Lesson Plan

Big-picture Thinking

Understanding Organizational Vision, Mission, and Values

Objective: Students will define organizational vision, mission, and values and explore the role of each in the workplace.

Workplace Readiness Skill: **Demonstrate big-picture thinking.**

Demonstration includes

- *defining **big-picture thinking** as an understanding of one's role in fulfilling the mission of the workplace and a consideration of the social, economic, and environmental effects of one's actions*
- *identifying the organization's structure, culture, policies, and procedures, as well as its role and position within the community, industry, and economy.*

Correlations to Other Workplace Readiness Skills:

- Demonstrate integrity.
- Demonstrate work ethic.
- Demonstrate career- and life-management skills.
- Demonstrate professionalism.

Correlations to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL):

- English: 6.RV, 6.C, 6.LU, 6.R, 6.W, 7.RV, 7.C, 7.LU, 7.R, 7.W, 8.RV, 8.C, 8.LU, 8.R, 8.W, 9.RV, 9.C, 9.LU, 9.R, 9.W, 10.RV, 10.C, 10.LU, 10.R, 10.W, 11.RV, 11.C, 11.LU, 11.R, 11.W, 12.RV, 12.C, 12.LU, 12.R, 12.W
- History and Social Sciences: WHI.3, WHI.9. WHI.10, WHII.2, WHII.3, VUS.3, VUS.10, VUS.12, VUS.15, VUS.16, GOVT.1, GOV.4, USII.2, USII.3, USII.5, USII.7, CE.1, CE.12

Instructional Steps:

1. ***Introduce the lesson by asking students to name a company with which they may want to work, either now or in the future.*** List them. Explain to students that every organization, whether it be a school system or a corporation, has a *vision*, a *mission*, and underlying *values*. Display Teacher Resource #1: Definitions, with the terms covered up. Ask students if they can determine which definition refers to *vision*, to *mission*, and to organizational *values*. Discuss the three and how they are related. To provide an example, consider using the vision and mission statement for your school division or school.

2. ***Research sample vision and mission statements.*** Going back to the list of companies, ask each student to conduct a brief Internet search to find one or two companies' vision and mission statements. Explain that many companies will frame their vision and mission in a published statement. These usually can be found on the "About Us" section of a company's website. Ask students to write down the mission and vision statements they find, and share with the class. Ask, "After reading the company's vision and mission statements, would you be more or less likely to want to work for that company?"

3. ***Relate the concepts of vision and mission to the workplace.*** Group students into groups of four or five and ask them to share the vision and mission statements from their Internet research. Ask groups to discuss the differences they notice among the various statements, and consider the role of vision and mission in a prospective employee's decision to join a company. Complete Handout #1: Vision and Mission in the Workplace.

4. ***Determine corporate values based upon a case study.*** Explain that corporate vision, mission, and values are more than just statements and words. They should apply to the everyday practices and decisions of the company. Share the case study in Teacher Resource #2: A Case Study in Values and Corporate Decision-Making, and use it as a springboard for discussion. Ask, "Based on the case study, what values are important to the manufacturer? How are corporate decisions and behaviors linked to values? How can a company ensure it is staying true to its core values?"

Formative Assessment**:**

- Assess student understanding as demonstrated in the class and small group discussions.
- Evaluate student understanding of concepts within the lesson as demonstrated by responses on Handout #1: Vision and Mission in the Workplace (student responses will vary based upon the companies they research/choose).

Options for Adaptation/Differentiation:

- To offer scaffolding to students and to complete this activity in a shorter amount of time, frame the initial discussion about vision, mission, and values around one sample organization, such as a school or district.
- Ask students to work in groups to create mock companies. Students must identify a product or service that their company offers, define the company's underlying values, and must describe its vision and mission. Incorporate art and design by asking students to design a logo for their company that reflects its vision, mission, and values.

Suggestions for Follow-up:

- Invite a manager from business and industry to discuss the mission and vision of his/her company, including how the mission and vision are used and shared within the organization.
- Ask students to write a journal reflection using the following prompt:

> *Jill has worked hard in her chosen career field, information technology. She is finally ready to make the big jump—Jill is starting her own IT consultancy. Before doing so, she has a lot of planning to do. Before she dives into such things as budgeting or hiring employees, Jill wants to begin by defining her company vision, mission, and values. How should Jill proceed? What might she need to consider as she formulates her vision and mission statements? How should Jill's personal values translate into her company values?*

Teacher Resource #1: Vision/Mission/Values Definitions

MISSION	This specifies an organization's purpose or **reason for being**. It should capture the essence of the organization, what it does, and for whom. This statement should guide daily activities, decisions, and organizational culture. It is the primary standard against which the organization's plans and programs should be evaluated.
VISION	This is aspirational and describes what the organization is **trying to become**. This statement will often include what the organization will focus on or value to realize its purpose. This statement clarifies how the world will be different because of the organization. It can stir emotions and usually includes universal values such as respect and integrity.
VALUES	These are **principles and ideals** that bind the organization together (including the customers, employees, vendors, and all stakeholders). They are developed to frame an ethical context for the organization, and to many they are the "ethical standards" of the organization—the foundation for decision-making within the organization.

Handout #1: Vision and Mission in the Workplace

Directions: In teams, review the mission and vision statements of various companies, and answer the questions below.

1. If you had to choose a career with one of the listed companies, based on its vision and mission statements, which one would you select?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. List additional factors that influenced your decision. You may want to research the company to find out information such as its location(s) and the types of jobs it offers.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. In what ways would working for that organization enhance your skills, interests, and talents?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. In what situations might the mission statement be used by managers in the company to justify an initiative, an expenditure, or a new project? Would this be good or bad, in your opinion?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Considering the company's vision and mission statements, list attributes and skills that company may be looking for in an entry-level employee.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Why might it make sense to research an organization's vision and mission statements prior to applying for a job with that organization? Explain.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Teacher Resource #2:

A Case Study in Values and Corporate Decision-Making

In 1982, someone laced Tylenol capsules with highly poisonous potassium cyanide, causing several deaths and alarm around the country. Johnson & Johnson, the manufacturer of the product, acted quickly and embarked on an active media campaign to issue mass warnings. They immediately recalled the more than 31 million bottles of Tylenol in circulation. Johnson & Johnson offered replacement Tylenol to those who returned pills already purchased. They also offered a reward for information leading to the apprehension of the individual or people involved in the poisonings.

Prior to the poisonings, Tylenol controlled more than 35 percent of the over-the-counter pain reliever market; just a few weeks later, that number sat at less than eight percent. However, because of its swift and aggressive handling of the matter, as well as the introduction of new safety protocols, Johnson & Johnson's Tylenol regained its market share and continues to be a popular product to this day.

The company's values are reflected in its credo, which begins, "We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses and patients, to mothers and fathers and all others who use our products and services. In meeting their needs everything we do must be of high quality." In this case, the company credo was demonstrated in its behavior during the aftermath of a tragedy.

Questions to discuss:

1. Based on the case study, what values are important to the manufacturer?
2. How are corporate decisions and behaviors linked to values?
3. How can a company ensure it is staying true to its core values?

Source: "How the Tylenol Murders of 1982 Changed the Way We Consume Medicine," PBS, September 19, 2014.

Full text of "Our Credo," Johnson & Johnson.