

Social Skills in the Workplace: Workplace Skills Simulation

Activity Goal: Students will apply workplace awareness, hidden workplace expectations, self-advocacy, emotional regulation, and constructive feedback skills by participating in a classroom workplace simulation. Students will navigate realistic workplace situations, respond appropriately to supervisors and coworkers, demonstrate professional decision-making, and practice self-management strategies while completing collaborative workplace tasks.

Embedded Skill Targets:

- Demonstrate workplace awareness and observation skills.
- Identify and respond to hidden workplace expectations.
- Demonstrate appropriate self-advocacy.
- Apply emotional regulation strategies.
- Respond professionally to supervisor feedback.
- Demonstrate workplace problem-solving.
- Strengthen communication and teamwork skills.
- Reflect professional workplace behaviors.

Curricular Area	Learning Spectrum		
	Basic	Emerging	Proficient
9th Grade: Knowledge-Based (Environmental Awareness, Hidden Rules & Receiving Feedback)	Identify workplace expectations while completing assigned tasks.	Demonstrate awareness of workplace surroundings, respond appropriately to feedback, and follow workplace expectations.	Independently recognize hidden workplace expectations, respond professionally to feedback, and demonstrate responsible workplace behaviors.

<i>10th Grade: Application-Based (Self-Advocacy & Emotional Regulation)</i>	Demonstrate appropriate self-advocacy and emotional regulation during workplace situations.	Communicate workplace needs appropriately while maintaining professionalism.	Independently apply self-management strategies, advocate appropriately, and maintain professionalism while solving workplace challenges.
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Materials:

Provided: • Workplace Scenario Cards • Supervisor Feedback Cards • Employee Role Cards • Workplace Challenge Task Cards • Self-Advocacy Cue Cards • Employee Performance Checklist • Reflection Sheet • Student Competency Tracking Sheet	Needed: • Classroom arranged into workplace departments • Department signs • Employee name badges • Clipboards • Pens/pencils • File folders • Workplace supply bins • Timer • Sticky notes • Chart paper
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Preparation:

1. Arrange classroom tables into workplace departments.
2. Prepare employee role assignments and name badges.
3. Organize workplace task folders and challenge cards.
4. Display department signs and workplace expectations.
5. Prepare supervisor feedback cards and observation checklists.
6. Review simulation expectations with classroom staff.

Helpful Learning Tools

- Workplace Expectations Poster
- Hidden Rules Anchor Chart
- Emotional Regulation Poster
- Self-Advocacy Flow Chart
- Visual Daily Schedule
- First/Then Supports
- Visual Task Analysis

Instructions:

1. Welcome students and explain that today's classroom has been transformed into a workplace. Review workplace expectations, professional behaviors, communication strategies, and the employee responsibilities discussed throughout the week. Students receive employee badges and are assigned to workplace departments.
2. Students report to their assigned departments and review their workplace responsibilities. Each department discusses how they will complete assigned tasks while demonstrating professionalism, teamwork, and awareness of workplace expectations.
3. Students begin the first workplace challenge by completing a collaborative task while following workplace expectations that are both stated and unstated. Students are expected to observe their environment, remain organized, communicate respectfully, and recognize hidden workplace expectations independently.
4. During the simulation, supervisors introduce realistic workplace situations such as schedule changes, missing materials, unexpected interruptions, or changes in instructions. Students practice adapting appropriately while maintaining professional behavior.
5. Throughout the activity, supervisors provide constructive feedback to individual employees and teams. Students demonstrate appropriate responses by listening respectfully, asking clarifying questions when needed, thanking the supervisor for feedback, and making appropriate adjustments to their work.
6. Students encounter scenarios requiring self-advocacy such as requesting clarification, asking for additional materials, reporting a workplace concern, or communicating that they need assistance. Students practice respectful communication while solving problems appropriately.
7. Additional workplace scenarios challenge students to regulate emotions during frustrating situations such as changes in assignments, working with unfamiliar

terminates, making their turn, or correcting mistakes. Students practice emotional regulation strategies before continuing their work.

8. Departments complete a final collaborative challenge that requires communication, flexibility, teamwork, observation, and professional decision-making. Students demonstrate their ability to work together while responding appropriately to workplace expectations and supervisor guidance.
9. The teacher facilitates a whole-class discussion reviewing workplace successes and challenges observed throughout the simulation. Students discuss how workplace awareness, professionalism, emotional regulation, and self-advocacy contributed to successful task completion.
10. Students complete an **Employee Reflection** identifying one hidden workplace expectation they recognized independently, one example of constructive feedback they received, one self-advocacy strategy they used appropriately, and one emotional regulation technique they successfully applied during today's workplace simulation.

Activity Variation:

- Students requiring additional support will receive simplified workplace task cards, visual schedules, emotional regulation cue cards, and teacher-guided prompting throughout the simulation.
- Emerging learners will complete collaborative workplace tasks using structured peer support, visual organizers, and instructor feedback.
- Proficient learners will independently solve workplace challenges, demonstrate leadership, support coworkers, and model professional workplace behaviors throughout the simulation.

Task Alignment & Check-off:

9th Grade

- **301** Identify environmental characteristics commonly found in workplace settings.
- **302** Recognize how environmental factors influence workplace behavior and productivity.
- **303** Identify hidden workplace expectations through observation.
- **304** Demonstrate awareness of workplace surroundings.
- **401** Identify hidden workplace rules and expectations.
- **402** Explain how workplace expectations influence employee behavior.
- **403** Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate workplace behaviors.
- **404** Demonstrate understanding of professional workplace expectations.

- **501** Identify appropriate responses to constructive workplace feedback.
- **502** Demonstrate respectful responses when receiving feedback from supervisors or coworkers.
- **503** Explain how workplace feedback contributes to employee growth and success.

10th Grade

- **801** Identify appropriate methods of requesting assistance in the workplace.
- **802** Demonstrate self-advocacy strategies during workplace situations.
- **803** Determine appropriate times to seek clarification or accommodations.
- **804** Explain the importance of communicating workplace needs professionally.
- **901** Identify emotions commonly experienced in workplace settings.
- **902** Demonstrate appropriate emotional regulation strategies during workplace situations.
- **903** Apply self-management techniques to maintain professionalism during workplace challenges.