Lesson Plan

Initiative and Self-direction: Exhibiting Motivation

Objective: Students will explore the relationship between exhibiting motivation and the concept of initiative.

Workplace Readiness Skill: **Demonstrate initiative and self-direction.**

*Demonstration includes*

* *recognizing the importance of proactive, independent decision making*
* *identifying workplace needs*
* *completing tasks with minimal direct supervision*
* *applying solutions.*

Correlations to Other Workplace Readiness Skills:

* Demonstrate integrity.
* Demonstrate work ethic.
* Demonstrate conflict-resolution skills.
* Demonstrate customer service skills.
* Collaborate with team members.
* Demonstrate big-picture thinking.
* Demonstrate career- and life-management skills.
* Demonstrate professionalism.

Correlations to Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL):

* English: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.7, 6.8, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.7, 7.8, 8.2, 8.7, 8.8, 9.1, 9.6, 9.7, 10.1, 10.6, 10.7, 11.6, 11.7, 12.6, 12.7
* History and Social Science: CE.4, CE.14, GOVT.16

Instructional Steps:

1. ***Review the concept of work ethic.*** Work ethic is demonstrated through a variety of characteristics, such as being punctual, focusing on work-related tasks, taking direction willingly, exhibiting motivation, and taking initiative. Discuss the idea of initiative, motivation, and positive attitudes as they relate to work. Why would these things be important to an employer? Brainstorm reasons.
2. View the three-minute video from the U.S. Department of Labor titled “[Soft Skills:](https://youtu.be/X0voPlW2pSs) Enthusiasm and Attitude” ([**https://youtu.be/-vk-99seC\_I**](https://youtu.be/-vk-99seC_I)**)**. Discuss the scenarios in the video. While the two examples of job interviews are very different, they illustrate an important point about the importance of enthusiasm and attitude.
3. ***Ask students to watch the video a second time and complete Handout #1: Recognizing Attitude.*** Discuss student responses.
4. ***Demonstrate initiative and positive attitudes.*** Break into small groups, practice the role-play scenarios on Handout #2: Demonstrating Positive Attitudes, and take turns role playing for the class. Discuss each scenario, and how the role play demonstrated positive attitudes.
5. ***Reflect on the lesson.*** Ask students to reflect in writing on the importance of initiative and positive attitude. Use the following prompt:

*A friend has a new job with a company that offers internal promotions and training to employees who exhibit initiative, motivation, and attitudes for success. What tips might you offer to your friend, based on what you’ve learned in this lesson, to help him or her demonstrate these characteristics?*

Formative Assessment**:**

* Gauge student understanding about the importance of motivation and attitude during the discussion of the video, “Soft Skills: Enthusiasm and Attitude.”
* Evaluate student responses as recorded on Handout #1: Recognizing Attitude (sample student responses can be found at the end of this document).
* Ask peers to assess each other informally during the presentations of the role-playing scenarios by ranking each group on a scale of one to five on their demonstration of motivation and positive attitude.
* Use the “Journal Assessment Rubric” to assess student understanding of the concept as demonstrated in writing.

Options for Adaptation/Differentiation:

* To offer scaffolding to students, complete a whole-group walk-through of Handout #1: Recognizing Attitude.
* To offer an extension option to students, conduct mock interviews so that students can practice demonstrating positive attitudes and motivation. Engage a community partner to accomplish this if possible.

Suggestions for Follow-up:

* Ask students to read Carol Dweck’s book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Discuss the importance of a positive mindset to career success, as well as to success in life. Share a report on lessons learned from the book with another class.
* Ask students to complete activities associated with the lesson on page 36, “Never Underestimate the Power of PMA,” in [Soft Skills to Pay the Bills — Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/) (<https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>), from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

Teacher Resources

*Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol S. Dweck

[Soft Skills to Pay the Bills — Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/) (<https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>), U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

[Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) Assessment: Virginia Overview](https://www.ctecs.org/virginia/virginia-overview) (<https://www.ctecs.org/virginia/virginia-overview>), Career and Technical Education Consortium of States (CTECS).

[Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) for the Commonwealth: Instructional Resources](http://cteresource.org/wrs/index.html) (<http://cteresource.org/wrs/index.html>), Career and Technical Education (CTE) Resource Center.