

Social-Emotional Skill in the Workplace

Goals

- Understand what social-emotional skill is as it relates to the workplace
- Examine how social-emotional skill affects one's career success and ability to function effectively in the workplace

Duration

60 minutes to complete

Prerequisites

Completion of the AchieveWorks® Skills assessment

Materials and Preparation

Students will need:

- a printout of the Social-Emotional section of their AchieveWorks Skills report or an Internet-enabled device to view these results online
- copies of the Problem Scenarios and Do Differently Scenarios handouts
- one or more partners
- paper and a writing utensil

You will also need:

- a whiteboard/chalkboard or poster

Please print and modify as needed to use these guided activities with your students. Note, however, that this content, or any portion thereof, may not be copied, distributed, republished, uploaded, posted or transmitted without the express written permission of Human eSources Ltd.

Method

Motivational Set (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to answer the following questions and to think about the reasoning behind their decision. When everyone is ready, ask students to raise their hand for each answer to take an informal vote.
 - Would you rather be honest or well-liked?
 - Would you rather know everyone or always be right?
 - Would you rather be smart or always right?
 - Would you rather be popular or smart?
 - Would you rather be unpopular or know lots of people but have no connection to them?
 - Would you rather cheat and win or be honest and possibly not win?
 - Would you rather work as part of a team or on your own?
2. Ask students how these questions relate to the workplace. Use the following questions to encourage discussion.
 - How does acceptance fit into the workplace? What about honesty? What's more important?
 - Should you always be right in the workplace? What does that mean?
 - Is success all that matters in a job? What is success in the workplace?

Overview

Tell the students they will be reflecting on the social-emotional skill in their AchieveWorks Skills assessment. Students will need to have completed this assessment prior to the activity as they will be examining what social-emotional skill is and how it affect one's ability to function effectively in the workplace.

Defining Social-Emotional Skill (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to write down what the phrase "social-emotional skill" means to them. What do they think social-emotional skill is? When they are done, ask students to share their ideas on the board (or poster).
2. Have students view the social-emotional skill results in their AchieveWorks Skills report. Then have them paraphrase what their results say below their explanation.
3. When students are done, ask them to write two sentences or more on how social-emotional skill impacts them at work or when they are in work-type environments. Ask students to read the skill facets to find ideas of work-type environments. Remind students that they are thinking about how they are impacted by social-emotional skill.
 - For example, students may find that they scored low in networking and this impacts them when they are forming new relationships. They are generally shy, so meeting new people — such as customers or clients — makes them uneasy.
 - As another example, students may find they are very critical of others . This impacts their perception of others' needs and emotions.

Scenarios Handout A (20 minutes)

1. Now that students understand what social-emotional skill is, ask them to read over the Problem Scenarios Round One handout and then answer the following questions. Students can refer back to their AchieveWorks Skills reports to help them answer, and they can work in partners, if desired.
 - What is the problem?
 - Which facet(s) of social-emotional skill does the problem fall under? Explain.
 - What do you want to do in this situation?
 - What should you do in this situation to achieve the best results possible?
2. When students are done, come together as a class to discuss their answers.

Scenarios Handout B (15 minutes)

1. In this round, students will be focusing on how they would handle each situation outlined in the scenarios. Have students read the Do Differently Scenarios Handout B handout and then answer the following questions. Students can refer back to their AchieveWorks Skills reports to help them answer, and they can work in partners, if desired.
 - What is the problem?
 - Which facet(s) of social-emotional skill does the problem involve? Explain.
 - Would you use the same solution or would you do anything differently? Explain.
2. When students are done, come together as a class to discuss their answers and share ideas.

Reflection Questions (5 minutes)

Ask students to jot down a few answers to the questions below before discussing as a class. (Students could write their responses in full paragraphs as well.)

- Which specific social-emotional skill facets are important to you? Why is that?
- Which skill facets will you work on? How will you work on them?

Closing Activity (Optional)

Ask students to list situations where having a low social-emotional score could be negative for them. When would having a high social-emotional score help them? Could a high social-emotional skill also be negative for them? Can they think of any examples? Talk to the students about the importance of functioning effectively in a workplace and explain that we learn to adapt our skills to best suit our needs and the needs of the workplace.

Handout B

Problem Scenarios

Read each scenario carefully and answer the following questions. You can write your answers on the handout under each scenario or on a separate sheet of paper. Be ready to share your ideas with the class.

- What is the problem?
 - Which facet(s) of social-emotional skill does the problem fall under? Explain.
 - What do you want to do in this situation?
 - What should you do in this situation to achieve the best results possible?
1. You have just started your first real job, one that aligns with the career you have in mind. You have been getting along really well with your co-workers. They asked you to come out for lunch with them. While eating, they start talking about your boss and all the problems they have with him. They say some pretty mean things. They talk about his recent divorce and how he lost some clients because he was so sad all the time. You mention that he has always been nice and happy around you. The others laugh and tell you to just wait and see. You head back to the office and feel like you should say something to your boss. But you also want to fit in with your new co-workers. You give yourself a day to think about what to do.
 2. You're working at a bowling alley part time while you finish up your schooling. It is a pretty easy job. You help customers find their shoes, clean the alleys, pick up garbage. However, you always get paired with Nick, who hates being there. He constantly complains, makes you clean out the bathrooms, and doesn't spray down the rented shoes when they're returned. You've also noticed some change is missing from the register — nothing big, but you know there were more coins in there. You know you should do something but just aren't sure what.
 3. You work with other leaders planning out activities at a summer camp. This week, you and three others are in charge of soccer camp for the 5-8 year olds. You and another leader are eager to plan out the week and decide which skills to work on each day. However, the other two leaders, who are older than both of you and have led the camps before, are more laid back and suggest not planning out the week. They say it depends on the kids and the weather, and it's just easier to plan in the moment when you know everything. You and your partner look at each other. Wouldn't it be better to plan the week out? What should you do?
 4. You've landed a job as a waiter at your local restaurant. You're excited to make extra money for an upcoming vacation your family has planned. However, you feel like you've gotten in way over your head. One particular night, you arrive late to work because your car wouldn't start and your dad could only drop you off after picking up your brother from his music lesson. Then your boss yelled at you. Then when you started working, you realized you forgot your apron and had to borrow a used one. You didn't have time to memorize the specials and now you've forgotten the order you just took from the family at Table 14. You also have a phone call from your dad wondering when he should come and get you. What do you do and how could you prevent this night from happening again?
 5. Your co-worker, Liza, shows up to work upset. You ask what's wrong. She pulls off her hat to reveal a new, choppy hairstyle. She says she got a haircut but it isn't what she wanted. She looks at you and asks what you think of it. Before you can answer, another co-worker walks by and yells, "Nice hair!" Liza is about to break into tears. What do you say to her?

Handout B

Do Differently Scenarios

Read each scenario carefully and answer the following questions. You can write your answers on the handout under each scenario or on a separate sheet of paper. Be ready to share your ideas with the class.

- What is the problem?
 - Which facet(s) of social-emotional skill does the problem involve? Explain.
 - Would you use the same solution or would you do anything differently? Explain.
1. Kyle is working on a group project when he starts to goof off and suddenly water, or whatever was in the beaker, spills over everyone's papers. The results from the experiments were on these papers and Kyle hadn't copied them yet. He's wondering what to do when Tito says not to worry. He tells Kyle to clean up the mess and grabs a new piece of paper. Kyle asks what he's doing and Tito says he's making up the results. He doesn't want to do the experiments again and the results are close enough. Kyle knows they would have time to do the experiment again but cleans up the mess anyway. He wonders how accurate Tito's results will be. Does he remember that they are in milliliters and not liters?
 2. Sara is waiting for her math class to start. She's going over her notes when she notices a problem in her assignment. She asks her teacher for help. When she sees that her teacher hasn't heard, she gets up and walks over to his desk. She is about to ask him for help when she notices that he is crying. Unsure of what to do, Sara leaves the room.
 3. Devon works at the hardware store, and every week they have to take stock. Devon's noticed that Ernie is stocking the paints incorrectly. And the nails. And the screws. Devon's boss is thinking of making Devon floor manager, so he elects him to talk to Ernie, but Devon doesn't want to. Ernie is defensive and irritable. A few days go by and still Devon has not spoken to Ernie about the problem. Devon, unsure of what to do, decides to restock everything correctly and tells his boss he talked to Ernie.