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The Big Picture

This activity was created to be used primarily with:

11. Big-Picture Thinking

Secondary skills include:

1. Creativity and Innovation
3. Initiative and Self-Direction
5. Work Ethic
8. Respect for Diversity
9. Customer Service Orientation
10. Teamwork
14. Efficiency and Productivity
20. Professionalism

1. Teacher will define Big-Picture Thinking as:

an understanding of one's role in fulfilling the mission of the workplace: this is how a company describes itself. The operative word here is "mission" referring to the formal document of "mission statement," which companies publicize because it helps employees and others to clarify the main work, service, or product of the company. The mission statement lists the aims and values of a company, organization, or individual. Often it is accompanied by a vision statement, which states the future objectives of an organization. The vision statement is intended as a guide to help the organization make decisions that align with its philosophy and declared set of goals. Mission is what it is; vision is what it hopes to become. Both descriptive statements help those working within the organization to understand their role in relation to the big-picture goals and values.

a consideration of the social, economic, and environmental effects of one's actions: because a company functions within a context of larger financial and environmental ecosystem, its actions can impact that ecosystem. Social refers to community and sometimes political environment. Economic refers to how the company functions within a larger economic climate, which could be heavily impacted by positive or negative economic conditions, such as globalism. Environmental refers to the actual physical, natural environment which a company exists within, and how it manages natural resources and byproducts or waste.

identifying the organization's structure: a system that outlines how certain activities are directed in order to achieve the goals of an organization. These activities can include rules, roles, and responsibilities. The organizational structure also determines how information flows between levels within the company.



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identifying the organization’s culture: the collection of values, expectations, and practices that guide and inform the actions of all team members. Think of it as the collection of traits that make your company what it is. Culture is also the spirit or morale of an organization's people and is much broader than simple mission and vision statements, although both can help define it.

identifying the organization’s policies and procedures: policies and procedures are how the work or service is to be accomplished, describing details of every role within an organization, policies are also how an organization governs itself within a larger framework of the law.

as well as its role and position within the community: the position is the degree to which an organization interacts within its community, depending on location, and how the organization contributes to ideals of community support, education, philanthropy, and charity beyond its core business; how important the organization is to the health of the community.

its role and position within the industry: this is the companies relative financial health and contributions and perceived value within a competitive market segment.

its role and position within the economy: this value or position can be market share or understood more broadly in terms of local, regional, national, or global economic impact.

Note. Big-Picture Thinking skills offer many crossover skill teaching opportunities for reinforcement.

2. Teacher will present various strategies students could use to improve their skills for ways to analyze an organization through the lenses of mission, vision, culture, and organizational roles and impacts.

3. Teachers will take learners through the following questions and have students decide which component of big-picture thinking each question would be trying to answer.

1. How long have you been with the company?
2. How has the company changed since you joined?
3. I’ve read about the company’s founding, but can you tell me more about...?
4. Can you tell me about the team I’ll be working with?
5. What’s the company and team culture like?
6. What’s different about working here than anywhere else you’ve worked?
7. Has your role changed since you’ve been here?
8. What can you tell me about your new products or plans for growth?
9. How would you describe the work environment here—is the work typically collaborative or more independent?
10. Who will I work with most closely?
11. What’s your favorite part about working here?
12. Where do you see this company in the next few years?
13. What are the team’s biggest current challenges?



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14. What are the current goals that the company is focused on, and how does this team work to support hitting those goals?
15. How does this organization give back to the community at this location?
16. What are the biggest economic indicators that might present the largest challenges for this organization moving forward?
17. What gets you most excited about the company's future?

Additional resources:

51 Great Questions to Ask in an Interview: <https://www.themuse.com/advice/51-interview-questions-you-should-be-asking>

THE 4 TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE YOU SHOULD KNOW: A comprehensive overview of the most common types of company culture: <https://builtin.com/company-culture/types-of-organizational-culture>