be counted on to be on time every single day. _____
3. Catches even the smallest errors in their work. _____
4. Will see something that needs to be done and do it. _____
5. Understands the importance of being a good listener. _____
6. Can be counted on to act with honesty and integrity. _____
7. Treats co-workers and customers with courtesy and respect. _____
8. Tries to accomplish as much as possible each day. _____
9. Is able to figure things out on their own. _____
10. Can work well with others on projects. _____
11. Takes advantage of any training or workshops that may help improve job performance. _____

Characteristics of a Valuable Employee

Consider which valuable employee characteristic is **LACKING** in the statements below. Write the corresponding letter next to each statement.

A - Attention to Detail

G - Initiative

B - Communication

H - Problem Solving Skills

C - Cooperation

I - Professionalism

D - Dependability

J - Self Discipline

E - Desire to Learn

K - Trustworthiness

F - Hard Work

1. Is easily tempted to take care of personal business at work. _____
2. Only does the tasks he or she is specifically asked to do. _____
3. Does only the amount of work required to avoid being fired. _____
4. Must have his or her way when working on team projects. _____
5. Goes home early on the days the boss isn't around. _____
6. Attends mandatory trainings only. _____
7. Fails to notice when a word is misspelled or a task is not complete. _____
8. Can't be relied on based on inconsistent past job performances. _____
9. Snaps gum, dresses sloppily and listens to their i-pod on the job. _____
10. Is unable to figure out how to solve a problem. _____
11. Has a hard time sharing feelings or expectations with others. _____

On the Job



Should I Be Working?
Leader's Guide



Workplace ‘Dos’ and ‘Don’ts’



Read over the office behaviors below. Decide which behavior’s are workplace “dos” and which are don’ts.” Then connect the corresponding “dos” and “don’ts” together.

Do _____	<i>i.e. Ask how you can help out.</i>	_____	Take responsibility for own mistakes.
_____	Speak harshly.	_____	Be the office prankster.
_____	Wear tight leather pants.	_____	Use good table manners.
_____	Control emotions.	_____	Dress professionally.
_____	Have a sense of humor.	_____	Respect the privacy of others.
_____	Look through a co-workers desk drawer.	_____	Clean up messes.
_____	Leave dishes in the break room sink.	_____	Arrive only a couple minutes late.
_____	Focus on job duties while on the job.	_____	Crank-up the radio for a great song.
_____	Be prompt.	_____	Use a considerate tone of voice.
_____	Blame others when something goes wrong.	Don't _____	Say, “It’s not my job.”
_____	Keep noise to a minimum	_____	Worry about personal problems.
_____	Talk with your mouth full.	_____	Put a rude customer in his place.

Proper Job Etiquette - True or False?

Read each statement and determine whether it is true or false of proper job etiquette. Explain why those that are false are wrong.

1. Personal cell phones do not belong at work.

True / False

2. It's ok to use the FAX machine at work for personal reasons.

True / False

3. If you are over 21, it's ok to have an occasional beer at work as long as you don't get tipsy.

True / False

4. The bad attitude of a single employee can effect the morale of an entire office.

True / False

5. Doing personal stuff on the job, such as making phone calls or running errands, is an abuse of a company resource.

True / False

6. The employee that did the majority of work completing a successful project should take the credit for a job well done.

True / False

7. An employee's appearance isn't important. It's what is on the inside that matters.

True / False



Proper Job Etiquette - True or False? *cont.*

8. It is extremely unprofessional to gossip at work.

True / False

9. It's ok to poke fun at a co-worker as long as they know you're just teasing.

True / False

10. It is never acceptable to use vulgar language at work.

True / False

11. It is ok to lose your temper if a co-worker is unethical or out of line.

True / False

12. Employees who want to look their best at work should keep a mirror and supplies in their desk to freshen up with throughout the day.

True / False

13. The amount of respect an employee deserves from a co-worker depends on their position.

True / False

14. Employees should limit the amount of noise they make at work – whether it be loud talking or laughing, humming, music, sniffing, eating or drinking noises.

True / False

What's Wrong With This Job Scenario?

Tara is very excited. She's taking a flight to visit her cousin. She's flown before, but never alone. Her mom drops her off at the airport and Tara is happy to see there is no line at the check-in counter. However, all of the customer service agents are talking in a group and no one offers to help her. She checks her watch and sees she has 40 minutes until her flight departs. After 5 minutes of waiting, one of the customer service agents finally comes over and asks how she can help. Tara explains that she wants to check in for her flight. In an unfriendly voice, the customer service agent asks why she didn't use the computer check-in kiosk and proceeds to scold Tara for not using the computer to check in. Then the agent comes around the counter to show Tara how to use the check-in kiosk, but the agent is not spelling Tara's name correctly and can't check her in at the kiosk. The agent then goes back around the counter and tries to check in Tara on the computer behind the counter. However, by this time 5 more minutes has passed. The agent tells Tara she can no longer check in for her flight because she missed the 30 minute cut off. Tara calmly explains her situation, but the agent states she is unable to help Tara get on her flight, but can book her for another flight which leaves 6 hours later! When Tara leaves the counter, she calls her mom on her cell phone. As Tara is explaining her situation she notices the customer service agent is again talking with the other agents and they are laughing and pointing at Tara.

Think about how you would feel if you were in Tara's situation. Talk with your group and use the following chart to analyze the above job scenario:

Identify negative job etiquette traits from the scenario above:	How would you have handled the situation if you were the customer service agent?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • •

3-2-1 ACTION!

Use the following outline to help you and your group create a job scenario skit of your own to act out for your class. After the skit, be prepared to lead a class discussion about the negative job etiquette traits portrayed in your skit. Make sure to include plenty of negative traits so your classmates can practice identifying what is wrong with your scenario. Also, make sure your classmates suggest ways to make the situation better!

<p>Where does your job scenario skit take place? Be specific! Don't just say "in a store." What kind of a store?</p>	
<p>Who are the characters in your job scenario? Who are the employees? Who are the clientele?</p>	
<p>What is going on in your skit? Add detail! What specific negative job etiquette traits are your characters going to perform?</p>	
<p>How would you correct the negative behavior of your employees? Provide a correction for each negative trait portrayed in your skit.</p>	

What's Wrong With This Job Scenario?

Amber has a job at Amazing Styles Clothing Store. She has only worked there a few months, but was reprimanded by her boss yesterday for using her cell phone while she was supposed to be working. This is just one of a string of issues that Amber has had since she started working at the store. Last week she was caught sleeping in one of the dressing rooms while she was supposed to be on duty. Amber often goes to work tired from staying out late with her friends the night before. She wonders why her boss often has her working in the back of the store but doesn't seem to realize that her appearance is often sloppy and doesn't reflect that she cares about how she looks. Amber just thinks that no one appreciates her unique sense of style. Her "style" doesn't follow the store dress code--heels, nice dresses or jeans and tops, make-up, styled hair, and at least four accessory items. Amber is not making her sales quotas and knows that if she doesn't sell more, she may lose her job!

How can you help Amber keep from losing her job? Talk with your group and use the following chart to analyze the above job scenario:

Identify negative job etiquette traits from the scenario above:	What job etiquette advice would you give Amber to help her keep her job?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • •

3-2-1 ACTION!

Use the following outline to help you and your group create a job scenario skit of your own to act out for your class. After the skit, be prepared to lead a class discussion about the negative job etiquette traits portrayed in your skit. Make sure to include plenty of negative traits so your classmates can practice identifying what is wrong with your scenario. Also, make sure your classmates suggest ways to make the situation better!

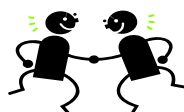
<p>Where does your job scenario skit take place? Be specific! Don't just say "in a store." What kind of a store?</p>	
<p>Who are the characters in your job scenario? Who are the employees? Who are the clientele?</p>	
<p>What is going on in your skit? Add detail! What specific negative job etiquette traits are your characters going to perform?</p>	
<p>How would you correct the negative behavior of your employees? Provide a correction for each negative trait portrayed in your skit.</p>	

Body Language - What Does It Mean?

Read each description and write down what you think a person is saying with non-verbal communication.



Eye Contact



Gestures



Behavior

What is a person communicating if he or she...

Example: Has clenched fists and is gritting their teeth? **The person is frustrated, upset, annoyed, gearing up for a fight, etc.**

1. Looks at you and smiles when you approach? _____

2. Glances over at you and rolls his or her eyes? _____

3. Won't look at you? _____

4. Yawns repeatedly during a conversation? _____

5. Shakes your hand whenever he or she greets you? _____

6. Sighs loudly when asked to do something? _____

7. Is pacing back and forth while repeatedly glancing at the time? _____

8. Chews food with an open mouth and drops crumbs everywhere? _____

Say It Without Words

Cut apart the feelings listed below and put them in a hat (bag, bowl, etc.). Have teens take turns drawing a slip of paper and use non-verbal communication to show that emotion while the rest of the class tries to guess what it is.

AFFECTIONATE	ATTENTIVE	ANGRY
ANXIOUS	ASHAMED	BORED
BRAVE	CHEERFUL	CONCERNED
CONFIDENT	CONFUSED	CRANKY
DEPRESSED	DEVASTATED	EAGER
EMBARASSED	EXCITED	FED-UP
FRIGHTENED	FRUSTRATED	GOOFY
GRIEVING	GROUCHY	GUILTY



Say It Without Words

HAPPY	HATEFUL	HURT
INTERESTED	IRRITABLE	JEALOUS
LAUGHING	LAZY	MEAN
PEACEFUL	PROUD	RELAXED
SAD	SATISFIED	SCARED
SELFISH	SHOCKED	SILLY
SORRY	SURPRISED	TIRED
UNCERTAIN	UNSURE	WORRIED

Characteristics of a Valuable Employee

Consider which valuable employee characteristic listed below is demonstrated in the statements below. Write the corresponding letter next to each statement.

A - Attention to Detail

G - Initiative

B - Communication

H - Problem Solving Skills

C - Cooperation

I - Professionalism

D - Dependability

J - Self Discipline

E - Desire to Learn

K - Trustworthiness

F - Hard Work

1. Can tune out distractions and stay on task in a busy environment. J
2. Can be counted on to be on time every single day. D
3. Catches even the smallest errors in their work. A
4. Will see something that needs to be done and do it. G
5. Understands the importance of being a good listener. B
6. Can be counted on to act with honesty and integrity. K
7. Treats co-workers and customers with courtesy and respect. I
8. Tries to accomplish as much as possible each day. F
9. Is able to figure things out on their own. H
10. Can work well with others on projects. C
11. Takes advantage of any training or workshops that may help improve job performance. E

Characteristics of a Valuable Employee

Consider which valuable employee characteristic listed below is **LACKING** in the statements below. Write the corresponding letter next to each

A - Attention to Detail

G - Initiative

B - Communication

H - Problem Solving Skills

C - Cooperation

I - Professionalism

D - Dependability

J - Self Discipline

E - Desire to Learn

K - Trustworthiness

F - Hard Work

1. Is easily tempted to take care of personal business at work. J
2. Only does the tasks he or she is specifically asked to do. G
3. Does only the amount of work required to avoid being fired. F
4. Must have his or her way when working on team projects. C
5. Goes home early on the days the boss isn't around. K
6. Attends mandatory trainings only. E
7. Fails to notice when a word is misspelled or a task is not complete. A
8. Can't be relied on based on inconsistent past job performances. D
9. Snaps gum, dresses sloppily and listens to their i-pod on the job. I
10. Is unable to figure out how to solve a problem. H
11. Has a hard time sharing feelings or expectations with others. B

On the Job



Should I Be Working?
Leader's Guide



Workplace ‘Dos’ and ‘Don’ts’



Read over the office behaviors below. Decide which behavior’s are workplace “dos” and which are don’ts “do.” Then connect the corresponding “dos” and “don’ts” together.

<u>Do</u>	Ask how you can help out.	<u>Do</u>	Take responsibility for mistakes.
<u>Don't</u>	Speak harshly.	<u>Don't</u>	Be the office prankster.
<u>Don't</u>	Wear tight leather pants.	<u>Do</u>	Use good table manners.
<u>Do</u>	Control emotions.	<u>Do</u>	Dress professionally.
<u>Do</u>	Have a sense of humor.	<u>Do</u>	Respect the privacy of others.
<u>Don't</u>	Look through a co-workers desk drawer.	<u>Do</u>	Clean up messes.
<u>Don't</u>	Leave dishes in the break room sink.	<u>Don't</u>	Arrive only a couple minutes late.
<u>Do</u>	Focus on job duties while on the job.	<u>Don't</u>	Crank-up the radio for a great song .
<u>Do</u>	Be prompt.	<u>Do</u>	Use a considerate tone of voice.
<u>Don't</u>	Blame others when something goes wrong.	<u>Don't</u>	Say, ‘It’s not my job.’”
<u>Do</u>	Keep noise to a minimum	<u>Don't</u>	Worry about personal problems at work.
<u>Don't</u>	Talk with your mouth full.	<u>Don't</u>	Put a rude customer in his place.

Proper Job Etiquette - True or False?

Read each statement and determine whether it is true or false of proper job etiquette. Explain why those that are false are wrong.

1. Personal cell phones do not belong at work.

True False

2. It's ok to use the FAX machine at work for personal reasons.

True **False**

Using company equipment for personal use is an abuse of company resources.

3. If you are over 21, it's ok to have an occasional beer at work as long as you don't get tipsy.

True **False**

It is never professional to have drugs or alcohol at work.

4. The bad attitude of a single employee can effect the morale of an entire office.

True False

5. Doing personal stuff on the job, such as making phone calls or running errands, is an abuse of a company resource.

True False

6. The employee that did the majority of work completing a successful project should take the credit for a job well done.

True **False**

Sharing the credit with every one who helped can build trust between employees, encourage future team efforts and boost office morale.

7. An employee's appearance isn't important. It's what is on the inside that matters.

True **False**

Employees represent the company they work for and should make a positive professional impression on others.

Proper Job Etiquette - True or False? *cont.*

8. It is extremely unprofessional to gossip at work.

True False

9. It's ok to poke fun at a co-worker as long as they know you're just teasing.

True **False**

Never joke at the expense of others.

10. It is never acceptable to use vulgar language at work.

True False

11. It is ok to lose your temper if a co-worker is unethical or out of line.

True **False**

Emotional outbursts are not professional.

12. Employees who want to look their best at work should keep a mirror and supplies in their desk to freshen up with throughout the day.

True **False**

It is never appropriate to groom in public.

13. The amount of respect an employee deserves from a co-worker depends on their position.

True **False**

Employees should treat everyone with the same dignity and respect.

14. Employees should limit the amount of noise they make at work – whether it be loud talking or laughing, humming, music, sniffing, eating or drinking noises.

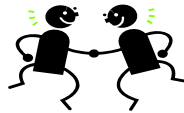
True False

Body Language - What Does It Mean?

Read each description and write down what you think the person is saying with different forms of non-verbal communication.



Eye Contact



Gestures



Behavior

What is a person communicating if he or she... (ANSWERS WILL VARY)

Example: Has clenched fists and is gritting their teeth. *The person is frustrated, upset, annoyed, gearing up for a fight, etc.*

1. Looks at you and smiles when you approach? *The person is glad to see you, you are welcomed, the person is nice, etc.*
2. Glances over at you and rolls his or her eyes? *The person is irritated, frustrated, hostile, annoyed, making fun of you, etc.*
3. Won't look at you? *The person is upset, annoyed, shy, nervous, etc. (In some cultures direct eye contact shows disrespect in certain circumstances.)*
4. Yawns repeatedly during a conversation? *The person is bored or tired.*
5. Shakes your hand whenever he or she greets you? *The person is glad to see you, friendly, professional, etc.*
6. Sighs loudly when asked to do something? *The person is irritated, frustrated, annoyed, hostile, overwhelmed, etc.*
7. Is pacing back and forth while repeatedly glancing at the time? *The person is nervous, worried, anxious, late, etc.*
8. Chews food with an open mouth and drops crumbs everywhere? *The person is a slob, has no manners, is not considerate of others, etc.*