Lesson Plan

Researching Excellence in Customer Service

Objective: Students will explore the concept of customer service and research companies known for excellent customer service.

Workplace Readiness Skill: **Demonstrate customer service skills.**

Demonstration includes

- *defining **customer service** (e.g., internal customer service; external customer service)*
- *identifying the benefits of providing helpful, courteous, and knowledgeable customer service*
- *prioritizing customer service (both within an organization and to external customers and stakeholders)*
- *anticipating needs of customers and coworkers*
- *demonstrating how to provide helpful, courteous, and knowledgeable service to address customer and/or coworker needs.*

Correlations to Other Workplace Readiness Skills:

- Demonstrate work ethic.
- Demonstrate conflict-resolution skills.
- Demonstrate listening and speaking skills.
- Demonstrate big-picture thinking.
- Demonstrate career- and life-management skills.
- Demonstrate professionalism.

Correlations to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL):

- English: 6.RV, 6.RI, 6.C, 6.LU, 6.R, 6.W, 7.RV, 7.RI, 7.C, 7.LU, 7.R, 7.W, 8.RV, 8.RI, 8.C, 8.LU, 8.R, 8.W, 9.RV, 9.RI, 9.C, 9.LU, 9.R, 9.W, 10.RV, 10.RI, 10.C, 10.LU, 10.R, 10.W, 11.RV, 11.RI, 11.C, 11.LU, 11.R, 11.W, 12.RV, 12.RI, 12.C, 12.LU, 12.R, 12.W

- History and Social Science: WHI.2, WHI.4, WHI.6, WHI.7, WHI.8, WHI.9, WHI.10, WHI.11, WHI.13, WHII.1, WHII.2, WHII.3, WHII.4, WHII.5, WHII.6, WHII.7, WHII.9, WHII.10, WHII.11, WHII.12, VUS.1, VUS.2, VUS.3, VUS.5, VUS.6, VUS.10, VUS.11, VUS.12, VUS.13, VUS.14

Instructional Steps:

1. ***Introduce the lesson by asking students, "Have any of you had a memorable customer service experience— either positive or negative— when shopping at a store, visiting the doctor or dentist, or when interacting with a service provider?"*** Discuss examples from students (as well as your own).

2. ***Create a "T" chart and record characteristics of positive customer service vs. negative customer service, based on student experiences.*** What worker behaviors characterize a positive experience for customers or clients?

3. ***Explain to students that no matter what field they are considering entering—from health care to retail; from IT to automotive repair—customer service is a vital component of employee success.*** Tell students that today they will be researching companies known for excellent customer service to determine what mindsets and behaviors factor into successful customer service.

4. ***Divide students into research groups.*** Assign each group a company known for excellent customer service to research. Examples that you may want to use include Disney, Wegmans, Zappos, The Apple Store, and The Ritz-Carlton (but feel free to add other companies known for excellent customer service). Ask students to use Handout #1: Excellence in Customer Service to record their findings. Discuss appropriate keyword searches to ensure that students get the best results via the Internet.

5. ***Allow time for research and group work.*** Circulate among students and offer assistance as needed.

6. ***Hold class discussion to share research findings.*** Ask each group to present their findings about great customer service. Create a list of elements required for excellent customer service.

7. ***Reflect in writing.*** Based on the day's activity, ask students to reflect in writing on the following journal prompt:
   Why do you think customer service is important to the success of a business? What outcomes do businesses experience when they make customer service a priority? What outcomes may companies experience when customer service is not a priority?

Formative Assessment**:**

- Assess student understanding and participation as demonstrated in the class and small group discussions.
- Evaluate student understanding of concepts within the lesson as demonstrated by the findings recorded on Handout #1: Excellence in Customer Service.
- Evaluate student presentations of research.

Options for Adaptation/Differentiation:

- To offer student scaffolding for this activity, research just one company together, completing Handout #1: Excellence in Customer Service as a whole class.
- To extend this activity and provide further enrichment, ask students to use their notes to create a PowerPoint presentation about their chosen company. What philosophies and behaviors are behind the company's success when it comes to customer service?

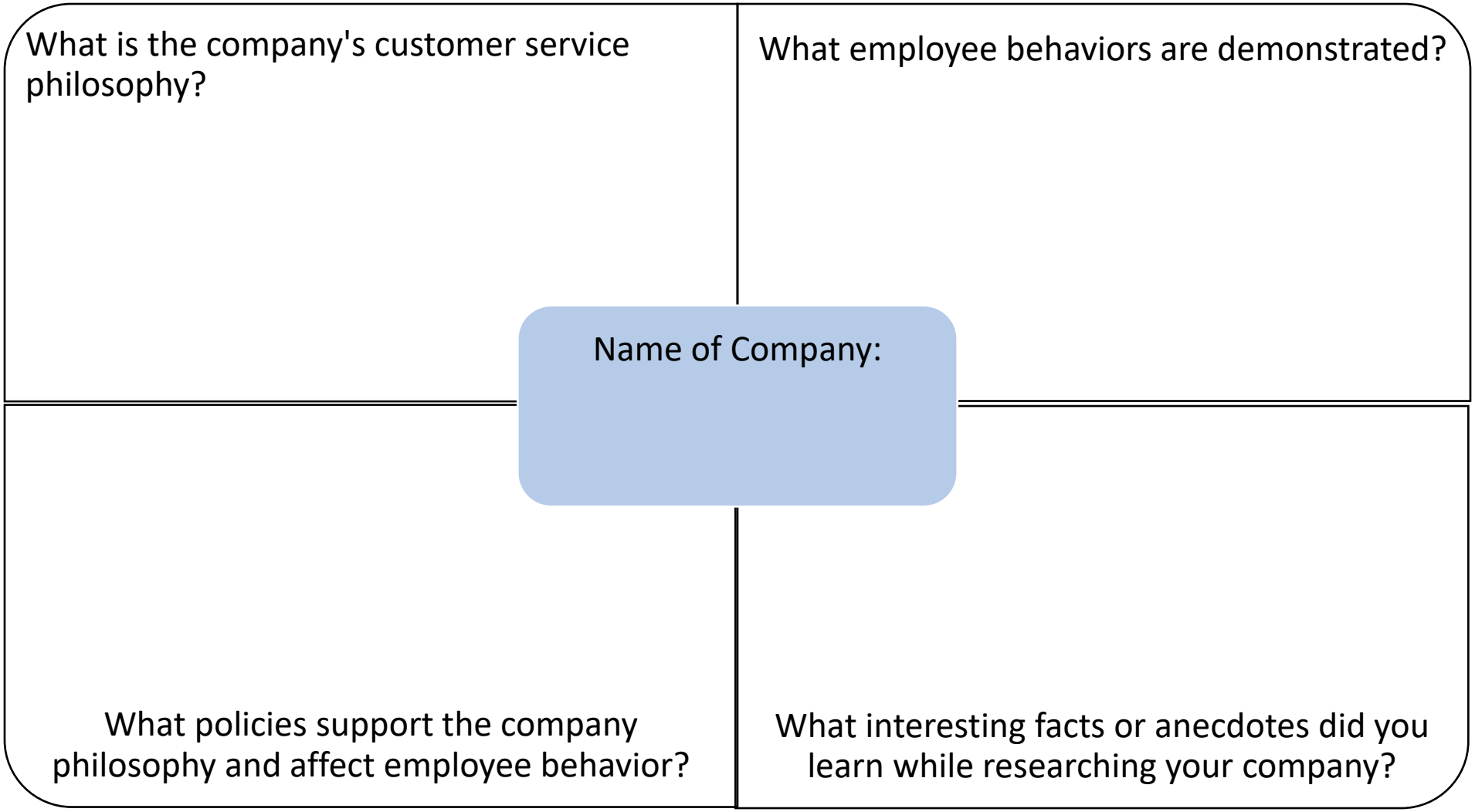
Suggestions for Follow-up:

- Invite a manager or business owner to discuss the importance of good customer service.
- Many elements of good customer service (e.g., listening skills, conflict-resolution skills, resourcefulness) are skills that align with overall workplace readiness, as well as with success in the classroom. Ask students to create a bulletin board of "tips for success" that incorporate some examples from student research.

Teacher Resource:
Dealing with Unhappy Customers: Turning a Challenge into an Opportunity, MindTools

Handout #1:

Excellence in Customer Service



Customer Service

Journal Assessment Rubric

	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)
Student displays conceptual understanding.	The student understands the concept and importance of customer service.	The student somewhat understands the concept and importance of customer service.	Student understanding is spotty or unclear; the student partially grasps the concept and importance of customer service.	The student does not demonstrate a conceptual understanding.
Written ideas are fully formed.	Ideas within the journal are developed and clear to the reader.	Ideas within the journal are somewhat developed and clear to the reader.	Ideas within the journal are incomplete or unclear to the reader.	Ideas within the journal are not developed.
Writing is organized and clear.	Student journal is organized in paragraphs and clearly conveys all ideas.	Student journal is somewhat organized in paragraphs and conveys most ideas.	Student journal requires additional organization and attention to detail.	Student journal is not organized and does not convey ideas.
Student uses good vocabulary and language choices.	Choice of vocabulary is specific, professional, and appropriate to the audience (teacher).	Choice of vocabulary is somewhat specific, professional, and appropriate to the audience (teacher).	Choice of vocabulary needs to be improved so that it is specific, professional, and appropriate to the audience (teacher). Some slang or simplistic words should be replaced.	Choice of vocabulary is not specific, professional, and appropriate to the audience (teacher). Slang or simplistic words replace those that would better convey student ideas.
Student attends to grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.	There are no grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.	There is one grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation error.	There are two grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.	There are more than two grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation errors.