

Transition to Work and Self Sufficiency Video Series

Instructor's Guide for ***The Real Work Begins***

Overview

You land a job by promising to meet an employer's expectations. You keep a job by *continuing* to meet them. If you are the right person for the job, your work every day will prove it. Failure to meet those expectations, or to engage in behaviors that cost the employer time or money or endanger yourself or those around you, will almost certainly lead to dismissal.

While your current job should certainly be one worth keeping, it is also an important step toward your larger goals. But moving ahead in your career will require you to do more than simply meet expectations. If you want to advance, you need to go above and beyond, exceeding the employer's expectations and improving your own skills along the way.

This video offers important tips and strategies for job survival and success. The video tracks the progress of four job seekers—Tanya, Jack, Karen, and Anthony—as they work to keep and excel at their jobs. Students should be encouraged to discuss their own strategies for ensuring on-the-job success. Feel free to pause the video for activities and discussion as your own schedule dictates.

Presentation Suggestions

Begin by asking students about their history of on-the-job success. Without forcing the issue or getting too personal, ask students what they have done well or done poorly in past jobs. Make a list of actions and attitudes that are cause for dismissal. Then ask students to share any specific examples of measurable success. Stress to them that there are two sets of attitudes, behaviors, and skills they need to concentrate on: those that will allow them to keep their jobs and those that will allow them to get ahead. Tell them that the video will give them tips for doing both.

When you feel students have begun thinking about these issues, give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to watching the video. If you wish, allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to take notes or to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to their answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information they learned. Follow up this discussion with the **Activities**.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from students or assign the questions as homework essays.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group. Assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You may revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. What are some of the situations, actions, or attitudes that can get you fired?
2. What can you do to impress your employer?
3. What should you do if you encounter a coworker with a negative attitude?
4. Why should you continue to network after you land a job?

Answer Key

1. Answers will vary but may include the following: not getting along with coworkers, dishonesty, stealing, not following the dress code, constant tardiness, absenteeism, and making too many mistakes.
2. Answers will vary but may include the following: volunteer for extra work, ask for additional training, come early and stay late, and get along well with coworkers.
3. Try not to develop close ties; avoid guilt by association.
4. Because it can lead to even more and better opportunities in the future.

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Fired/Not Fired

Format: Whole class

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Pen, 3 x 5 index cards

Procedure:

1. Start by making a list of all of the potential pitfalls to job survival and success, including those covered by the video. Write this list on the board and try to make it as exhaustive as possible.
2. Give each student an index card and have them choose one of the pitfalls listed. Have them write the pitfall on the card and then imagine a scenario in which they engaged in the negative behavior, action, or attitude involved.
3. Once students are ready, call them up in groups of three. Have each of these three “employees” describe his or her scenario. Then have remaining students vote on which of the three employees should be fired. Ask students to justify their decision. Why are some behaviors or attitudes worse than others? What kinds of actions are more easily amended? What behaviors or actions are cause for immediate dismissal?
4. Remind students that while some of these behaviors, actions, and attitudes are worse than others and more likely to lead to a dismissal instead of simply a warning, any behavior that costs an employer time, money, or customers can and will lead to a dismissal if it isn't corrected.

Activity #2

Title: My Job Success Credo

Format: Individual

Time: 15-20 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, pen

Procedure:

1. The video addresses some of the most common pitfalls and success strategies for work situations across the board. However, each student will have his or her own potential pitfalls, some of which aren't even addressed in the video. By personalizing their goals for keeping and succeeding on a job, students will have a much clearer understanding of the specific steps *they* should be taking. Using the worksheet included with this guide, have students create their own job success credos. If you'd like, you can provide your own personal example.
2. Because of the personal nature of this exercise, it is not recommended that students be forced to share their credos with each other, though you can ask for volunteers if time permits.

Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of workers seem to succeed and move quickly up the ladder? What do they do differently than others? What does it mean to go “above and beyond” on a job?
2. Imagine you are an employer. What attitudes, actions, or behaviors would be just cause for instant dismissal? Why?

3. What are some things you can do on your *current* job to help you prepare for your *next* job? What steps can you take to keep your skills updated? To advance your education? To stay alert to new and better opportunities?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the video.

1. An employer can't fire you on the basis of your appearance.
2. It is the worker's responsibility to ask for extra training.
3. Most employers have zero tolerance for drug and alcohol use on the job.
4. Weak academic skills can be improved through daily tasks on the job.
5. You should always try to keep your personal problems outside of the workplace.
6. Failure to follow directions is cause for dismissal.
7. Once you have a job, you no longer have to worry about networking.
8. Misrepresenting your skills and experience on a resume or in an interview can lead to a dismissal.

Answer Key

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. False | 5. True |
| 2. True | 6. True |
| 3. True | 7. False |
| 4. True | 8. True |

Homework Option

Have students pick an industry and then imagine that they are small business owners in that industry. Tell them they need to write a want ad for a new hire. This want ad should describe the perfect employee. What skills would they have? What characteristics and traits? What kinds of work experience? Tell students to have high expectations, but to be realistic. (Don't ask Bill Gates to come manage a small computer store.) Have them bring their want ads to the next session to share with the class.

My Job Success Credo

I, _____, hereby declare that I will not only *keep* my job, but will *excel* at it.

I order to keep my job...

I will not _____

I will not _____

I will not _____

I will not _____

I will not _____

I will not _____

And in order to excel at it . . .

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

I will _____

Signature

Date