

LESSON PLAN

NETWORKING SKILLS

Grade Range: 10-12

Time Needed: 50min for activities, 30min for teacher talking points and time for questions

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to explain what networking is and how it can benefit them.
- Students will improve their conversational skills

Supplies/Materials

- Chart paper or white board.
- Markers for chart paper or white board.
- Networking BINGO handout (1 per student).
- Writing utensil (for students to use during BINGO).

What is Networking?

- “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know. This is a common expression and is a great foundation for understanding the importance of networking. Everyone has a network, even if you don’t realize it! You have family, friends, parents of friends, friends of friends, neighbors, coaches, teachers, bosses, and coworkers – all of these people are part of your personal network. When it comes time to search for jobs, your network is just as important as your skills and abilities.”
- “Many people underestimate the power of their network. People in your network have their own network, which can become valuable when you are looking for a job. Very often, people learn about job openings through people in their network – some jobs may not even be posted yet, and your network might be able to provide a good reference for a possibility of becoming a candidate for a job.”

1. Activity #1 (An Introduction to Networking)

2. Activity #2 (Networking BINGO)

3. Networking on Social Media

- a. Ask participants to list social media platforms (Google, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, Skype, etc.). Write these on a whiteboard or chart paper. (3 min)
- b. Optional: ask students to raise their hands if they have an account for each platform (name them individually). Then ask for volunteers to share how often they are on those platforms and/or if they use them to find jobs or network with people professionally.
- c. Next, ask participants to share reasons social media will improve their networking and job opportunities. Validate their answers and then move into cautions when using social media. (5 min)
- d. Cautions for using social media: Nothing is private! Don’t post anything, even on Snapchat, that you wouldn’t want a future employer to see. Derogatory comments, revealing or risqué photos, foul language, and inappropriate jokes will all be viewed as a reflection of your character – even if you are sharing memes or gifs that are not your original work. Everything on the internet is archived, and there is no eraser, so consider setting profiles to private – but even then, be cautious about what you are posting.

- e. Social Media can be a great way to network – the ability to view mutual friends or see potential connections (such as on LinkedIn) can be very beneficial if you are wanting to find a new job, career, etc. Just use it with caution and always be professional in your posting!

Process Questions:

- Who can give a summary to the class about what networking is?
- What are a few ways we can network?
- Do you feel more confident about networking now?

Sources

Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success: Networking. (n.d.). Retrieved April 23, 2018, from <https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/Networking.pdf>

Workforce Solutions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 23, 2018, from http://www.wrksolutions.com/Documents/WhenIGrowUp/WIGU_PDFS/High-School/Lesson6-Networking-Bingo.pdf

If you use someone else's activity or lesson to develop one here, make sure to reference at the end using APA reference citation (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/>).

LESSON PLAN

NETWORKING SKILLS: ACTIVITY #1

AN INTRODUCTION TO NETWORKING

Adapted from (Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success)

This activity will introduce participants to the process of networking and help them understand its relevance to career development.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Chart paper or white board and corresponding markers

DIRECTIONS

Ask participants the following question: “How do people find jobs?” List their responses. If the following were not discussed, you can include: personal contacts, secondary or post-secondary career centers, Department of Labor, employer websites, Craigslist, Internet Job Sites (Monster.com snagajob.com, indeed.com, etc.), etc.

Ask: “Did you know that approximately 80% of jobs today are NOT advertised?”

Discuss: “If employers are not advertising, how are people finding jobs?”

Discussion Points

Talking to or contacting people you know to find job leads is the most effective way to find a job.

Many of us find jobs through personal contacts – people we already know in our network, such as family, friends, doctors, and so forth.

Approximately 60% of job hunters find their new job with the help of friends, family members, or acquaintances.

Small group

Break into smaller groups of 3-4. Because most people find jobs by interacting with other people, ask the groups to spend 5 minutes developing a list of 5 strategies they might use when looking for a job (who they can talk to, what to say, etc.). Strategies should be geared towards creating as many ways as possible to tell others you are looking for a job.

Conclusion

Ask for a representative from each group to list the strategies they came up with. Inform the class that they have just accomplished traditional professional networking. Networking takes time and practice. It requires that you seek out people you know to build upon relationships. Networking is an active process for developing new relationships as well as new opportunities.

LESSON PLAN

NETWORKING SKILLS: ACTIVITY #2

NETWORKING BINGO

From the following link: http://www.wrksolutions.com/Documents/WhenIGrowUp/WIGU_PDFS/High-School/Lesson6-Networking-Bingo.pdf

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- BINGO sheet for each student
- Writing utensil

DIRECTIONS

Hand out 1 BINGO sheet per student and instruct them to complete each square individually by writing their response to the prompt. Allow 2-3 minutes for this to be completed.

Then instruct the students to network, mingle around the room, and talk to people with similar interests or similar characteristics. They need to find 1 person per square, no repeats (unless the class size is small).

Based on group size, inform students how many minutes they have to network (10 minutes or so?). The first student to complete all 12 spaces on the grid wins.

Once a winner has been deemed, ask the students to take 4-5 minutes to complete the questions below the BINGO squares.

Discuss (10 minutes):

- Who got the most signatures?
- What was the easiest match to find?
- What was the most difficult match to find?
- Were there missed networking opportunities?
- Were all of the BINGO items work-related?
- How could these topics have an impact on an actual job search?
- Talk about the questions at the bottom of the worksheet.
- Ask: do you feel more comfortable networking after doing this activity?