

GETTING A GOOD START

Facilitator's Guide

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The World of Work: GETTING A GOOD START

SERIES OVERVIEW

Why This Series Has Been Produced

The world of work offers many challenges to young people. Finding an appropriate vocation, conducting a fruitful job search, and understanding what it takes to have a successful job interview are only a few of those challenges. Once the new worker finds a job, other formidable tasks present themselves. This is especially true for first-time workers whose skills and understandings may be deficient in three crucial areas —

- how to function successfully in the work environment,
- how to relate well with supervisory personnel, and
- how to be a team player.

The World of Work has been produced to help young people find appropriate jobs. It also has been produced to build the skills needed to perform successfully in the work environment. While the information is broad-based, and is applicable to virtually all job situations, the producers have taken special care to give concrete examples to help viewers understand what may be unfamiliar concepts (such as the necessity of showing up on time, every day). The skills covered are applicable to both public and private sector settings.

Intended Audience and Uses

This series is intended for young people and unemployed or under-employed individuals unfamiliar with the basic skills needed to perform successfully in the work environment. The program has been designed to be used in the following settings:

- High school job-training programs
- Vocational schools
- High school vocational and distributive education programs
- Welfare-to-work programs
- Job training programs at penal institutions
- Juvenile detention centers that stress job training.

Materials

The World of Work Series contains --

- four video programs
- four facilitator's guides, one for each program
- overhead masters and blackline masters.

SYNOPSIS OF *GETTING A GOOD START*

The program opens with a loading dock worker who philosophizes about his role as a new employee. His pronouncements mirror many new workers' attitudes:

- I'm going to do the job *my* way because I know what's best for me.
- When a person first starts out, he or she won't do anything important.
- Attitude doesn't matter if you do your job.

The video then looks at each belief and shows how none will lead to success in the work place. The necessity of teamwork is covered first. A hidden camera episode shows a new employee who decides to ignore his supervisor's instructions. Afterwards, the unfortunate consequences are revealed. The lesson? ***In the world of work, you have to think of the implications for your coworkers and your company, not just yourself.*** Next, the video looks at whether new employees do only unimportant tasks. The fact, as is shown by the average investment organizations make in employee training, is that there is no such thing as an unimportant job. Organizations really do count on their employees to perform their specific job duties and to follow company procedures. One way to do that is to read the organization's handbook, if it has one. Organizational rules, policies and procedures can be extremely important. Some, such as sexual harassment policies, are governed by federal, state or local laws. Of course, new employees may ask questions, also. A humorous hidden camera episode shows how one new employee reacts to an actress who gives fast, double-talk instructions. The second lesson? ***What you do is important, so if you don't understand something, ask questions (or find the answer in your organization's handbook).*** Finally, the program discusses worker attitudes.

The results of a nationwide poll of human resource directors reveals six attitudes that cause problems in the workplace:

- Whining, complaining
- Brown-nosing the boss
- Gossiping
- Making snap judgments about fellow workers
- Being petty and disrespectful
- Losing one's temper

The final lesson, then, is that *attitude is just as important as job performance.*

PARTICIPANT OBJECTIVES

After viewing this video and completing the suggested activities, participants should be able to do the following:

1. Explain why it is important to be a team player on the job.
2. Tell why there is no such thing as an unimportant job.
3. Name six attitudes that can undermine one's job performance.
4. Recount at least three ways that they can be a team player.
5. Tell, in specific terms, how and why their jobs are important to their organization.
6. Analyze whether they have any attitudes might cause problems on the job.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION PLAN

1. Introduction

Ask your group how to get off to a good start in a new job. Why is a good start so crucial? Help everyone understand that first impressions can make the difference between

success and failure on the job. Is it important that a new employee “fit in” with the others in the organization? Is it okay to be a “loner?” Is it generally acceptable to be extremely sociable? Why or why not? Discuss the various ways new employees can fit in. Define and discuss organizational cultures. Ask, “What kinds of cultures do your peer groups have?” How can one best fit in with the particular culture of his or her peer group? Is it the same for business?

2. Previewing Activities

Tell the group that they will now see a program entitled “Getting a Good Start. List all the items mentioned and discuss them. Place the “What You Will Learn” transparency on the overhead projector. Go over each item. Then hand out the “Viewers’ Concept Guide, Getting a Good Start.” Tell the participants that they will be expected to know the answers to the questions in the guide after they see the video. If you feel it is appropriate, go over the questions.

3. Show the Video

The presentation lasts approximately 12 ½ minutes.

4. Post-viewing Activities

Discuss the three items on the “What You Will Learn” transparency. Then, have your group members answer the questions in the “Viewers’ Concept Guide, Getting a Good Start,” either as an individual or group activity. In either case, review and discuss the answers in detail. Next, hand out “Truth vs. Fiction.” Have everyone fill in the boxes with truthful statements. Then discuss what they’ve written. Next, write on the chalk board or overhead projector, “Mike’s Mistakes.” Discuss the hidden camera episode that featured Mike McGinnis, the order processor who didn’t

turn in his orders on time. Tell the group that Mike made more than one mistake. Have the participants enumerate them, if they can. (Failing to follow instructions, failing to think of the team, putting his desires before everyone else, failing to anticipate how his actions would impact others.) Now, discuss both the *personal* and *financial* hardships Mike's actions might have engendered. (Coworkers had to change their personal plans to stay late, hourly employees might have to be paid overtime – decreasing profitability.) Discuss how Mike's supervisor and coworkers will view his actions. Stress that Mike's failing to follow instructions and putting his desires first resulted in a very *bad* start, and that bad starts can stick with employees. Next, discuss the significance of the statement, "There is no such thing as an unimportant job." *Stress that in today's globally competitive environment, every job is important. If a job isn't important, it is eliminated.* Pass out "Taking Personal Responsibility." Instruct everyone to read this handout, then discuss it. Finally, hand out "Why Attitude Matters." Have the group complete the exercise, then go over the answers they've written. You may also do this as a group exercise. Once all the written exercises have been completed and discussed, ask the group to make a list of tasks they will need to accomplish to get a good start on their new jobs.

PURPOSES OF THE HANDOUT MATERIAL

Viewers' Concept Guide: Getting a Good Start: To help participants focus on the main concepts of the presentation.

Truth vs. Fiction: To help participants understand the implication of the video's three key points.

Taking Personal Responsibility: To help individuals understand the necessity of taking personal responsibility for job success, and to help them delineate and focus on the specific life-style and vocational behaviors that are needed to

be successful on the job.

Why Attitude Matters: To create an in-depth understanding of why an employee's attitude is so important to success on the job.

ANSWER KEY

Viewers' Concept Guide, Getting A Good Start: 1. Your coworkers (other members of your team). 2. Recheck figures, plug in Mike's data, reprint monthlies, personnel needed to stay late 3. Investment in training 4. Ask supervisor, human resources department, consult employee handbook 5. Sexual harassment 6. To appear interested, to determine how you fit into scheme of things, to do things according to your organization's policies and procedures 7. Don't whine or complain, don't brown-nose the boss, don't gossip, don't make snap judgments, don't be petty or disrespectful, don't lose your temper.

Truth vs. Fiction: Although answers will vary, some possibilities might include the following: (1) You should follow your supervisor's instructions **because** he or she has more experience, and an important part of your job is following instructions. (2) When you first start out, you will be doing some important tasks **because** your organization wouldn't hire you and train you unless what you did was important. (3) Attitude is important **because** it affects your coworkers and how well they do their job.

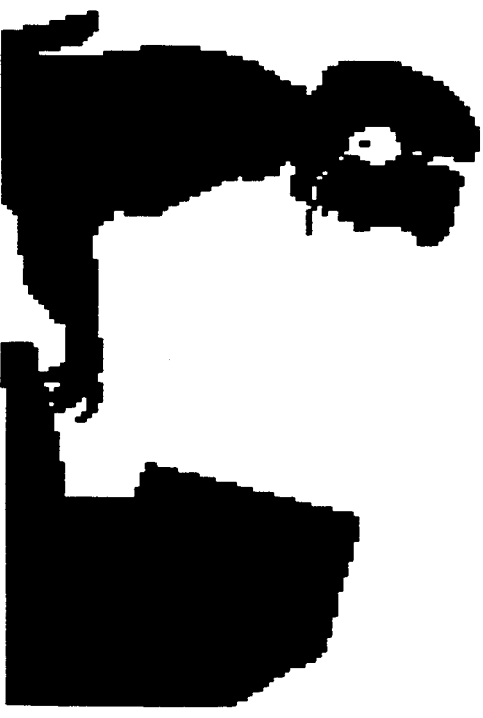
Taking Personal Responsibility: Although answers will vary, some possibilities might include the following: (1) Maintain health by eating right and exercising so that will be able to go to work every day; get plenty of sleep so that can function well on the job; show moderation in behavior so that relationship problems won't interfere with work schedule. (2) Ask questions on the job about specific tasks

unclear about; learn about how my job fits into the overall scheme of things; keep abreast of new techniques that will increase my productivity; watch and learn from more experienced personnel. (3) Be friendly and act professional; don't whine, don't gossip, don't make snap judgments about coworkers, don't brown-nose the boss, don't be petty or disrespectful, don't lose your temper; be enthusiastic.

Why Attitude Matters: Answers will vary, but the following might be considered: (1) Whining creates a negative atmosphere; (2) People prefer to be judged on their job performance and brown-nosing suggests you don't have what it takes to do well without brown-nosing. (3) Gossip creates hard feelings and a negative atmosphere; it also can be hurtful, disrespectful and false. In addition, it can result in legal liability. (4) Human behavior seldom can be understood quickly. It often takes a psychologist months to understand an individual's behavior; it is unrealistic that a person untrained in psychology can understand a coworker. (5) Pettiness and disrespect create hard feelings and a negative atmosphere. (6) Losing one's temper is highly unprofessional. It is a sign of immaturity and a lack of self-discipline – two factors that hinder advancement.

What You Will Learn

- **The Importance of Being a Team Player**
- **Why Your Job Is Important**
- **Attitude Is Just as Important as Performance**



Name _____

Viewers' Concept Guide, "Getting A Good Start"

Directions: Write your answer in the provided spaces. If you need more room, write on the back of this paper.

1. Who will you need to get the job done?

2. What problems were caused by the order processor's not being a team player?

3. What is one sign which shows that organizations value their new employees' work?

4. Name three ways you can get information about your organization, and how you fit in there?

5. Name an example of organizational policy that is regulated by law.

6. Why is it important for new employees to ask questions?

7. What are six attitudes and behaviors that should be avoided when at work?

Name _____

Truth vs. Fiction

Directions: Read each statement. Then, in the provided box, write the truth. Then tell why your statement is true.

You should always do your job the way you want to, regardless of what your supervisor says.

When you first start out, you won't be given important things to do.

Your attitude isn't important on the job, as long as you do your work.

Name _____

Taking Personal Responsibility

A job means taking on a lot of responsibility. Sure, you are responsible for getting to work on time every day. But that's only the beginning. In the boxes, list all the responsibilities you acquire when you have a job.

Personal Life Responsibilities For Success

Educational Responsibilities for Success

On-the-Job Behaviors Needed for Success

Name _____

Why Attitude Matters

Tell *why* it is important to:

1. Never whine –
2. Never brown-nose your boss –
3. Never gossip –
4. Never make snap judgments about your coworkers –
5. Never be petty or disrespectful –
6. Never lose your temper –