Handout #1

*When to Employ Initiative*

Use the following scenarios as a springboard for discussion about demonstrating initiative in the workplace. Consider the following questions:

* What should the employee do?
* Is it always a good idea to make independent decisions in the workplace, or are there times when it is more appropriate to turn to a team member or manager?
* What will be the effect of the chosen action?
* How might the employer feel about the outcome?

Scenario 1: Pari works at a deli. Her boss, Cheryl, has recently negotiated a new contract with a supplier. Cheryl spent months researching her options before signing on with the new supplier. A delivery is scheduled for Friday night, when Cheryl is scheduled to be off. The supplier phones on Friday afternoon because he will not be able to make the delivery. Cheryl has already left. What should Pari do?

Scenario 2: June’s manager calls to let her know that he will be running late due to a family emergency. The business is supposed to open at 8:00 a.m., and the manager has booked morning client appointments at 8:30, 9:00, and 9:30. June is familiar with all these clients’ projects, but is not scheduled to begin work until 10:00 a.m. What should June do?

Scenario 3: Tameka works at a retail store. An angry customer comes in with a damaged item to return. The item has no tags, the brand is not one that is familiar to Tameka, and there is no receipt. Tameka understands customer service and wants to make all the customers happy, but she is suspicious about this return. Her boss is not around. What should Tameka do?

Scenario 4: Bill works at an automotive repair shop where he is working on the engine of a 2015 Dodge Ram. A new part has been delivered but Bill sees that it is not an exact fit for that engine. Bill thinks he can use his knowledge as a mechanic to create a fix using the part. Should Bill use initiative to solve the problem, or should Bill alert his manager that the wrong part was delivered?

Scenario 5: Carlos has a new job in a law office. Carlos thinks he might want to attend law school someday. One of the firm’s partners offers to walk through some aspects of a lawyer’s career with Carlos, but Carlos will have to stay after work to do this and will certainly not get paid. What should Carlos do?