



# Example Activity Plan for Teaching Soft Skills

## Topic: Effective Communication

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Effective communication is a soft skill that demonstrates the ability to actively listen and clearly express one's thoughts. When students communicate effectively on the job site, they are more likely to build positive relationships with co-workers and supervisors.

**Activity Description:** Provide students with a variety of example scenarios involving an employee communicating with a manager. Guide students to determine if the scenario is an example of effective or noneffective communication.

### Example Scenarios:

- An employee needs to request a day off for a family vacation.
  - **Manager:** "One of our workplace policies is to request days off at least two weeks in advance."
  - **Employee:** "Well I can't work next week so I need you to give me those days off."
- An employee can't remember how to do a job task, so they need to ask a manager for help.
  - **Employee:** "I'm not sure I remember how to sort these documents. Do you have time to show me?"
  - **Manager:** "Absolutely! I appreciate you asking me to make sure you're doing it correctly."

**Reflection Questions:** After your students complete the activity, ask them the following questions to reflect on their experience.

1. What were some similarities between the scenarios when employees used effective communication?
2. What do you think may happen when employees don't communicate effectively with their supervisors?

### Making Connections:

1. What are some examples of ways you may use effective communication on the job?
2. Who are the different people that you may have to effectively communicate with?
3. What effective communication strategies did you learn from the activity that you could use in the workplace?



## Topic: Conflict Resolution

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Instruction on conflict resolution includes discussion around how conflicts may arise at the workplace and how to navigate conflict resolution professionally. When students can engage in effective conflict resolution, they are more likely to maintain their employment.

**Activity Description:** Provide students with a variety of scenarios that involve an employee facing a conflict in the workplace. Ask students to determine how to professionally work through the conflict.

### Example Scenarios:

- Your co-worker at a restaurant does not help you perform closing duties like cleaning the tables.
- You are working at a crowded restaurant and a customer is upset that their food order is taking a long time.
- Your boss scheduled you to work on a day that you requested off.

**Reflection Questions:** After your students complete the activity, ask them the following questions to reflect on their experience.

1. What social skills can you use to resolve conflict in the workplace?
2. If a conflict is never resolved, how could relationships with a coworker or customer be impacted?

### Making Connections:

1. What are some examples of ways you may use conflict resolution on the job?
2. Who are the different people that you may have conflict with, in the workplace?
3. What conflict resolution strategies do you use as a student in school that you may need to use as an employee in the workplace?



## Topic: Teamwork

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Incorporating team-based activities will help students build their teamwork skills. Employers often seek out employees that demonstrate they can work collaboratively with their coworkers.

**Activity Description:** Divide students into groups and provide them with scenarios, challenges, or activities that will require them to work as a team. Encourage students to work together to determine a solution to the challenge they are given.

### Example Scenarios:

- Provide teams of students with a “worst- case scenario” and ask them to work together to come up with a plan or solution
  - Taking the wrong bus and ending up in an unfamiliar city
  - Getting lost in the woods with no supplies
  - Stranded on a desert island
- Provide teams of students with non-traditional building materials and ask them to work together to build a tower or bridge using only the materials provided
  - Marshmallows
  - Newspaper
  - Toothpicks or straws
  - Tape or string

**Reflection Questions:** After your students complete the activity, ask them the following questions to reflect on their experience.

1. What challenges did you face when working with your team?
2. What were the benefits to working with your team as opposed to working alone?

### Making Connections:

1. What are some examples of ways you may use teamwork on the job?
2. What teamwork strategies do you use as a student that you may need to use as an employee in the workplace?