

SECTION 3:

Interpersonal Skills

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The following learning activities also include Interpersonal Skills

Located in the Communication Skills section:

| | |
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| LESSON 1: Realtor Role-Play | .C-1 |
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| LESSON 10: Students as Teachers | .C-25 |

Located in the Decision-Making Skills section:

| | |
|--|-------|
| LESSON 1: See How We Run (Our Business) | .D-1 |
| LESSON 2: And By What Name Shall This Business Be Known? | .D-3 |
| LESSON 3: Setting Up for Business | .D-5 |
| LESSON 4: “Going Out of Business” Successfully! | .D-9 |
| LESSON 6: How to Prepare for the First Day of Employment | .D-17 |
| LESSON 9: Measurement Skills | .D-25 |
| LESSON 14: “Hey You! Here’s a Project for You to Do!” | .D-45 |
| LESSON 20: How to Keep a Job | .D-71 |

Located in the Lifelong Learning Skills section:

| | |
|---|-------|
| LESSON 5: Packaging Your Assets | .L-15 |
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| LESSON 9: Business and Industry Resource Book | .L-31 |
| LESSON 10: Building Memories. | .L-33 |

Using “I” Messages

This activity helps learners learn to give criticism, explain a problem, make a suggestion, or express an opinion without being offensive to the other person.

Learning Objective

Adult learners will understand the importance of “I” messages, identify their feelings, and express their feelings in difficult situations in a non-threatening manner.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others, resolve conflict and negotiate; *Communication Skills:* Speak so others can understand, listen actively, convey ideas in writing, read with understanding.

KSAs: Cooperates with others, Works on a team effectively, Listens for understanding; Talks with respect; Follows instructions; Reads work related text.

SCANS: *Basic Skills:* speaking, listening, reading, writing; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team, exercises leadership; *Resources:* human.

Subjects

- Interpersonal relationships
- Life skills
- Problem solving
- Work environment

Activity Description

I have had learners who have quit their jobs because they could not get along with the boss. They did not

understand how to explain a problem or express an opinion without offending the other party.

This learning activity was part of a series of lessons on problems of communication in the workplace. We also covered lessons on understanding barriers to communication and improving listening habits.

1. Ask learners how many times they have wanted to “tell someone off” but just let the situation pass because they knew a confrontation would occur.
2. Encourage learners to share some of these situations with the class. Have the class share different approaches that could have been used and discuss the possible outcomes.
3. Explain that it is better to express how you feel about an issue rather than to criticize the other party. Demonstrate verbal examples of “I” messages. Such examples might include “I’m really feeling upset about this,” instead of, “You really make me mad.”
4. Using *Handout 1*, have the learners change the “you” messages to “I” messages.

Beverly Dean

Henderson County
Adult and Community
Education



Materials and Resources

- Handout 1—*Using “I” Messages*
- Handout 2—*Conflict Situations*
- A good additional resource is *Job Survival Skills*, Educational Design, Inc., 47 West 13 Street, New York, NY, 10011. This contains a worksheet of “I” messages.

Learner Level

Multi-level

Learner Grouping

Small group

Time Needed

2 hours

Setting

This activity was done in a Families First class of approximately 5 – 10 learners. The class meets Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 12 NOON.

Families First is the Tennessee program to provide training for those welfare recipients who lack basic education skills. While learners do work toward a GED, emphasis in these classes is shifting toward the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learners need to acquire and keep a good job.

5. Using *Handout 2* (or a sheet that you have made containing examples of conflict situations), discuss appropriate and inappropriate responses to conflict situations. Leave part of the appropriate responses blank for the learners to fill in on their own response. Make sure there are several “You” messages which are incorrect and “I” messages which are correct, so that the learners can compare.
6. Write negative feeling words that show a wide range of emotions such as “scared” or “angry” on the board. These examples can guide the learners in determining the correct words to use in their messages.
7. Ask learners to create a list of responses to situations they have experienced or are likely to experience with their children, classmates, or co-workers.
8. In the next hour, have learners pair up and practice what they have learned by role-playing the different responses.
9. As an added emphasis, have learners practice using “I” messages describing how things could be changed. This goes beyond expressing feelings. For example, if a co-worker tells you that you are doing something wrong, you could reply, “Although I don’t agree, I appreciate your point of view.” Then, for the second part of the “I” statement, you could say, “I wish we could see eye-to-eye more often.”

Assessment

The learner will be able to write the correct “I” message conveying both the feeling and the desired change when given a conflict situation from the workplace.

Practitioner Reflection

The learners had a much easier time dealing with the parent-child situations than with the workplace situations. I believe this is because they feel more comfortable dealing with problems with which they have had more experience.

Using “I” Messages

Part 1—The Feeling Part

Change the “You” message in the first column to an “I” message in the second column.

| “YOU” Message | “I” Message |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. You make me so mad! | I’m really feeling upset about this! |
| 2. You are really disorganized. | I like to have things well organized. |
| 3. You are always interrupting me. | _____ |
| 4. You don’t understand. | _____ |
| 5. You’re walking way too fast. | _____ |
| 6. You don’t make sense. | _____ |
| 7. You smoke too much. | _____ |

Part 2—The Desired Change

Read the “I” message in part one and add the desired change or action in part two.

| “I” Message—Part 1 The Feeling Part | “I” Message—Part 2 The Desired Change or Action |
|--|--|
| 1. I’m having some difficulty following you. | Could we go back to the first part of your story? |
| 2. I don’t agree, but I do hear your point. | _____ |
| 3. I’m concerned that this will look bad for our team. | _____ |

Using “I” Messages—Conflict Situations

1. The day shift where you work is having a meeting to decide the best way to store merchandise. Rochelle insists that she knows the best way and won't give anyone else a chance to talk.
2. At the company Christmas party, some of your co-workers start teasing you about being the favorite of the boss. It starts to bother you because if they have a real problem with this, you would like to clear the air.
3. You have just started working at a fast food restaurant. The shift manager is watching your every move. This makes you nervous and you make more careless mistakes.
4. The boss's secretary is collecting money for the coffee fund at work. Everyone is supposed to contribute to the fund but you aren't a coffee drinker.

Feeling Puzzled? Try Teamwork!

Chris Spiess
Dyer County Literacy
Program

In this learning activity, adult learners work together in teams to meet quotas and work a jigsaw puzzle. They also practice paying attention to detail.

Learning Objective

Learners practice with a quota system and learn its concepts. Learners also recognize the value of teamwork and relying on others who are a part of their team.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others; *Decision Making Skills:* use math to solve problems and communicate.

KSAs: Cooperates with others; Works on a team effectively; Listens for understanding; Accurately performs work.

SCANS: *Basic Skills:* arithmetic/mathematics; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team; *Resources:* human.

Subjects

- Job skills
- Mathematics
- Work environment

Activity Description

Employers find it expressly important that their employees not only get along well with each other but also work well as a team. Keeping accurate records is also part of the way a company calculates progress and efficiency. My learners would be more

marketable in the work force with experience in these skills.

1. Open the activity by discussing the ways companies use accurate record keeping. Also discuss why teamwork is the wave of the present and the future at companies and why it is important to work well on a team in order to be successful.
2. Choose the number of teams you want and put learners on a team. (I used teams of three or four each.) Explain how quotas work. Give this example: If a team building picture frames has a quota of 400 per day and they actually made 375 one day, they fell 25 short of their quota. This would be expressed as -25 . If they had actually made 450, then they were 50 above their quota. This would be expressed as $+50$.
3. Explain that teams within the class are going to use quotas in putting a puzzle together. Decide how many days you want the project to last. With the class, figure the number of pieces necessary each day to reach that goal. (I would suggest having the teams only work one hour per day on their project.) Figure the quotas for each team each day. (For example, for a 300-piece puzzle to be completed in three days with four teams: 100 pieces per day, 25



Materials and Resources

300-1000 piece jigsaw puzzle (each team may have a separate puzzle if space allows)

Learner Level

Grade levels 6.0-12.9

Learner Grouping

Small group

Time Needed

Several class sessions

Setting

This learning activity was conducted in a class that is workforce focused as well as preparing for the GED test. The class meets for four hours a day, five days a week.

Families First is the Tennessee program to provide training for those welfare recipients who lack basic education skills. While learners do work toward a GED, emphasis in these classes is shifting toward the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learners need to acquire and keep a good job.

pieces per team per day for their quota.)

4. Each team will need a recorder for each day's work. The recorder will keep a tally of the number of pieces his/her team puts together during that day. Each team recorder will make a daily work log to record the daily progress of each team and will find their overall (cumulative) progress each day on the project. This shows how each team is doing on keeping up with the quotas assigned to them.

Assessment

Work real examples from the work logs on the board and check for understanding by giving the learners a short quiz. The class puzzle was 1000 pieces. It was completed in eight days, five days ahead of schedule.

Practitioner Reflection

Anytime learners can work in groups, it strengthens the class. This project gave learners the chance to work on something a little different while learning valuable work skills and attitudes. Display the finished product in your room. We used Mod Podge to seal the puzzle on cardboard. It was easy and inexpensive to do this instead of framing. I would probably use a different puzzle for each team the next time to make the project a little more competitive. As it was, the class felt good about the project it completed together.

Assembly Line

Learners transform their knowledge of how to make a single item into an assembly line to produce 75 of the items.

Learning Objective

Learners will work together on a team to produce a quality product.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others; *Decision Making Skills:* plan, solve problems and make decisions.

KSAs: Cooperates with others; Works on a team effectively; Listens for understanding; Quality in the workplace.

SCANS: *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team; *Resources:* human; *Thinking Skills:* seeing things in the mind's eye, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, reasoning.

Subjects

- Job skills
- Learner produced materials
- Adult basic education
- Community involvement

Activity Description

Learners needed to realize the importance of doing quality work, as well as working together cooperatively. The opportunity to produce something of quality that was needed by someone else arose when we were asked to produce 75 3-part net puffs for corsages for the Chamber of Commerce's Sec-

retary's Day Luncheon. Accepting this assignment also gave learners experience in donating time and service to the community.

1. The practitioner showed the learners how to make the product. The product was a 3-part net puff to be used as the base for carnation corsages for the Chamber of Commerce's Secretary's Day Luncheon. Making a puff involved wrapping the floral wire with floral tape, and cutting, folding, and wiring the net squares to make a puff.
2. Learners practiced doing all of the steps and making puffs individually until they were sure of their ability to make quality puffs.
3. Learners estimated the amount of each of the supplies needed to make the required number of the product and procured the supplies.
4. Learners then tried to think how best to produce 75 of these puffs using an assembly line. They analyzed the steps needed and the order in which the steps should be performed. They considered the supplies needed and the work area most suited to each of the steps. They decided how to organize the process so that the product could be handed down the line with each

Micki Hendrix
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Training Center



Project

This assembly line project is a stand-alone activity that replicates a work environment.

Materials and Resources

Whatever materials are required to make your chosen product. We needed:

- Spools of white nylon net
- Floral wire
- Floral tape
- Scissors

Learner Level

All levels

Learner Grouping

- Small group
- Whole class

Time Needed

Several class sessions

Setting

This activity took place in a Families First (adult learners) ABE/workforce readiness class that meets 5 days per week, 4 hours per day. Average attendance is 8-10 learners. The learners turned the classroom into a florist production line for this project.

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worker having the supplies and equipment needed for their step at hand.

5. Learners set up the assembly line according to their plans with individual learners taking specific assignments (either cutting net, wiring the net, or taping the net), based on their abilities and preferences.
6. Learners formed the assembly line and constructed the net puffs. Learners neatly stored their materials between assembly line sessions.

Assessment

The assembly line was successful in creating the product. The florist who was to use the puffs in the corsages was the judge of whether or not the puffs were of high quality. (They were!)

Practitioner Reflection

Next time, I would add tying ribbons and wiring the carnation to the scope of the project. I believe the learners could have also successfully finished the corsages. The activity was helpful in promoting teamwork and accurately performing work, which are vital in real-life situations. I would also add the discussion of ergonomics into plans to set up the assembly line next time.

Announcing Who We Are

The learners designed a business sign (or banner) to professionally display the name of the class business.

Lisa Coy
Chester County
Families First

Learning Objective

The learners will design, print, and post a business sign (or banner) that professionally displays the name of the class business.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others; *Decision Making Skills:* plan, solve problems and make decisions; *Lifelong Learning Skills:* reflect and evaluate, take responsibility for learning, use information and communications technology.

KSAs: Cooperates with others; Works on a team effectively; Listens for understanding; Quality in the workplace.

SCANS: *Thinking Skills:* seeing things in the mind's eye, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, reasoning; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team; *Resources:* human; *Information Skills:* uses computers to process information; *Technology Skills:* selects technology, applies technology to tasks.

Subjects

- Learner produced materials
- Work environment
- Critical thinking
- Job skills

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Activity Description

1. Class business manager calls business meeting to order and informs class members that today's agenda is the creation, printing, and posting of a business sign (or banner) to appropriately advertise the name and purpose of the class business.
2. Class business manager leads the discussion of what elements are necessary to consider in visually advertising one's business.
3. Class business manager, and practitioner if needed, asks the class members to research other similar professional businesses to examine their business signs (or logos). (For example: the yellow pages, signs on the outside of local businesses, businesses on the Internet.)
4. The class business manager leads the class team in brainstorming what elements, including colors, should be included on their class sign (or banner) to properly advertise the nature and purpose of their company.
5. Learners explore on the computer various software programs capable of creating original signs or banners. The class business manager,



Project

We received an action research grant to create a work-focused Families First classroom. We created and managed a small business for our project. This is the fourth of five lessons in this series on setting up the class business:

1. Researching a business
2. See How We Run (Our Business)
3. "And By What Name Shall This Business Be Known?"
4. Announcing Who We Are
5. Setting Up For Business

Materials and Resources

- Class notes from learning activities one, two, and three in this action research project.
- Copies of local newspapers, magazines, phone books with yellow page sections, and access to businesses on the Internet.
- Computer and software with graphics capability to develop a banner, color printer (or black ink printer with plenty of magic

markers and/or paints to apply color by hand)

- Computer paper

Learner Level

- Basic skills, grade levels 5.0-8.9
- Credentialing, grade levels 9.0-12.9

Learner Grouping

Whole class

Time Needed

Approximately one to two hours

Setting

This learning activity was used in a Families First Class that met five days a week for four hours per day in a regular classroom setting.

with the practitioner's guidance if necessary, can appoint the class to work as a whole on the project, or divide into teams to each create their idea of a business sign. If the class is divided into teams, the class business manager can suggest a vote to decide which is the best advertisement for the class business.

6. After the class has agreed on which design they want for their class sign (or banner), they should save the design to the computer hard drive or floppy disk.
7. After saving the design, the class should print the sign (or banner).
8. Next the class performs any hands on tasks necessary to assemble the sign (or banner) and display it on the wall. (We chose to laminate our banner in order to brighten the color and preserve it.)

Assessment

The assessment of this group activity is the production, appearance, and display of the business sign (or banner). This is a group activity with no right and wrong answers. To assess their participation, the practitioner must closely observe each learner's behaviors, not allowing any one particular learner to dominate decisions and encouraging participation from any reluctant participant. The practitioner can direct learners to document the

specific ways in which they participated in this activity, and the experience they gained through this activity in their personal work-force journal. The work-force journal should include the learner's personal reflections after each work-force activity.

Practitioner Reflection

I have found it to be far more challenging and time consuming to lead or guide the learners into making their own business decision than I think it would have been to just direct the new class business. I believe, however, that this direction is vitally important in enabling the learners to obtain critical decision-making skills, gain insight into the operation of a business, and develop a professional work ethic.

Overall, I found this to be a profitable learning activity in guiding the learners to critical thinking regarding work-force decisions. This activity was geared toward encouraging the learners to think from an entrepreneur's perspective, not just from an employee within a business. It also provided the learners an opportunity to take ownership of the class business.

At the end of this activity, it was my observation that the class members began to truly feel like they were operating a business. The display of the company name and their uniquely designed banner added a sense of realism to the project.

Working in Teams

Students study elements of a team and roles of team members. They form teams to accomplish a simple task so that they are able to determine the benefits of teamwork and the importance of the each team member's role.

Learning Objective

- Learners will actively participate as a team member in accomplishing a task.
- Learners will be able to name their role on the team and describe their team duties to the class.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others; *Communication Skills:* speak so others can understand, listen actively.

KSAs: Cooperates with others; Works on a team effectively; Listens for understanding; Talks with respect; Follows instructions.

SCANS: *Basic Skills:* speaking, listening; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team; *Resources:* human.

Subjects

- Job skills
- Listening Skills

Activity Description

1. Distribute *Handout 1* "Teamwork: Key Elements" and explain that they are going to learn about the components, or parts, of a team. Discuss the teamwork elements listed on the handout and encourage learners to take notes, giving special emphasis

to the elements they feel are most important.

2. Distribute *Handout 2* and go over "Task Roles of Team Members." Ask the learners to think about their place on the team.
3. Ask learners the following question, "If you had a choice of whether to accept a job in a career field that involved primarily working indoors or outdoors, which would you choose?" Now form teams by having those who prefer working outdoors line up on one side of the room and those who prefer working indoors line up on the other side of the room. Explain that each team has a common interest or purpose.
4. Review the task roles (as discussed on *Handout 2*) for each team before the teams begin this exercise. Allow each team 10 minutes to name as many jobs performed in their preferred work environment as possible.
5. Review the teams' "lists" orally in class, and explain to learners that although there are fun components to working together, the true challenge of teamwork lies in the ability of the team to use their talents and skills to solve problems.

Beverly Dean

Henderson County
Adult and Community
Education



Materials and Resources

- Chase, Laura. (1997). *Communication for Workers—An Activity Based Teaching Guide*. Rutland, VT: Vermont Adult Learning
- *Handout 1*. Teamwork: Key Elements.
- *Handout 2*. Task Roles of Team Members

Learner Level

Multi-level

Learner Grouping

Whole class

Time Needed

1 hour

Setting

The class is made up of approximately 8-10 Families First learners who start class at different times throughout the year. They come to class Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM –12:00 NOON.

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Assign both teams the following task: “From your team’s list of careers, choose the top 10 most desirable careers based upon the following criteria—annual income, type of work, education and training, benefits, retirement packages, etc. Each member is to use his or her role to aid in the team’s success. You may make phone calls, use the internet, or any other resources to gather your information. Remember, only by putting the team’s needs above your own individual needs will your team be successful. You have two days to formulate your results.”

6. The team that contributes the most group effort wins. The practitioner may create a checklist of criteria from which their group performance will be judged. Show learners this list before they begin.
7. Award the winning team an extra 30 minutes of break time.
8. As a large group, discuss the cohesiveness of their team and how each role worked to improve or detract from the effectiveness of the group goal.

Assessment

Learners conduct their own assessment as they discuss the cohesiveness of their team and how each role worked to improve or detract from the effectiveness of the group goal.

Practitioner Reflection

They were really excited about the idea of working on a team. This activity helped the class to bond, but more importantly, it made each person feel important. Some were a little hesitant to choose a role but were encouraged by the other learners.

Teamwork: Key Elements

- 1. Commitment**—Commitment happens when the team members see themselves as belonging to the team instead of as individuals acting on their own initiative. Also, commitment is evident when the team members are committed to the team goals over and above their own personal goals.
- 2. Trust**—When team members have faith that each member will honor their commitments, support each other, share and maintain confidences, and act in a responsible manner, trust is nurtured and exhibited.
- 3. Purpose**—It is important for teams to understand how they fit into the overall organizational picture of a business. And, equally important, team members must know their individual roles, feel a sense of pride and ownership of the project and recognize that their contribution can make a difference.
- 4. Communication**—Strong teams are those that exercise effective communication among members, as well as between group members and those outside the team. Members must be able to handle conflict, practice effective group decision-making and work toward smooth day-to-day interactions.
- 5. Involvement**—Team members each have an integral part on the team. Their contributions are respected and solicited, and they establish a real consensus before committing the team to action. Though differences in opinion are bound to occur, team members must feel a partnership with each other and respect those differences.
- 6. Process**—Effective teams possess proficient use of problem solving skills, the ability to plan, attend regular meetings complete with meeting agendas and minutes of the meetings, and use protocol to deal with problems.

Task Roles

1. Team Initiator

- Starts the discussion
- Introduces new topic or issue
- Gets team moving

2. Seeker of Information

- Asks others in the team to clarify or share information

3. Giver of Information

- Shares knowledge with the team
- Offers facts, opinions, and relative experiences

4. Challenger

- Questions the team's thinking to generate higher quality results
- Plays devil's advocate
- Asks "what if" questions
- Thinks critically about input and urges team to consider different points of view

5. Coordinator

- Helps to clarify group ideas and suggestions
- Makes connections which can advance the problem solving process

6. Evaluator

- Compares team's work to standards for the purpose of producing the best possible results

7. Completion Advocate

- Reminds group about unfinished business and the need for follow up

8. Summary Associate

- Summarizes what has been decided or accomplished at the meeting

9. Secretary

- Takes notes and records ideas and decisions of the team

10. Time-Keeper

- Keeps team on task in terms of time available and tasks remaining

11. Task Master

- Reminds team when the discussion has gone off task
- Refocuses the team to the task at hand

12. Procedure Development

- Develops procedure or methods of accomplishing the task.

Making Birthday Calendars for Community Organizations and Businesses

Micki Hendrix
McNairy County
Adult Education and Job
Training Center

Participants work together to make birthday calendars from start to finish, using “The Print Shop” computer program, a copy machine, and a binding machine.

Learning Objective

- Learners will compile work experience in using technology and in working together cooperatively on a project.
- Learners will produce a high quality useful product.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others; *Decision Making Skills:* solve problems and make decisions; *Lifelong Learning Skills:* use information and communications technology; *Communication Skills:* read with understanding.

KSAs: Works on a team effectively; Cooperates with others; Listens for understanding; Quality in the workplace.

SCANS: *Basic Skills:* reading; *Thinking Skills:* creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, reasoning; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team; *Information Skills:* uses computers to process information; *Technology Skills:* selects technology, applies technology to tasks; *Resources:* human.

Subjects

- Adult basic education
- Citizen participation
- Consumer education
- Employability
- Job skills
- Learner produced materials

Families First is the Tennessee program to provide training for those welfare recipients who lack basic education skills. While learners do work toward a GED, emphasis in these classes is shifting toward the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learners need to acquire and keep a good job.

Activity Description

“Birthday Calendars” are yearlong, month-by-month calendars made for each of the employees or associates of an organization with the names of those people printed on the dates of their respective birthdays. They are fairly easy to construct using the software program, “The Print Shop” and look professionally produced. We received an action research project mini-grant from the Center for Literacy Studies in collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Human Services to be used to create a work-focused classroom, and we used those funds for our start-up expenses and supplies. The practitioner should become familiar with “The Print Shop” before beginning the activity. Following are the steps used to produce the calendars.

1. Locate an organization for which to make the calendars and obtain the birthdays of the associates whose birthdays are to be included. We contacted the Department of Human Services for our first calendar. Birthday Calendars can be made as a public service for various community service organizations. The practitioner can initiate the contact with the agency or the adult learners can do it.
2. Give each learner individually the opportunity to “play” with “The Print Shop” program on the computer to



Project

Making Birthday Calendars is a “stand-alone” project that replicates a work environment.

Materials and Resources

- Computers
- Computer printer
- “The Print Shop” widely available computer program (Broderbund Software, 1997)
- Copy machine
- Binding machine
- Regular and heavy weight paper.

Learner Level

Learners from the beginner level to advanced can work together on this project.

Learner Grouping

Whole class

Time Needed

Several class sessions

Setting

The setting is a Families First ABE/workforce readiness class that meets five days per week, four hours per day. Average attendance is 8-10 learners. This activity was conducted in a school set-

ting arranged to replicate a print shop as closely as possible. Computers in the computer lab, copy machine, and binding machine are in close proximity to each other, and long tables are available nearby.

familiarize themselves with its capabilities and so the learners will begin to feel comfortable using the program. Learners are encouraged to create various items using “The Print Shop” to get the feel of it. Learners can choose to add decorative touches to the calendar pages if they wish. We used pumpkins from clip art to add to the October page, for instance. Hopefully each learner will then be able to create at least one month’s calendar page. If any learner doesn’t feel capable after working with the program, another learner can be assigned to assist on that page.

3. The calendar pages need to be proof-read for accuracy by the learners and also by the practitioner before the printed copies are made.
4. After the calendar pages have been completed, two learners can work together to design the cover. The learners’ names are included on the back cover of the calendar as the producers or publishers of the calendar.
5. Learners figure out how to organize an assembly line to copy, sort, and bind the calendars. Learners usually want to switch off jobs so everyone gets a chance at each station of the assembly line. How the assembly line is organized depends on the arrangement of the room and the location of the machines in relation to the place where the pages are sorted and arranged. It is helpful to have long tables to use to temporarily store and then sort and organize pages and covers.
 - Learners can use the copy machine to make as many copies of all the designed pages plus the cover as there will be calendars produced. We used regular copy paper for the pages and colored card stock for the covers.
 - Using the long tables, the pages are sorted and assembled to be bound as separate calendars.

- Our binding machine is called a “Docubind” machine. The binding of the pages involves three people working together: one person to stack the pages for one calendar in the machine, the second person to pull the cutting handle, and a third person to put on the plastic “comb” to finish the job. Binding the pages is the last step in the assembly line.

6. Individual learners work on assigned tasks until the job is completed. The participants personally deliver the calendars to their intended recipients.

Assessment

Completion of the birthday calendars fulfills the objective of gaining work experience using technology and working together. The quality and usefulness of the finished product is judged by the acceptance and recognition the birthday calendars receive from the organization for which the calendars are produced.

Practitioner Reflection

The learners had little actual work experience and very little experience taking the responsibility for seeing that a job is done and done well. This activity gave learners the opportunity to gain more confidence using the computer and other office machines and to work together as a team and produce quality work. In addition, learners were able to make some contacts in the community as we approached various organizations about making Birthday Calendars for them.

The activity was very worthwhile and enjoyable. The participants learned many valuable skills that will carry over to the work environment: using various office machines, meeting a deadline, working together, performing accurate work, decision making. We have repeated this activity several times. With each new calendar, the learners become more efficient and creative.

Communicating at Work: Putting Together a Team

Kathie Bowles
Smith County
Families First/ABE

Participants learn how to work as a team by delegating responsibilities within a group in order to complete an assignment involving the development and marketing of a particular product.

Learning Objective

Learners will contribute their skills and ideas to a team effort. Learners will affirm each other's strengths as they coordinate their efforts with those of their teammates to accomplish a simple but fun task.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others; *Communication Skills:* convey ideas in writing, speak so others can understand, listen actively; *Lifelong Learning Skills:* reflect and evaluate.

KSAs: Works on a team effectively; Cooperates with others; Listens for understanding; Talks with respect; Follows instructions.

SCANS: *Basic Skills:* writing, speaking, listening; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team; *Resources:* human; *Personal Qualities:* self-esteem, self-management.

Subjects

- Critical thinking
- Interpersonal relationships
- Job skills
- Life skills
- Listening skills
- Problem solving
- Work environment
- Writing skills

Families First is the Tennessee program to provide training for those welfare recipients who lack basic education skills. While learners do work toward a GED, emphasis in these classes is shifting toward the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learners need to acquire and keep a good job.

Activity Description

More and more, teamwork is “how the job gets done.” Learners need to know how to work in teams and how to value the contributions that each member can make in achieving a goal or accomplishing a task. This particular activity is an opportunity for learners to use their communication skills in determining separate responsibilities for each team member. Learners will then combine their different, specific jobs as a means of completing the project.

1. Introduce this activity by telling the class that they are going to have an opportunity to use their imaginations and work together in a challenging project. Each team will be required to delegate the following jobs for “brainstorming.”
 - Product design/remodel (all members)
 - Advertising
 - Demographic study
 - Marketing
 - Cost and accounting
 - Product presentation
2. Divide the learners into heterogeneous teams with five members. If it is necessary to have smaller teams, some members will need to take on extra responsibility. Teams discuss one another's skills, interests, strengths and weaknesses, and decide who will take each job.



Project

This is the first activity of a two-part project on Communicating at Work. The lessons could easily be combined into one learning activity or used separately as presented here. The lessons in the project are:

1. Putting together a team
2. Developing a new product

Materials and Resources

- Items for marketing: suggestions include plastic cups, nail and string, piece of cardboard, etc.
- *Handout 1:* “Team Member Responsibilities”
- *Handout 2:* “Developing a New Product: Basic Steps”

Learner Level

Multi-level

Learner Grouping

Whole class working in teams

Time Needed

2-hour session

Setting

I teach a combination Families First/ABE class that meets Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 12 NOON. There averages 7-10 learners in attendance, ranging in age

from 18 to 77. They are a very personable group, get along well with one another, and all appear eager to try new things. All have the basic skills (grade levels 5-8.9) and half of those are in the credentialing level (9-12.9). So presently I have a group that can blend skills easily for team projects. They also all work well individually. This makes it easy for me to give individual help if needed. Our learning environment consists of a large classroom with computers and conference tables, and is easily used for a variety of activities. This activity was conducted around conference tables to give participants a feeling of a business “conference” or “brainstorming” atmosphere.

Instructor will then give the team worksheets (*Handout 1*) explaining what the specific duties are in each category.

3. Give each team a commonly used item such as a plastic drinking cup. (Each team receives the same item.) Each team ponders their item and observes it carefully. Teams are to determine how to “rename and/or rework” the item into a new, sellable product.
4. Distribute *Handout 2*, “Developing a New Product: Basic Steps.” Explain that these steps are suggestions for what is necessary to make the product economical and marketable to the public. Direct the learners to work together carefully, emphasizing the skills of each team member. The assignment is to write their ideas and findings according to the list of possible steps suggested in *Handout 2*.
5. Explain that this session is the beginning phase of the project. Answer questions only briefly, then allow the teams to “brainstorm” and work for approximately one hour.

6. At the end of the hour, give each team an opportunity to briefly explain its new product to the rest of the class. This is usually a really fun part of the class. Learners will be interested in the varied uses that different teams come up with for the same item.
7. Debrief the exercise with the class using a discussion of the importance of planning, teamwork, and research when completing any work assignment.

Assessment

To assess the teamwork used by each team, observe how each team works to see if all members contribute their ideas and energies to the project. Generalized observations by the practitioner of team functioning can be made during the debriefing of the exercise at the end of the class. The uniqueness and completeness of the written exercise produced by each team is also an assessment of learners’ teamwork efforts.

Practitioner Reflection

This exercise has been enjoyable and highly successful each time used. The learners have so much fun that they don’t seem to realize all the skills they are actually using.

Team Member Responsibilities

Product design/remodel—Discussion of all team members

Demographics—Decide what income bracket a majority of people are in a given area, and what the interests of people are. Population, stores, businesses, etc. are all important.

Cost and Accounting—Given a specific cost of the raw material, give an approximate cost of manufacturing and what price you would put on product.

Marketing—Determine which areas (locally) you want to place the product for sale, and in what retail stores, etc.

Advertising—Decide what methods you want to use for advertising the product, construct ads (verbal and visual)

Product Presentation—Put together a presentation to show potential sponsors or buyers, using verbal and visual aids.

Developing a New Product: Basic Steps

1. Determine the purpose of the product.
2. Determine who would use the product.
3. Determine the cost for “raw” materials, and whether it can be manufactured at a reasonable cost.
4. Determine where you would place the product for sale, and why.
5. Determine your methods of advertising, approximate costs, and design ads to attract customers.

Communicating at Work: Developing a New Product

Kathie Bowles
Smith County
Families First/ABE

Working in teams, participants apply their ingenuity to create “something out of nothing.” They then develop an imaginary market for their product and design advertising strategies using their knowledge of the area in which they live.

Learning Objective

- Learners will contribute their talents and ideas to a team effort.
- Learners will affirm each other’s strengths as they coordinate their efforts to arrive at a solution to a whimsical challenge.

Work-Based Skills

EFF Skills: *Interpersonal Skills:* cooperate with others, resolve conflict and negotiate; *Communication Skills:* speak so others can understand; *Decision Making Skills:* plan; *Lifelong Learning Skills:* reflect and evaluate.

KSAs: Works on a team effectively; Cooperates with others; Listens for understanding; Talks with respect; Quality in the workplace.

SCANS: *Basic Skills:* speaking; *Thinking Skills:* seeing things in the mind’s eye; *Interpersonal Skills:* participates as a member of a team, exercises leadership; *Resources:* human; *Personal Qualities:* self-esteem, self-management.

Subjects

- Critical thinking
- Interpersonal relationships
- Job skills
- Life skills,
- Listening skills

Families First is the Tennessee program to provide training for those welfare recipients who lack basic education skills. While learners do work toward a GED, emphasis in these classes is shifting toward the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learners need to acquire and keep a good job.

- Problem solving
- Work environment

Activity Description

More and more, teamwork is “how the job gets done.” Learners need to know how to work in teams and how to value the contributions that each member can make in achieving a goal or accomplishing a task. This particular activity is an opportunity for learners to use many skills including imagination and the acting upon their ideas. While working together, they will learn the importance of accepting and utilizing their skills together to accomplish their goal.

This is a continuation activity based on the development of teamwork concepts. The development of a new product can only be achieved after the team members have worked together to assign responsibilities and be familiar with the guidelines given. If the previous lesson in this project was completed, learners have already begun to develop some teamwork expertise. Keep the same teams for this activity unless there were serious problems with the teams in the first activity.

1. Introduce this activity by explaining that the same teams are going to use



Project

This is the second activity of a two-part project on Communicating at Work. The lessons could easily be combined into one learning activity or used separately as presented here. The lessons in the project are:

1. Putting together a team
2. Developing a new product

Materials and Resources

- Items for marketing: suggestions include plastic cups, nail and string, piece of cardboard, by-product of some other operation, a recyclable item, etc.
- Drawing materials including paper, pencils, crayons
- Telephone access
- Camera
- *Handout 1:* “Team Member Responsibilities”
- *Handout 2:* “Developing a New Product: Basic Steps”

Learner Level

Multi-level: each learner will have the opportunity to utilize their strengths.

Learner Grouping

Whole class working in teams

Time Needed

2-hour session, possibly spilling over to a second day

Setting

I teach a combination Families First/ABE class that meets Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 12 NOON. There averages 7-10 learners in attendance, ranging in age from 18 to 77. They are a very personable group, get along well with one another, and all appear eager to try new things. All have the basic skills (grade levels 5-8.9) and half of those are in the credentialing level (9-12.9). So presently I have a group that can blend skills easily for team projects. Our learning environment consists of a large classroom with computers and conference tables and is easily used for a variety of activities. We can do “book work,” or use the room to create a workplace environment with ease. This activity was conducted around conference tables to give participants a feeling of a business “conference” or “brainstorming” atmosphere.

some of the same teamwork skills to develop a new product. New objects are given to each team. (This time, each team has a different object or combination of objects. Teams are not in competition with each other.) Distribute the handouts, “Team Member Responsibilities” and “Developing a New Product.”

2. Teams may reorganize team member responsibilities (trade jobs within the team) based on their previous team experience, if they wish. Teams brainstorm as before to determine their project and start to determine their strategies for product development. Each team member then takes primary responsibility for one phase of the development of the project according to the assigned title of responsibility. Team members can check costs by making telephone inquiries, discuss demographics, and investigating possible advertising avenues.
3. Team members should document their findings and ideas, prepare posters and advertisements, and submit their plans to other team members to prepare for presentation.
4. At the end of the session (approximately 2 hours), give each team an opportunity to briefly explain and define their “new” product and the

planned methods to make it marketable to the rest of the class. (The presentations can be made the next class period if more time is needed.)

5. Debrief the exercise with the class using a discussion of (1) the feasibility of the various plans, and (2) the importance of planning, teamwork, and research when completing any work assignment.

Assessment

To assess the teamwork used by each team, observe how each team works to see if all members contribute their ideas and energies to the project. Generalized observations by the instructor of team functioning can be made during the debriefing of the exercise at the end of the class. The uniqueness and completeness of the project presentation by each team is also an assessment of learners’ teamwork efforts.

Practitioner Reflection

Aside from the fun this exercise always promotes, learners also gain a sense of their own capabilities. A bit of competitiveness between the teams just automatically seems to surface, and it’s a learning experience for both participants and practitioner.

Team Member Responsibilities

Product design/remodel—Discussion of all team members

Demographics—Decide what income bracket a majority of people are in a given area, and what the interests of people are. Population, stores, businesses, etc. are all important.

Cost and Accounting—Given a specific cost of the raw material, give an approximate cost of manufacturing and what price you would put on product.

Marketing—Determine which areas (locally) you want to place the product for sale, and in what retail stores, etc.

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