

Workplace Behavior

The **BIG** Idea

- What behavior and dress is acceptable in the workplace?

AGENDA

- Approx. 45 minutes
- I. Warm Up: Workplace Rules & Responsibilities (10 minutes)
 - II. Unspoken Rules (10 minutes)
 - III. Real-Life Scenarios (15 minutes)
 - IV. Wrap Up: Dress for Success (10 minutes)

MATERIALS

- STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:**
 - Student Handbook page 108, What’s the Problem?
 - Student Handbook page 109, Agree or Disagree?
 - Student Handbook page 110, Workplace Etiquette Scenarios
- FACILITATOR PAGES:**
 - Facilitator Resource 1, Workplace Etiquette
- Photos of business casual dress
- Tie-tying instructions (one classroom set)
- Ties (one classroom set)

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Recognize and understand written workplace rules and unspoken rules such as workplace etiquette and responsibility.
- Learn what behaviors are acceptable in the workplace.

OVERVIEW

This lesson reviews and explores workplace behavior, including etiquette and dress. By the completion of the lesson, students will recognize that workplaces have two kinds of rules: written rules (often found in employee handbooks), regarding punctuality, safety, etc., and unspoken rules, such as being a team player, being respectful, and being responsible. Through “real-life” scenarios, students will read about worker behaviors and identify them as acceptable or unacceptable and explain why. Then the class discusses workplace etiquette and generates a list of responsibilities. Finally, the class reviews and discusses appropriate forms of dress, and boys practice tying a tie.

PREPARATION

- The following handout needs to be made into an overhead transparency or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook page 108, What's the Problem?**
- List the day’s **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- Write the day’s vocabulary words and definitions on the board.
- For **Activity IV, Wrap Up**, gather pictures of men and women dressed in business casual outfits. Cut out the pictures to share with the class, or display them using your laptop and LCD projector.
- Collect ties to bring to school to use for practice. If possible, bring one tie for each student in your largest class. Review the following web sites for how to tie a tie. Print out the one you like best, and make copies for all students in your classroom.
<http://www.tieguide.com/four-in-hand.htm>
http://www.ehow.com/video_2970_tie-tie.html
<http://www.tie-a-tie.net/>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Students entering the workforce for the first time may lack experience in workplace **etiquette**, such as showing up on time, reporting absences, dressing appropriately, and limiting personal

phone calls. They may also need coaching on workplace attitude in order to recognize entry-level jobs as places to learn transferable skills and begin a positive work history. Finally, teens may need guidance on appropriate work attire.

VOCABULARY

Business Casual: a professional, but relaxed, style of dress that is appropriate in many businesses today.

Etiquette: rules of correct behavior.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

If you prefer, you may choose to use **Student Handbook page 108, What’s The Problem?** as a DO NOW. Give the students 5 minutes to complete it. Once they complete the page, continue with the Warm Up discussion.

For **Activity I, Warm Up: Workplace Rules and Responsibilities**, if the DO NOW activity is too long, have students respond to two of the four behaviors.

For **Activity IV, Wrap Up: Dress for Success**, invite a male guest to class to model how to tie a tie. He will also serve as a “mentor” of sorts, to model appropriate work wear and behavior.

If you’re short of time, you may skip **Student Handbook page 109, Agree or Disagree**, in **Activity II, Unspoken Rules**. In that case, present **Activity III, Real-Life Scenarios** first, then return to **Activity II, Step 4**, to create a list of rules.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. WARM UP (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As we approach Job Shadow day, it's time to discuss the type of behavior that's expected in the workplace. Of course you want to represent yourself and your school well on Job Shadow day. But you may also be curious about how to conduct yourself in any workplace. Believe it or not, figuring out how to fit in is something that affects all adults as they begin new jobs, because some rules are written down and some are not. Let's talk about the written rules first. You can usually find these posted in a workroom, or written in an employee manual provided to you during training.
2. [Display **Student Handbook page 108, What's the Problem?** on the overhead projector]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Open to **Student Handbook page 108, What's the Problem?** In the left column, there are four important workplace rules. Next to each rule, in the middle column, is an example of an employee breaking each rule. Your job is to put yourself in the boss's shoes, and explain why that behavior is a problem. Think through each situation and answer to the best of your ability. When you're finished, I'll select students to share their ideas.

3. [Allow students 3-4 minutes to complete the activity. When time is up, select a different student to share his or her response for each example.]
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Good job on this activity. As you can see, sometimes the rules are obvious, like being safe on the job. However, other job behavior is not always obvious. Let's explore this idea.

II. Unspoken Rules (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** What do you think would happen if you kept showing up for work at 10 am when you were scheduled to start at 9am? That's right, you'd probably end up being fired because you were not meeting your basic job responsibilities.

Unfortunately, the rules aren't always so clear-cut. The workplace, like many other social situations, has a set of unwritten rules that are still important to observe. For example, let's think about sports **etiquette**. Imagine you are not in the starting line-up for your soccer team. Rather than sit glumly on the bench, muttering about how unfair your coach is, you're expected to demonstrate a good attitude by cheering on your teammates.

Who can think of other sports “rules” that aren’t written down? [Students respond.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** In this activity, we will look at subtle rules of etiquette that will be useful to you in your Job Shadow experience, and as you start your work life. Turn to **Student Handbook page 109, Agree or Disagree?** Read each statement and decide whether you agree with the behavior or disagree. Be prepared to discuss your answers.
3. [Give students 5 minutes to complete the handbook page. Then, select students at random to explain their responses.]
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As you prepare for your Job Shadow, let’s brainstorm a general list of workplace rules. Many of these will be related to the workplace principles of responsibility, teamwork, and respect that we’ve discussed in earlier lessons. [See **Facilitator Resource 1, Workplace Etiquette** to see how these principles relate to workplace etiquette]. For example, a responsible employee should think before emailing, and not send anything he or she wouldn’t want everyone in the office to see. So, let’s start our list with this rule: “Think before you email.” What are some other rules of etiquette? [Jot down students’ ideas on the board or chart paper, asking questions as needed to make sure all topics are addressed.]

III. Real-Life Scenario (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As you begin your Job Shadow, you will encounter situations in which you’re not sure how to behave. Let’s take a look at some possibilities.
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Open to **Student Handbook page 110, Workplace Etiquette Scenarios**. In this activity, you and a partner will put yourselves in Anna’s shoes. Anna is a high school student participating in a Job Shadow at the XYZ Corporation. Like all new workers, she is running into situations she is not sure how to handle. Read Anna’s story with your partner and discuss each of Anna’s situations. Then write down your agreed-upon suggestions on the lines below each situation.
3. [Divide class into pairs and give them 10 minutes to complete the handout. When time is up, bring the whole class together to review responses to each situation in the scenario. Invite different pairs to read each section and share their responses.]

IV. Wrap Up: Dress for Success (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Dressing appropriately for your Job Shadow and future jobs is also part of good etiquette and key to job success. What this looks like varies from

job to job. [Ask students for examples.] When you're not sure of the dress code, "**business casual**" is a good bet.

2. [Pass around the pictures you clipped from magazines of men and women dressed in business casual, or display these using your laptop and LCD projector.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: For males, this means a shirt, tie, and pants other than jeans or sweats. Females can wear similar clothes (no tie needed) or a conservative dress, or a skirt and sweater. Dress shoes (or your best sneakers if you don't have dress shoes) are appropriate. Both genders should look neat and clean. Extreme "fashion statements" should be avoided.

3. [Distribute ties to each pair of students, and hand out a copy of instructions on how to tie a tie. (See **Preparation** section.) Or, if you've invited a guest to demonstrate, introduce him now.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE Today you will learn to tie a necktie, or if you already know how, you will take some time to practice or show a classmate.

4. [Distribute tie-tying instructions. Invite a volunteer to read each step of the tie instructions as a second volunteer demonstrates. If necessary, you may repeat the process. Working in pairs, have the guys practice tying their own ties. If some students know how to do it, have them partner with those who don't know. Once they have figured it out, have partners demonstrate for each other.]
5. [Compliment students on their efforts, and let them know that they'll spend the next two weeks studying Informational Interviews – what to say on their Job Shadow day.]

Workplace Etiquette

RESPONSIBILITY:

- Be where you're supposed to be, when you're supposed to be there.
- Don't make/take personal phone calls or text messages during work time.
- Think before you e-mail. Don't send anything you wouldn't want everyone to see.
- Ask questions when you're not sure how to do something.
- Don't waste or take supplies belonging to your employer.

TEAMWORK:

- Not every task will be exciting. Don't complain (or ignore the work) when asked to do something you think might be "beneath" you.
- If you finish an assigned task, look for the next thing that needs to be done.
- Pitch in when and where your help is needed.

RESPECT:

- Listen carefully when someone suggests a different way of doing things.
- State your opinion without raising your voice or insulting the other person.
- Be the kind of person others trust. Don't gossip.
- Dress in a way that's appropriate for your workplace.

What's The Problem?

Directions: Read each rule in the first column. Then read the “Breaking the Rule” item in the second column. In the third column, explain why the behavior is a problem.

Rule	Breaking the Rule	Why This Is a Problem
Show up on time, and work assigned hours.	A sales associate leaves his job early because there are not many customers and not much to do.	
Follow employer's safety guidelines, and wear required protective clothing and equipment.	A construction worker does not wear her hardhat because it gives her a headache.	
Treat co-workers and customers with courtesy and respect.	A customer at a fast food restaurant curses at a cashier, complaining that his food is cold. The cashier responds by insulting the customer.	
Work together to solve problems, and let employers know when you need help.	Employees at Roads to Success are working together packing materials that must be delivered to schools in a few days. One employee is confused by the instructions and abandons the project.	

Agree or Disagree?

Directions: Read each statement and decide if you agree or disagree by checking the appropriate column. Be prepared to justify your choices.

Behavior	Agree	Disagree
I'm often late, but I let my friends know I'm on the way with text or cell phone messages.		
Making photocopies is a mindless job, but if my boss asks me to do it, I should.		
I'm known for my sense of style, and like my clothes to make a big impression.		
I ask questions when I'm not sure what to do.		
Babysitting is an easy job, so it's okay to make personal phone calls while I'm working.		
I get angry when someone points out my mistakes.		
I see a classmate struggling with an assignment that I found easy. It's better to let him or her figure it out rather than to help him or her.		
In my cashier job, if I have no customers, I should enjoy the downtime and take a break.		
Rather than stop to buy paper towels on the way home from work, I take a couple of rolls from the office's supply closet.		
When friends email me at work, I do not reply.		

Workplace Etiquette Scenarios

Directions: Anna just started her Job Shadow at the XYZ Corporation, and she's facing some challenging situations. Read each section and decide the best way for Anna to respond.

1. Anna is getting dressed for her Job Shadow at the XYZ Corporation. When she visited the company previously, she noticed many employees wore jeans, t-shirts, and sneakers. Anna wants to make a good impression and wants to fit in with her co-workers. How should she dress?
2. When Anna arrives at the office, she approaches a very busy receptionist. She introduces herself and says she is here for the Job Shadow day. The frenzied receptionist has no idea what Anna is talking about and is somewhat unfriendly. What should Anna do?
3. Finally, Anna meets her host, who keeps her engaged in a variety of tasks. Suddenly, her host is called into a meeting. After an hour, Anna has completed the tasks on her list. She is bored and not sure what to do next. What would you advise Anna to do?
4. Anna finds herself in the cafeteria with some employees of the company who are close to Anna's age. They are gossiping about their boss, who she's noticed can be very demanding. What should Anna do?
5. A recent college graduate who works at the company has been assigned the job of showing Anna what her workday is like. She is very helpful. Anna wants to thank her at the end of the day, but she is nowhere to be found. Anna remembers her first name, but not her last name. What should she do?