

MODULE 4

On the Job



New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance
Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor
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MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #31

FIRST DAYS ON THE NEW JOB

In this activity, MAC participants will become familiar with what to expect from a new employer.



SUPPLIES AND HANDOUTS

Handouts:

WORRIED?

FIRST DAYS ON THE JOB SITUATIONS

GOALS FOR WORK

WORRIED

CONFUSED

TIRED

BORED

AFRAID

ADJUSTING TO WORKING

MANAGING WORK AND FAMILY



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

adjust

benefits

bored

confused

Human Resources

payroll

policies

procedures

responsibilities

situations

supervisor

tired

worried



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The first day of work on a new job can be both exciting and stressful. In this activity, the MAC participants will learn about how to prepare for a new job, what to expect, what questions to ask, and how they may feel when their new job finally begins.

This activity can be conducted with all MAC participants, whether they have obtained employment or not.

For most new employees, regardless of their work experience or the type of job, the primary concerns are:

- How am I going to get to work?
- What should I wear?
- Do I take my lunch and where do I eat?
- When do I get paid?



In other words, concerns about the actual job responsibilities are often secondary to personal concerns. The MAC Coach should discuss the possible responses to these questions and how the MAC participants can find out the answers.

There may be less tension when the new job begins if the MAC Coach provides general information in advance about:

- Work hours (including work shifts and expectations about overtime)
- Breaks (including employer policies about smoking, leaving the premises, and location of breaks)
- Transportation options (including information the employer may have about public transportation)
- Meals (including lunch breaks, access to vending machines or cafeteria, where to eat)
- Uniform or dress code (including tattoos, piercings, jewelry, shoes, and uniform fees)
- Tools and equipment required

Based on the overview, the MAC participants can prepare questions to ask their new employers.

MAC participants should also be aware of the paperwork they will have to complete. They may be able to refer to their application portfolio (see Module 2 – Activity #13 *Getting Ready for the Job Hunt*) and should gather the following so that they are prepared:

- Social Security #
- Permanent address
- Phone numbers



In addition, the MAC participants may need to know about:

- Health care options
- 401(k) and other retirement plans
- Paycheck automatic deposits
- Union dues
- Other benefits

Although the MAC Coach cannot describe individual benefits for each employer (unless the Employee Handout from Human Resources is available for review), a general overview of these topics may be necessary.

Most businesses provide an orientation, but it can be cursory and confusing. MAC participants should be aware of some of the language used when completing forms and making decisions about benefits – and most importantly, whom to ask at their new place of employment if they have questions.

Most employers will also provide training about new equipment, organizational policies and procedures, and job responsibilities. However, there are no guarantees that the training will be thorough and helpful, particularly if the MAC participant is still learning English. The MAC Coach should reassure them that asking questions is expected and respected, and most employees feel a bit flustered on the first few days of work.

A critical topic to discuss with MAC participants is the issue of making new friends at work because new relationships may not always be the healthiest friendships. Not all co-workers will welcome a new employee, particularly refugees. This topic is discussed in detail in Module 4 – Activity #32 *Friendships at Work*.

This activity can also be used in conjunction with Module 1 – Activity #4 *Building a Strong Work Ethic*, Module 3 – Activity #30 *Managing Work and Family*, and Module 4—Activity #33 *Professional Behavior at Work*.

ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Distribute the handout WORRIED? and discuss the questions on the handout. The MAC participants do not need to record their initial responses, but they should list ideas about how to resolve the things that they are worried about. (If assistance is not available for the MAC participants to take notes, concentrate on the discussion.)



This discussion can occur whether all of the MAC participants have obtained employment or not.

Ask: As you think about your first day on a new job, what are you worried about

Discuss their concerns and then provide the information described in the Background Information section of this activity.

2. *Ask:* Who at your job do you think will be able to answer your questions?

Discuss the role of Human Resources (HR), supervisors, and co-workers in answering questions.

Stress that even though some co-workers will be very helpful, they may not be accurate when providing information and advice.

Encourage the MAC participants to identify the individual in their new organization who is responsible for issues such as:

- payroll and benefits
- policies and procedures
- job responsibilities.

3. Discuss relationships with supervisors. Since the style of supervisors vary considerably, discuss:

- when to approach a supervisor with a question
- how to build a strong relationship with the boss
- what impresses supervisors and employers.

4. Ask: What do *you* need to do to make sure *you* are prepared for the first day on a new job?

Begin this conversation by asking:



What will you wear?

Will you take your lunch?

How will you get to work?

What have you been told about the job?

What time do you need to be there? What time do you plan on arriving?

What else do you have to take with you to work, such as bus fare or medications?

5. Discuss the handout FIRST DAYS ON THE JOB SITUATIONS.

Remind MAC participants about the components of a strong work ethic using the handout GOALS FOR WORK.

6. Post the handouts WORRIED, CONFUSED, TIRED, BORED, and AFRAID.

Discuss how these are normal emotions during the first few days on the job.

Some MAC participants may not realize that the first few days at work may actually be boring because they will be given introductory tasks or reviewing things that they already know.

They may not realize how tired they will be as they adjust to a new work schedule.

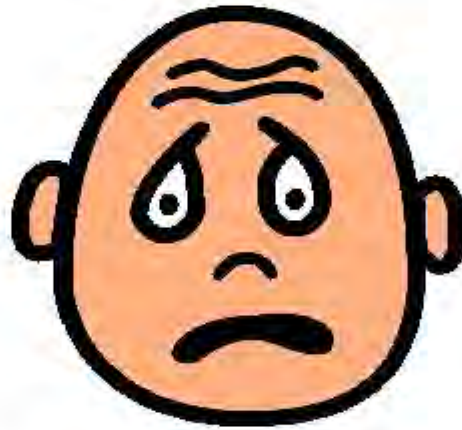
Review what they should do if they are confused, worried or afraid.

Distribute the handout ADJUSTING TO WORKING and stress that if they are prepared, they will feel more confident. Discuss each item on the handout.

Remind them that the job will become easier and they should be proud that they are employed.

7. Some MAC participants may benefit from a review of the handout MANAGING WORK AND FAMILY as they prepare for their new employment.

WORRIED?



As you think about your first day on a new job, what are you worried about?

Who can answer some of your questions?

What do you need to do to make sure that you are prepared for the first day on a new job?

First Days on the Job Situations

Tomorrow is your first new job on the second shift, starting at 3:00.

You can get the bus to work at either 2:15 or 2:30.

What should you do?

On your first day on the job you are sent to an orientation session. The first assignment is a pile of paperwork. You don't understand all of it, so you ask questions to the new employee sitting next to you. The two of you get along right away. By the third day of the Orientation you realize that your new friend is clinging to you but you want to meet new people.

How do you meet more people at work?

You are invited to sit in the cafeteria during your lunch break with a co-worker who has been training you. After a few minutes you realize that the co-worker and his friends are complainers. They criticize everything, even the boss, without worrying about being overheard. You really want to stay clear of them in the future.

How do you meet new people without insulting the complainers?

You want to save money, so you bring your lunch and take the bus. The team of employees in your department go out to eat every Friday.

What can you do?

The job is a lot more complicated than you thought it would be, and you are feeling overwhelmed. You don't want to whine, but working at your job is a lot harder than you thought it would be.

How do you cope during this transition to a new job?

GOALS FOR WORK



BE ON TIME



BE CLEAN



BE FRIENDLY



HEALTHY LUNCH



WORK HARD



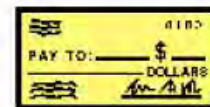
BE CAREFUL



OBEY RULES

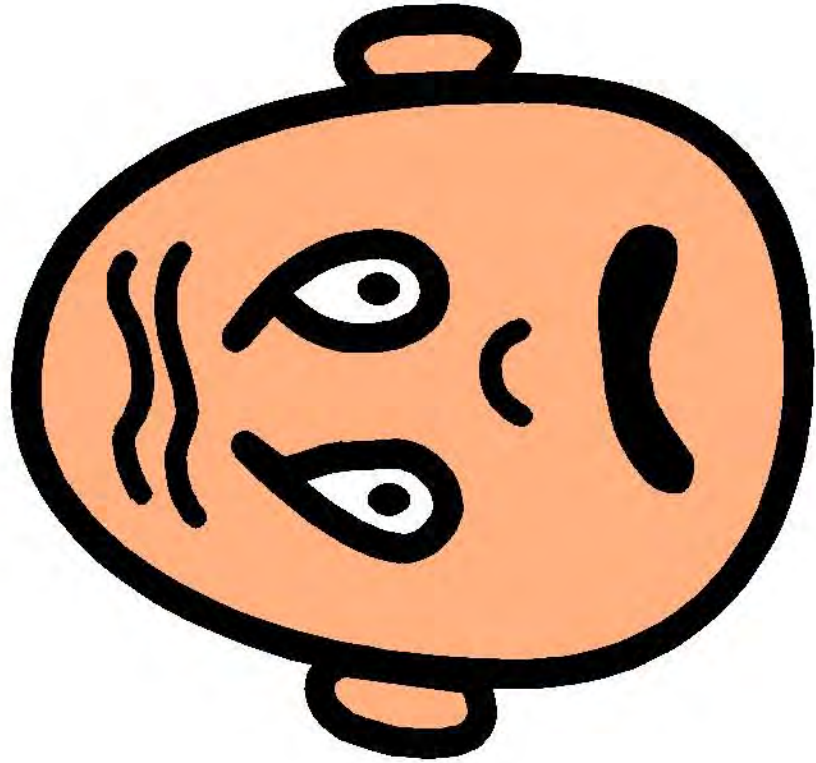


ASK QUESTIONS

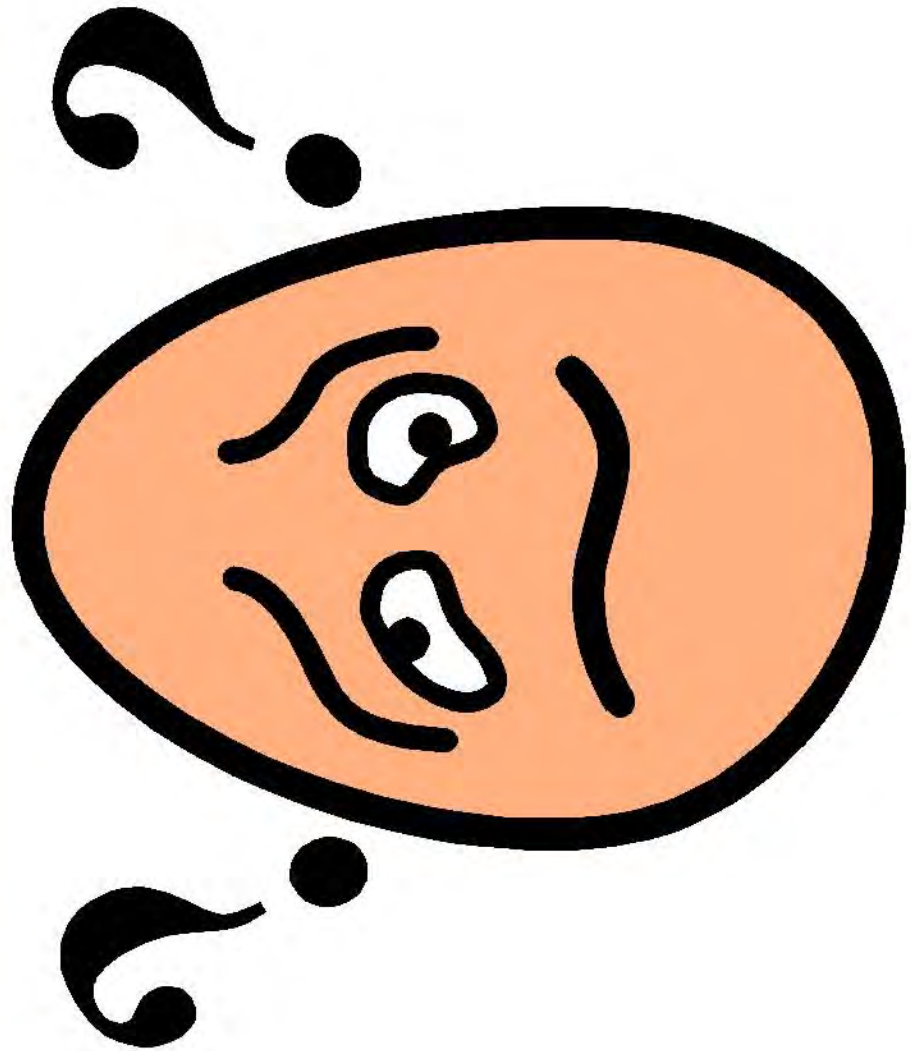


EARN MONEY

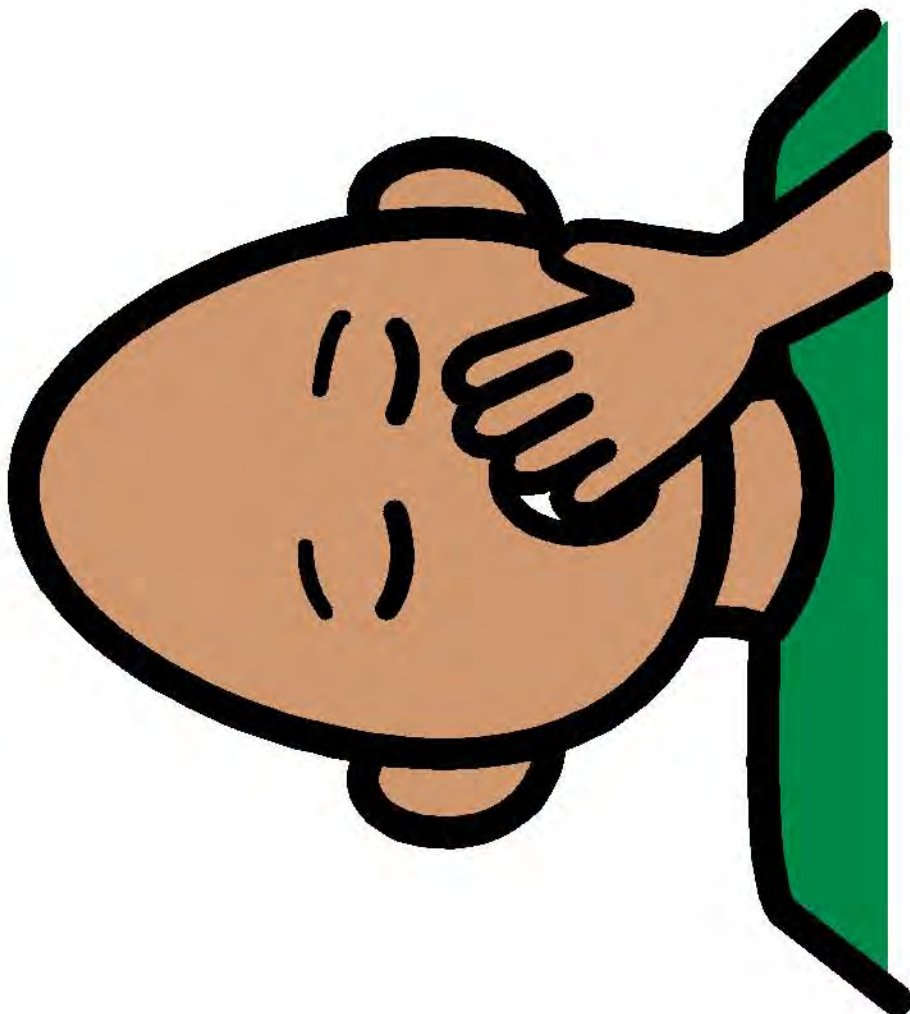
Worried



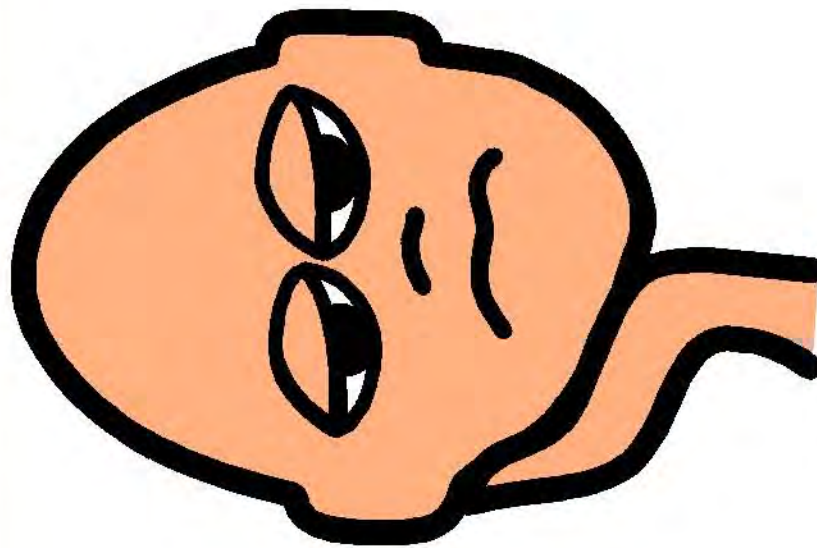
Confused



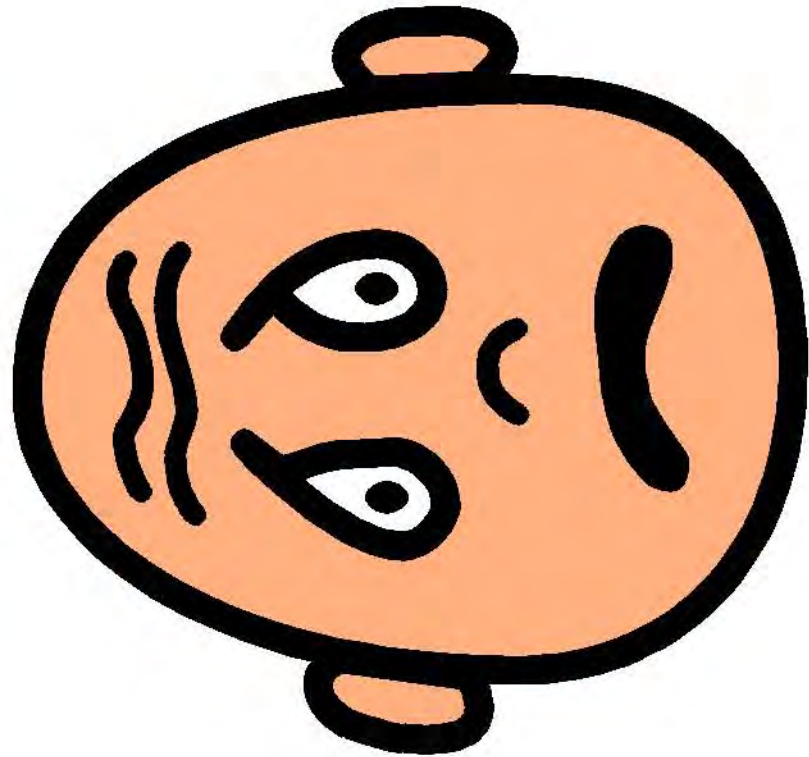
Tired



Bored



Afraid



Adjusting to Working



Go to bed
early



Arrange for
transportation



Get your
clothes
ready



Shower and
Shave



Pack your
lunch



Plan for your
paycheck



Get your
questions
ready



Stay
Positive!

Managing Work and Family



Do you keep a family calendar for everyone to see?

Do you mark special events, work schedules, and holidays?

Have you planned for family time?



Do you have support from family, friends, and neighbors?

Do you know who to call if you need help?

Do you have more than one backup for child care?



Do you know how to obtain a cell phone?

Can you be located in case of an emergency?

Do you know how to reach family and friends on your phone?



Do you make lists of what needs to be done?

Do you delegate some tasks that you really don't have to do yourself?

Do you try to keep paperwork in one place?



Do you schedule a time to shop for food?

Do you buy healthy foods?

Are you eating healthy foods and taking care of yourself?



Do you cook extra food to serve later in the week?

Do you have help in preparing food and cleaning up?

Do you save money and time by freezing foods?



Have you checked your child care arrangements for safety and loving care?

Do you arrange to check on your child when possible?

Do you talk to your child about their child care experience?



Do you find time to focus just on your children?

Do you use every opportunity to help your children learn?

Do you make sure that you have time with your family?





MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #32

FRIENDSHIPS AT WORK

In this activity, MAC participants will become familiar with how friendships should be fulfilling and positive.



SUPPLIES AND HANDOUTS

Handouts:

FRIENDSHIP BOUNDARIES

FRIENDS AT WORK

NEW FRIENDS

FRIENDS HELP

FRIENDS SHARE

FRIENDS TALK

FRIENDS ARE HONEST

FRIENDS ARE POLITE

FRIENDS ARE KIND



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

boundaries

compliment

friends

honest

kind

lunchroom

manager

polite

relationship

umbrella



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Friends are not always easy to find at work, but they can make the day more enjoyable.

However, it is important for MAC participants to understand the difference between a true friendship, where a co-worker is supportive and kind, and a “friendship” that interferes with productivity and a positive work ethic.

For many refugees, the opportunity to make new friends can be very appealing. The MAC Coach should explain that it takes time to develop rewarding friendships at work. The first co-workers that the MAC participants meet, even if they are friendly, may not be the best friends to have at work. New employees should be aware that finding friends requires:

- patience to discover who can be a good friend
- participating in a variety of activities to expand the number of relationships at work
- revealing minimal personal information until a strong, trusting friendship has developed
- recognizing that someone who is friendly at work may not wish to have a social relationship after work.

Good friends:

- enjoy being with you
- choose to spend time with you
- are honest, but kind
- are polite and respectful
- are helpful
- are supportive and encouraging
- don't hurt your feelings.



MAC participants may be invited to join a group for lunch, only to discover later that it's a group of employees who are complainers and not very well liked. Or

they may, unfortunately, discover that a co-worker who befriended them does not have their best interest at heart and may be trying to undermine them as a new employee. They should always be friendly to everyone but take time to establish positive friendships.

This recommendation to be cautious at first may seem to paint a negative picture of the welcome that refugees may receive, but too often new employees (regardless of their background) are tested or resented. This treatment can be confusing to MAC participants who are looking forward to enjoying the new job and making new friends.

The MAC Coach can help the participants understand that positive friends do not:

- distract employees from working
- encourage employees to break the rules
- isolate employees from other workers
- borrow personal items unless there is a clear agreement
- question, criticize, or gossip about you
- invade your privacy or personal space
- complain or challenge the boss
- make an employee feel pressured, uncomfortable, or unsafe
- encourage activities that are unsafe or illegal.

The MAC Coach can use the handout FRIENDSHIP BOUNDARIES as a reference when discussing the qualities of a trustworthy friend.

The MAC Coach can also use this activity in conjunction with Module 5 – Activity #46 *Bullying* and #49 *Gangs*.

ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Using the Background Information in this activity and the handout FRIENDSHIP BOUNDARIES as a guide, discuss the handouts:

FRIENDS AT WORK
NEW FRIENDS
FRIENDS HELP
FRIENDS SHARE
FRIENDS TALK
FRIENDS ARE HONEST
FRIENDS ARE POLITE
FRIENDS ARE KIND

Stress the qualities of a good friend and how to patiently develop friendships at work.

2. With another adult, role play a series of scenes that take place in a lunchroom at work.

Ask after each role play: Is this a good friend?

Discuss if the co-worker is a *friend*, or *friendly*, and if the relationship, with time, could develop into a personal friendship.

Role play:

- Invite a co-worker to take a break with you. Make sure to mention that it is a scheduled break and approved by the supervisor.
- Tell a co-worker that it's okay to take things home that belong to the employer (e.g., office supplies, bathroom supplies) and they won't get into trouble.
- Tell a co-worker that you are available to help them later and ask if that's okay.
- Give a co-worker a personal compliment.
- Invite a co-worker out for pizza after work.
- Ask a co-worker if they watched television or a movie the night before.



- Ask a co-worker if they enjoy taking the bus to work. Then ask about their sick child, whether they were able to find a new winter coat, and other personal questions.
- Tell a co-worker that it's raining and you have an extra umbrella.
- Tell a co-worker that you understand how the job can be frustrating and it's all the fault of the lousy manager.
- Ask a co-worker if they would like to come with you to discuss a problem with the manager. The problem is not a concern of the co-worker.
- Tell a co-worker to be careful when they are lifting something and offer assistance.
- Bring a co-worker some of your leftovers from dinner the night before.
- Tell a co-worker about something you heard about another worker. Explain that you are not supposed to tell anyone, but you are friends so you are sharing the information.
- Tell a co-worker that they should leave work early with you to get to a concert.



3. Review what MAC participants can do to develop positive friendships at work and professional relationships with their co-workers and supervisor.

Ask: What are some examples of things you can do to demonstrate that you are friendly and helpful at work?

4. You may want to discuss the topic of romance in the workplace with the MAC participants. Some employers have strict policies about romantic relationships at work.

FRIENDSHIP BOUNDARIES

PLACE A CHECK MARK NEXT TO THE QUALITIES
OF A TRUSTWORTHY FRIEND.

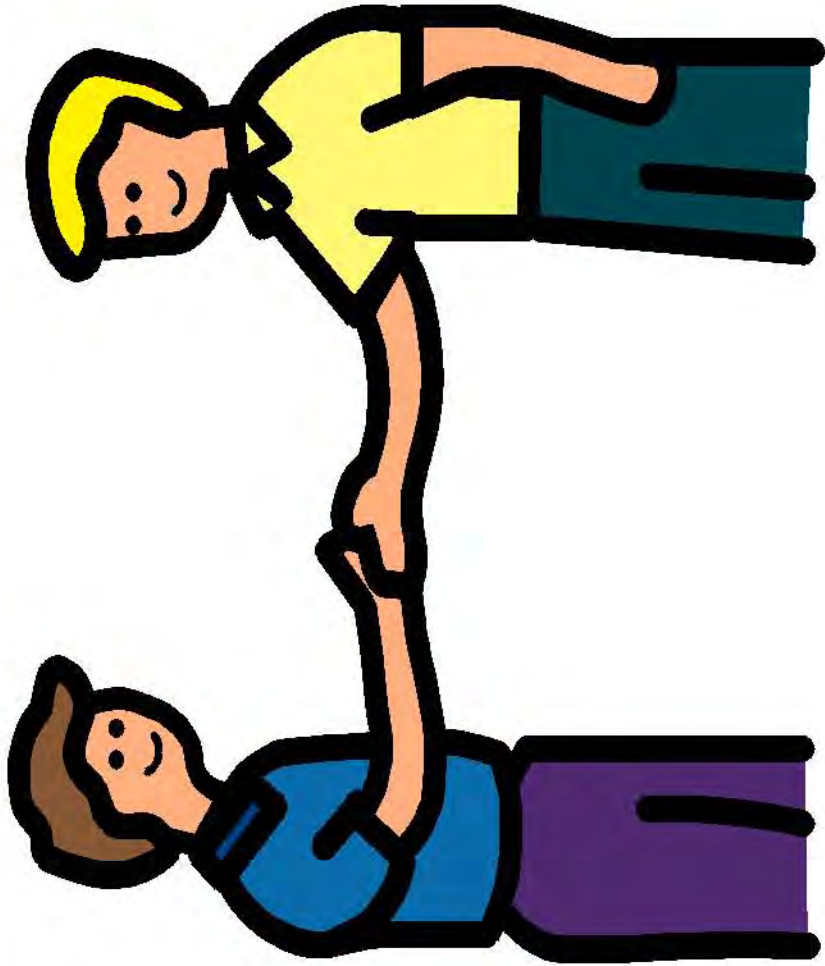
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- ☐ Offers approval
 - ☐ Wants what is best for you
 - ☐ Provides support and kindness
 - ☐ Recognizes when you are feeling low
 - ☐ Defends and supports you to others
 - ☐ Keeps private information private
 - ☐ Doesn't gossip about you
 - ☐ Provides helpful suggestions
 - ☐ Knows when to listen and when to give advice
 - ☐ Understands that you have family and work responsibilities
 - ☐ Doesn't encourage you to do things that are unsafe or illegal
 - ☐ Doesn't socialize with people who are negative influences
 - ☐ Shares information with you with openness and honesty
 - ☐ Does not pry or expect you to share personal information
 - ☐ Never threatens, criticizes, belittles, or insults you
 - ☐ Does not deliberately hurt you emotionally
 - ☐ Does not behave inappropriately or embarrass you
 - ☐ Enjoys similar activities; introduces you to new activities
 - ☐ Demonstrates with actions that they can be trustworthy



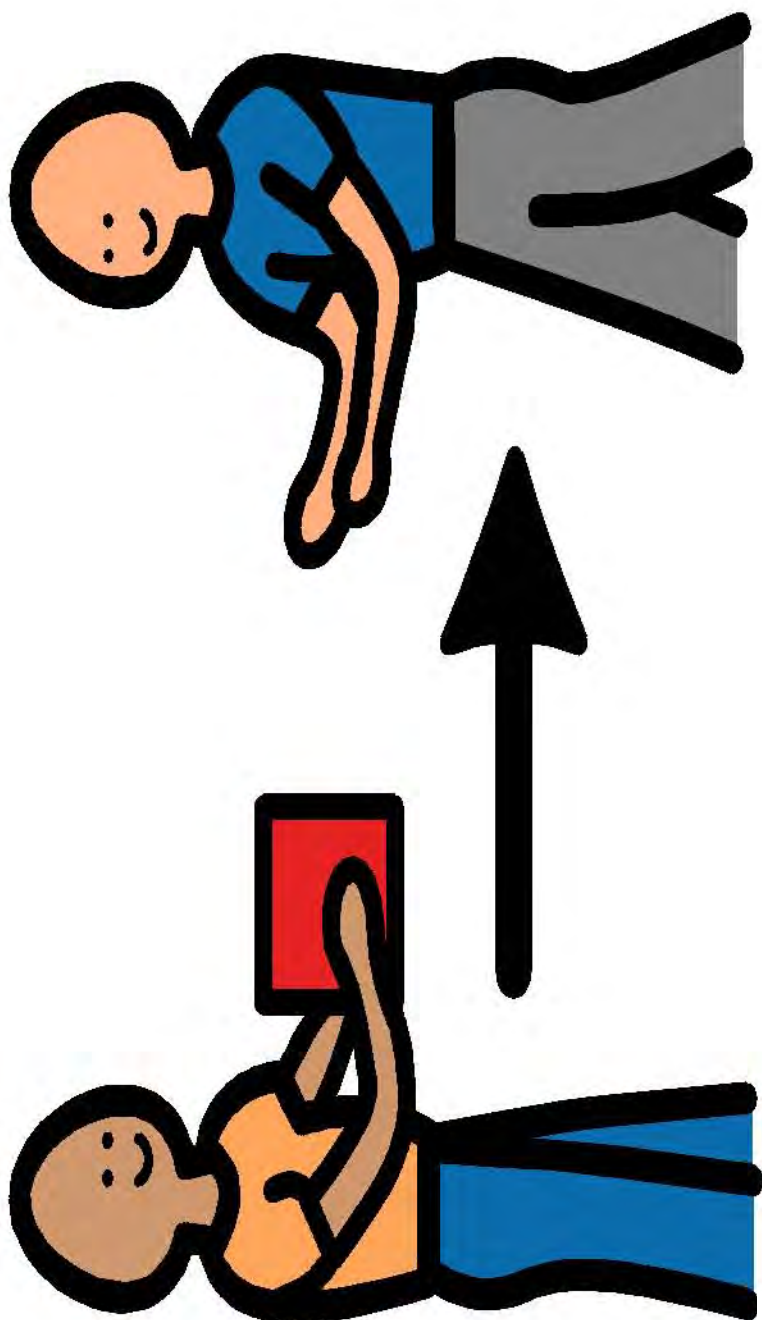
Friends at Work



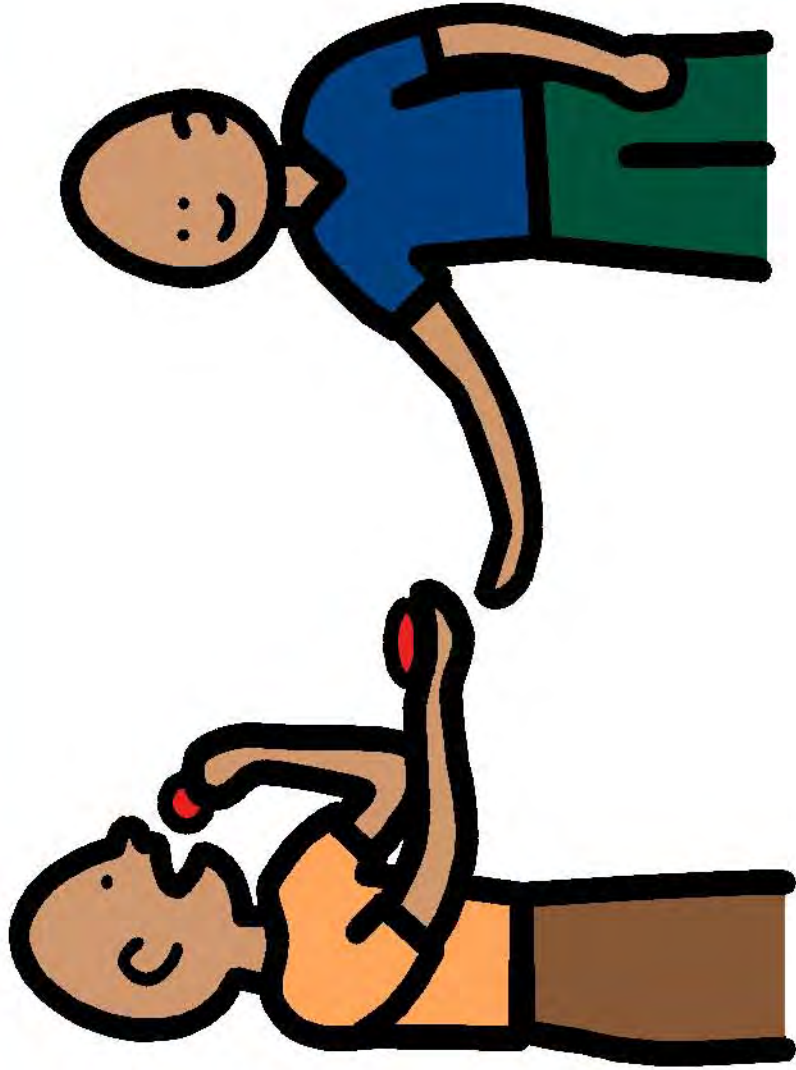
New Friends



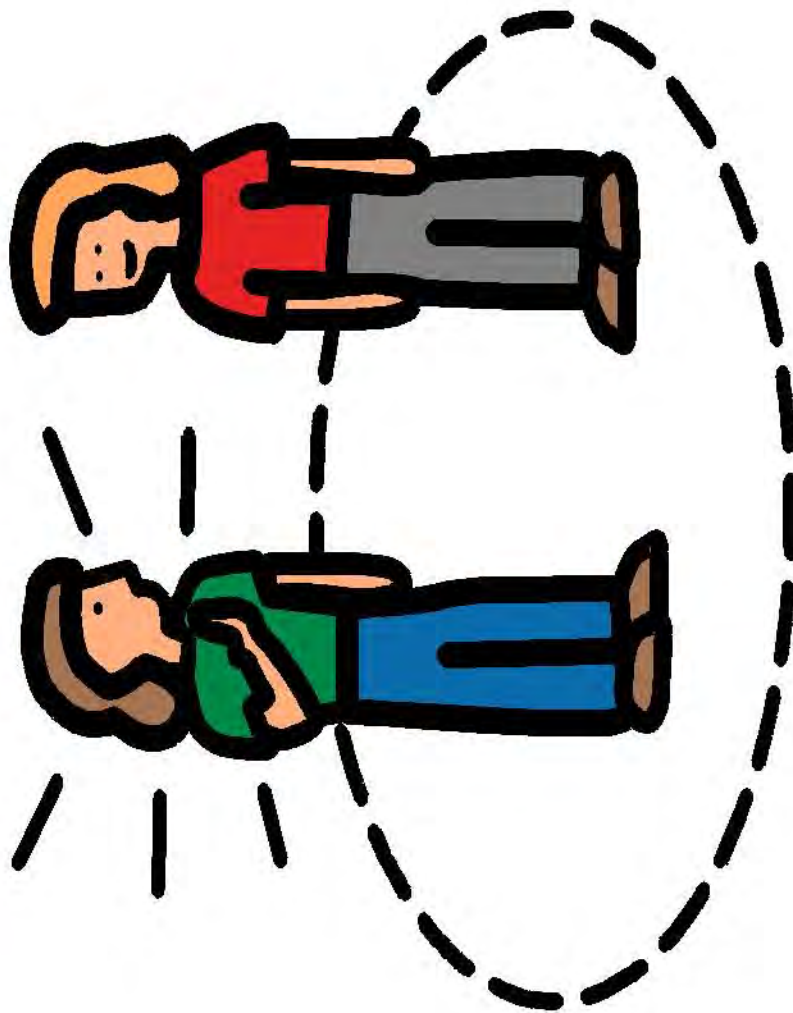
Friends Help



Friends Share



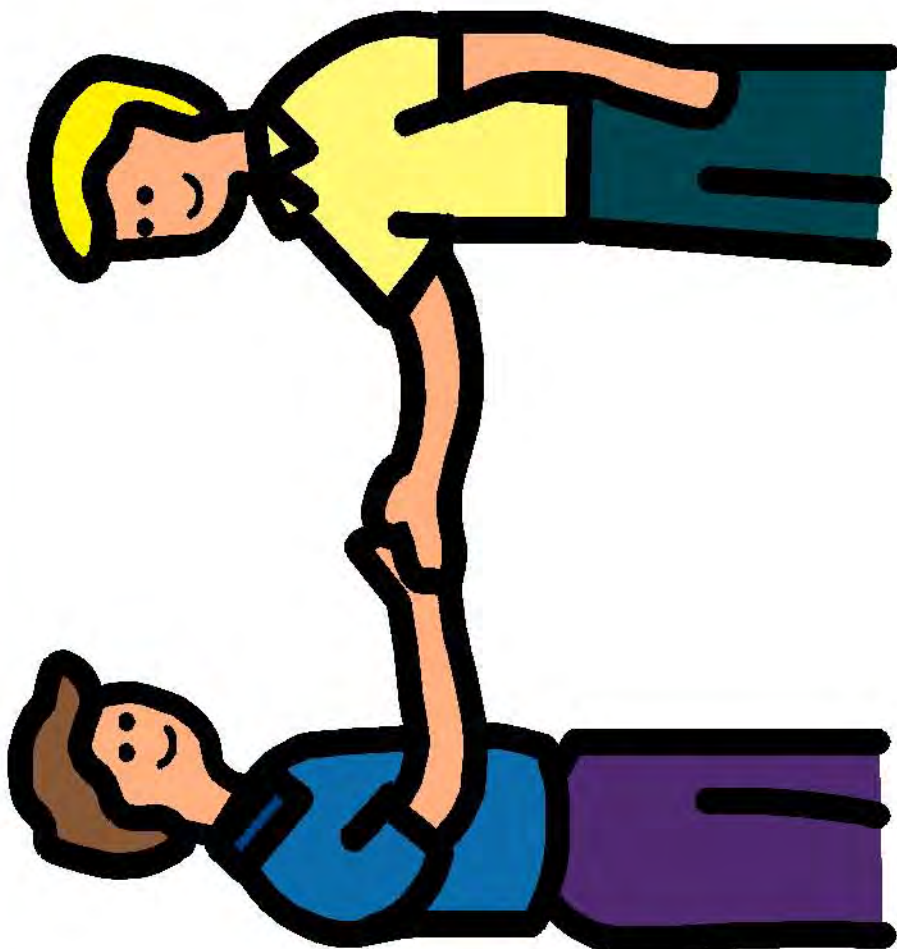
Friends Talk



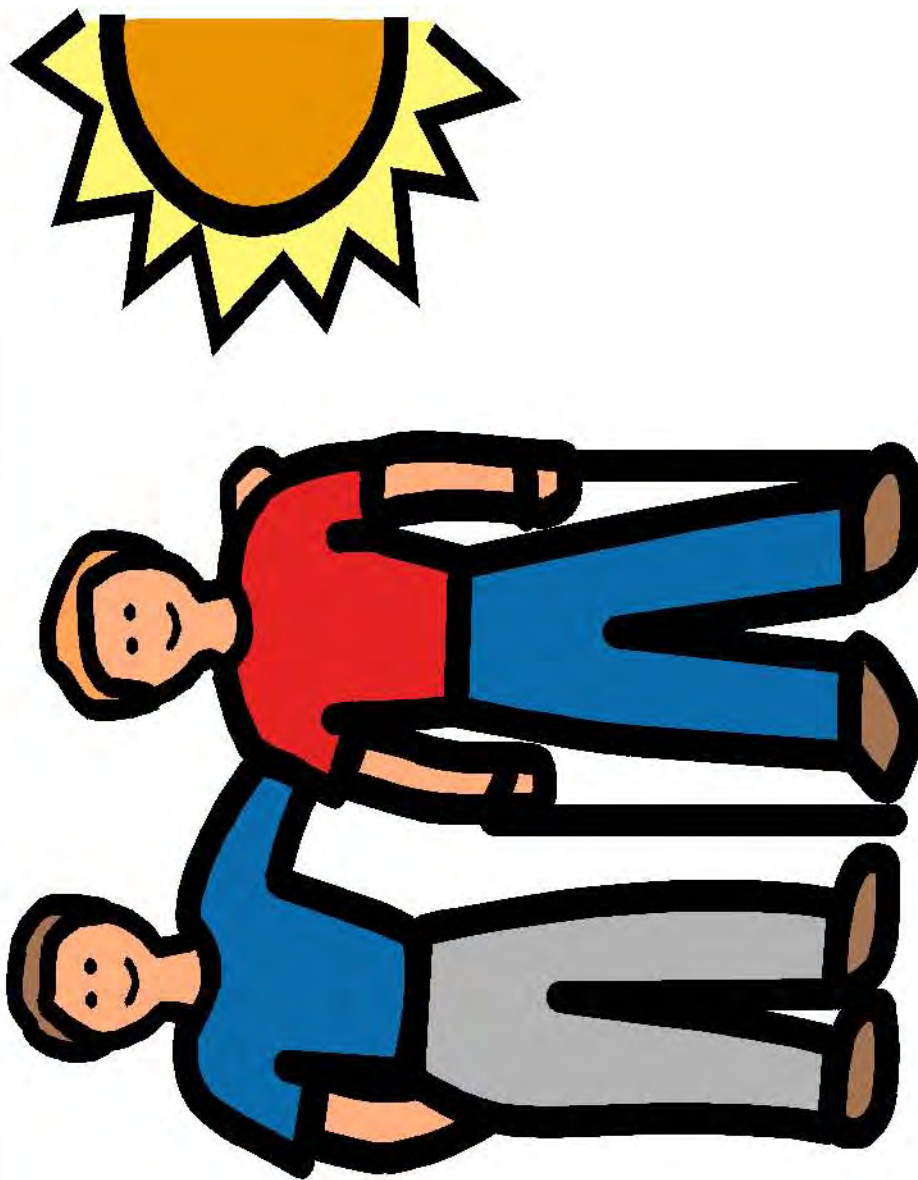
Friends are Honest



Friends are Polite



Friends are Kind





MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #33

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AT WORK

In this activity, MAC participants will become familiar with the characteristics of professional behavior at work, regardless of the type of job.



SUPPLIES AND HANDOUTS

A large box containing:

- alarm clock
- clean uniform or shirt
- iPod
- cell phone
- fancy jewelry
- tank top (men's and women's)
- flip-flops
- picture or poster of a movie star
- baby doll (representing a child)
- watch
- large bag of candy
- nail polish
- pillow
- comic book/magazine
- squirt gun
- chewing gum

Handout:

KEY ELEMENTS OF PROFESSIONALISM
(reference for MAC Coach)



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

(See the items listed in Supplies)

- behavior
- concentration
- customer
- exhausted
- focused
- gossip
- medication
- professionalism
- restroom
- supervisor
- uniform



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The MAC participants may not be able to envision themselves as “professionals,” but they will be expected to adhere to basic professional standards, policies, and procedures, even if they do not see co-workers acting professionally.

For reference for the MAC Coach, the characteristics of professionalism are described in the handout KEY ELEMENTS OF PROFESSIONALISM.

Note that prior to this activity the MAC Coach may want to review the concepts in Module 1 – Activity #4 *Building a Strong Work Ethic* with the MAC participants.

This activity can also be used in conjunction with:

Module 1 – Activity #6 First Impressions

Module 3 – Activity #22 Building Self-Reliance

Module 3 – Activity #30 Managing Work and Family

Module 4 – Activity #31 First Days on the New Job

Module 4 – Activity #32 Friendships at Work.



ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Ask each MAC participant, one at a time, to pull an item out of the box.

Ask: Is this something that you should take to work?

Discuss the responses of the group.

Recognize that sometimes the answer will depend on the policies of the organization and the culture of the work setting.

Ask: if the item is brought to work, what message does it send?

Explain the reasons for leaving some of the items at home (e.g., flip-flops for safety, jewelry for safety and security, personal items for privacy).

2. *Ask:* What would happen if you broke the rules and you were not very professional?

Explain about how a supervisor can write a warning that will go into an employee's file, or put an employee on probation – or even fire them for unprofessional conduct.

3. *Ask:* What would be the professional thing to do in these situations?

- You are having a difficult morning and you missed the bus to work.
- You desperately need to take a restroom break, but it's not your time for a break.
- You are exhausted from problems at home and are not feeling focused at work.
- You and your doctor are working on identifying the best medication for you, but in the meantime you are having side effects that interfere with your concentration.
- A customer is really giving you a hard time.
- A co-worker is really annoying you.
- You didn't have time to shower in the morning and co-workers are avoiding you.



- Your uniform has a food stain on it.
 - Your co-workers are gossiping and not working and you are very interested in what they are saying.
 - Your supervisor keeps giving you more and more work.
 - You have a large amount of cash to deposit at the bank after work.
4. Ask each MAC participant to describe something that they do to show that they are professional.

Encourage them to write in their Action Plans those behaviors that they will change in the future in order to be more professional.

KEY ELEMENTS OF PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism on the job is important in all work settings, regardless of the requirements of the job.

The MAC participants may not be able to envision themselves as “professionals,” but they will be expected to adhere to basic professional standards, policies, and procedures, even if they do not see co-workers acting professionally.

Professionalism consists of the following basic rules of the workplace:

- ☐ Proper, clean apparel
- ☐ Knowing policies and procedures and following them, even if others take short cuts or ignore rules
- ☐ Following organizational policy about appearance
- ☐ Polite language and civil communication
- ☐ Arriving on time or early for work
- ☐ Late or absent only for legitimate reasons
- ☐ Reporting to a supervisor if late or absent
- ☐ Assisting supervisor in finding substitute workers if expected
- ☐ Making an earnest effort to learn the tasks of the job
- ☐ Asking questions for clarification
- ☐ Showing respect and cooperation with supervisors, even if supervisors appear to be unreasonable
- ☐ Respecting the privacy and space of co-workers
- ☐ Taking breaks only when authorized
- ☐ Making personal phone calls only during authorized breaks
- ☐ Recognizing that volunteering is not the same as working for pay, requiring consistent attendance and professional work behaviors



- ❑ Accepting progress reports and performance reviews as opportunities to learn and plan for the future
- ❑ Speaking only positively (both at work and after hours) about the employer, supervisor, and co-workers, even if others are speaking negatively or changes need to be made.

The consequences of unprofessional behavior can make work stressful and unpleasant, and could result probation or losing the job.

- ❑ Employees who abuse time and attendance policies may develop a negative reputation and may lose their job.
- ❑ Employees who respect their co-workers understand the importance of arriving at work on time, and working the entire time during their shift.
- ❑ Professional employees know that whenever an employee arrives late or takes a day off, the workload of others increases. Schedules have to be readjusted, distribution of work is changed, and work may not get completed.
- ❑ Professional workers consult with supervisors before making any schedule changes.
- ❑ Professional workers always have a backup plan so that they are prepared for potential problems with time and attendance, such as transportation, clean uniform, etc.
- ❑ MAC participants who have medical challenges that may affect their ability to be consistent with time and attendance should discuss backup plans with supervisors so that the work can still be completed. (See Module 3 - Activity #29 *Employment and Disabilities*.)



MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #34

TEAMWORK ON THE JOB

In this activity, MAC participants will become familiar with the characteristics of a team and the qualities of a successful team member.



SUPPLIES

Distribute the following supplies to each group of 3-5 MAC participants:

construction paper, mixed colors

scotch tape

glue sticks

scissors

markers

rulers



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

chain

designs

employee

employer

goal

loops

ruler

strength

strips

supplies

talent

taping

team

teamwork



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Most jobs involve some sort of teamwork. The “team” could be a group of employees who work together closely, sharing tasks and depending on one another.

The “team” could also mean that individual employees work separately, but their tasks are linked together to create a product or provide a service.

MAC participants may be assigned specific jobs at work that do not directly involve working with a team. However, it is important that they understand that their role is important in the overall achievements of the organization.

For example, if they are responsible for shelving products in a grocery store, they may do the work in isolation. They may not see themselves as part of a team. But they contribute to the success of sales, marketing, customer service, and other aspects of store operation. Employers depend on all employees to work together to achieve an overall goal.

As the MAC participants carry out the teamwork activity, the Coach should review the following concepts:

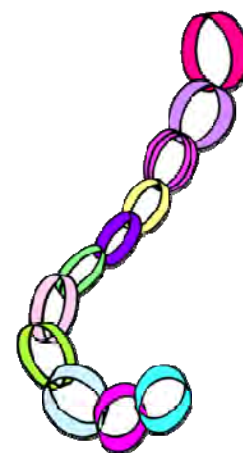
- ❑ Teamwork can involve working closely with a group of people or it can involve one person working individually. All employees are contributing to the overall goals and achievements of a business.
- ❑ Individuals who work by themselves are essential components of the overall accomplishments of a business.
- ❑ Teamwork is most effective when there is:
 - strong communication
 - tolerance of different work styles
 - a sense of purpose
 - recognition of skills.
- ❑ Good “team players” are:
 - cooperative
 - willing to share information
 - willing to share tasks
 - helpful to co-workers
 - motivated to achieve a goal.



The MAC participants will be making paper chains in this activity. They will be working in groups (teams) to create a long paper chain. All of the chains will eventually be linked together.

Since there may be multiple languages and a range of skills in the team, the MAC participants are going to have to figure out how to carry out the tasks and achieve the goal.

The MAC Coach should circulate and model possible ways of completing the assignment. Don't hesitate to step in – the teams should not struggle for long. Concentrate on demonstrating successful teamwork and point out that each member makes a valuable contribution.



ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Lay out on a table:

- Construction paper, mixed colors
- Scotch tape
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Markers



Ask: Has anyone ever been on a team? What was it like?

Accept all responses, but focus on the qualities that made the group a team.

Explain that a *team* is when a group of people work together to get something done.

Ask: How would you describe a good team?

Stress that teamwork is not always about winning, but is about working together to achieve a goal.

The team has a job to do and everyone on the team does their part to get the job done.

2. Explain that at work, a team can be close together and work on a task (such as serving someone at McDonald's), or a team can consist of everyone doing their job so that the business can do well (such as shelving products at a grocery store).

Ask: Are any of you working on a team at work?

Explain that they may not be participating in formal teams, but all of the employees are a member of the organization's team.

Emphasize that everyone on the team is valuable, and that no one is more important than anyone else. For example, if an employee is responsible for making sure that coffee cups are available in a coffee shop, then the other employees will not have to spend time looking for cups and making customers wait.

3. Divide the MAC participants into small groups of a maximum of 5 people each.

4. Demonstrate the process of making a paper chain:

- Cutting strips of construction paper (approximately 1" x 8" strips)
- Decorating the strips with designs made with markers
- Taping a strip into a loop (or use glue stick)
- Repeat the cutting and decorating, and looping the second strip into the first loop and so forth, to create a paper chain.

5. Ask: You are going to be working in small groups as a team. I am your employer and you are different branches of the PAPER CHAIN COMPANY.

How will I know that you are working together well? What should I look for?

Accept all responses, but stress the following points, giving specific examples.
A good team has members who:

- talk to each other
- praise each other
- help each other
- use strengths and talents
- cooperate to achieve a goal
- get the job done as assigned.



Ask: So how can you work together well as a team? What do you need to do

6. Instruct the teams to plan their system for making a long paper chain.
7. Circulate among the teams to guide and suggest, commenting on their teamwork.

If a team is having difficulty, stop and assist them to get back on track. Point out that teamwork needs constant assessment and adjustment.

8. Display the final products, commenting only on the positive aspects of each team.

Connect all the chains and hang the entire chain around the room.



MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #35

CUSTOMER SERVICE

In this activity, MAC participants will become familiar with the qualities of excellent customer service.



HANDOUTS

Handouts:

UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS (reference for MAC Coach)

WOULD YOU DO BUSINESS WITH YOU? (reference for MAC Coach)



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

business
cheerful
complaints
customer
employees
external customer
internal customer
public
service
unhappy



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Some MAC participants may obtain employment that involves direct contact with the public (*external* customers), whether it be in person or on the telephone. Others may have jobs that are behind the scenes, but they will still have to demonstrate strong customer service with their co-workers, or *internal* customers.



In this activity, the MAC participants will have the opportunity to practice positive customer service. They will also be able to assess whether they are interested in working directly with external customers.

The MAC Coach should refer to the handout UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS so that they can explain to the MAC participants why some customers behave the way that they do.

The handout WOULD YOU DO BUSINESS WITH YOU? describes the qualities of employees who provide excellent customer service. The MAC participants do not need to know the difference between *internal* and *external* customers – but should be aware that they should demonstrate the characteristics on the handout with *everyone* at work.

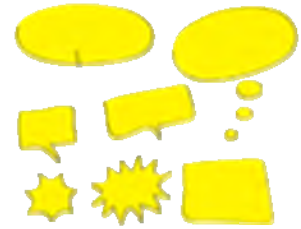
ACTIVITY STEPS

1. As the MAC participants enter the room, greet them as if they are customers.

Welcome to _____!

Can I help you find what you are looking for?

Can I show you to your seat?



Explain that you are practicing good customer service.

Ask: How many of you speak directly to the public in your job?

Explain that everyone should practice good customer service, whether they are working directly with the public or just with other employees.

Ask: How do you show good customer service?

Discuss the characteristics of good customer service.

2. Set up a table as a counter in a pretend store and identify one MAC participant to be a store employee at the counter.

Each MAC participant should take a turn pretending that they are a customer approaching the store employee at the counter.

Assign a role to the customers, such as:

You are in a big hurry.

You need directions.

You need to return something and start to complain about it.

You are very cheerful.

You are trying to return something that you did not buy in the store.

The MAC participants may have difficulty with this activity if they are learning English, but they can still demonstrate how to smile, calm someone down, and ask for assistance.

3. Repeat the role playing as if the MAC participants are co-workers. Discuss the qualities of good customer service, using the handout **WOULD YOU DO BUSINESS WITH YOU?** as a guide.

Ask: Do you enjoy customer service directly with the public?

Some MAC participants may not have had the chance to work directly with the public, or may have determined that they would prefer to stay behind the scenes.

Stress that they should still demonstrate the qualities of an employee with good customer relations – even if they are showing those qualities with internal customers.

4. *Ask:* Why do you think customers behave the way that they do?

Discuss possible explanations, using the handout **UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS** as a guide.

5. *Ask:* What will you do in the future to show that you work well with all customers?

UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS

Customers get upset for several reasons, but some of the major causes are listed below.

CUSTOMERS COULD GET UPSET BECAUSE THEY:

Expected something—and it didn't happen

Had expectations that were too high or unreasonable

Are already upset about something else

Are tired, stressed, frustrated, or not feeling well

Feel powerless

Believe they will get a response if they are the squeaky wheel

Were promised something that was not delivered

Were treated discourteously

Were told two different stories

Feel that they are not being listened to

Feel that they can get their way if they intimidate

Were given a flip, offhand reply—or their question was treated as a joke

Are angry because they don't want to be involved—
don't want to be responsible

Are embarrassed about needing help—about making a mistake

Were questioned about their knowledge—or their integrity

Are trying to juggle too many things at once and feel overwhelmed

Don't trust the answers that they are getting

These complaints come from both EXTERNAL and INTERNAL customers!

Would You Do Business with You?

Employees who have excellent customer service demonstrate the following characteristics.



Check off the characteristics that describe you.

- ☐ Pleasant to just about everyone
- ☐ Able to set aside my personal problems when helping others
- ☐ Interested in people
- ☐ Interested in solving problems
- ☐ Stick to policies of my employer
- ☐ Enjoy meeting all different types of people, even the grouchy ones
- ☐ Generally don't take things personally
- ☐ Comfortable on the phone
- ☐ Patient, even when frustrated
- ☐ Calm when under pressure
- ☐ Know when to get assistance if a problem can't be handled by me
- ☐ Look forward to working with people
- ☐ Willingness to learn
- ☐ Able to control emotions



MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #36

DON'T GET FIRED!

In this activity, the MAC participants will become familiar with the importance of complying with employer policies and procedures to avoid being fired.



SUPPLIES AND HANDOUTS

Optional: Sample copy of an Employee Handbook from any business

Handouts:

DON'T GET FIRED! (reference for MAC Coach)

DON'T GET FIRED! (cut up into individual cards)



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

downsized

fired

furloughed

hired

laid off

leave without pay

on probation

unpaid leave



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Before MAC participants begin a new job – or even if they have already started volunteering or working – the MAC Coach should review the many ways that an employee can get fired.

In some jobs, the employee can be fired “at will” for breaking the rules just once. In others, they may have additional chances or may be able to consult with union representation to analyze their employment status.

But in no situation should the employee use ignorance of the rules and regulations of the organization to explain behaviors.

The handout DON'T GET FIRED! should be used as a reference for the MAC Coach, and can be distributed to the MAC participants if appropriate.

ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Explain what it means to be *fired* from a job.

Discuss how it is essential that employees know the rules of an employer.

They can learn the rules from the employee handbook, orientation sessions, training materials, and other sources.

But some of the rules are basic common sense.

Stress that MAC participants should never jeopardize their own safety or the safety and security of their co-workers, and should always demonstrate a strong work ethic. If they obey the regulations they will not risk getting fired.

Explain that once an employee has been fired, not only will pay be suspended, but they may also lose all benefits and have difficulty obtaining a reference and finding another job.

2. Explain the difference between:

- fired (or termination of employment)
- laid off
- furloughed
- on probation
- unpaid leave
- downsized (sometimes referred to as "rightsized")



3. Ask each MAC participant to pull a picture from the handout DON'T GET FIRED! out of the box.

Show the picture to the group and discuss what is happening in the picture.

Ask: Can you get fired for this?

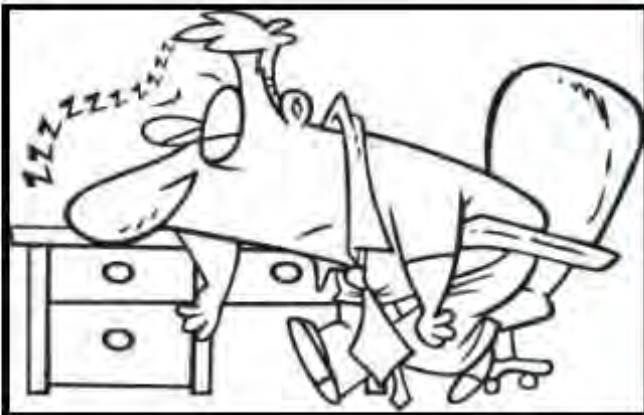
Details for each picture may have to be explained. Use the Coach reference copy of the handout DON'T GET FIRED!

Explain that there are occasions where employees get fired for reasons that are not legitimate. They have legal recourse should they choose to pursue the case.

DON'T GET FIRED!



stealing
petty theft
damaging equipment



sleeping on the job
not completing tasks or
meeting deadlines
sloppy work



absenteeism
repeatedly late for work
not prepared for job responsibilities



**forging documents
cheating
lying**



**smoking in nonsmoking settings
use of drugs and alcohol at work
taking breaks without permission**



**destroying company property
showing anger
inappropriate behavior**



**difficult to work with
uncooperative
refusing to follow instructions**



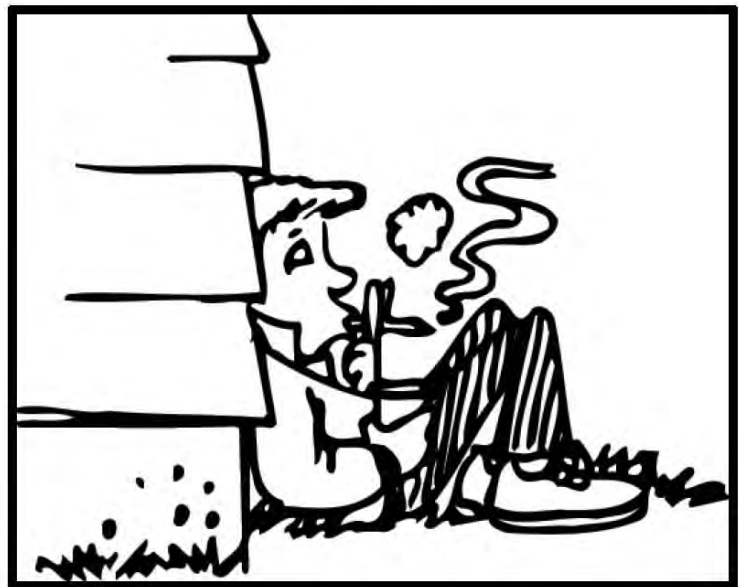
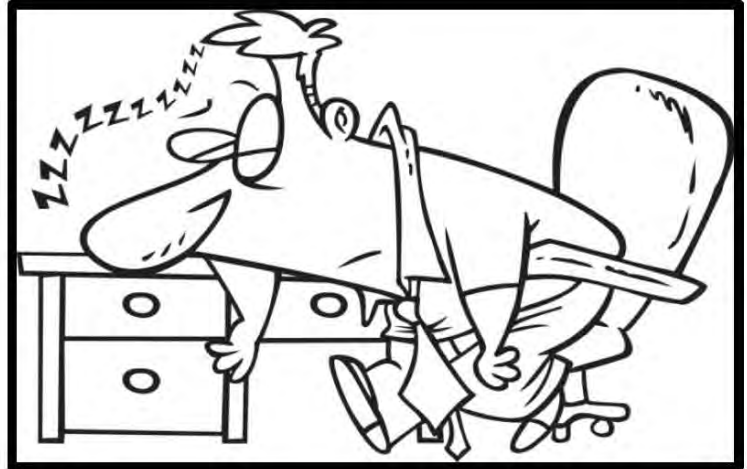
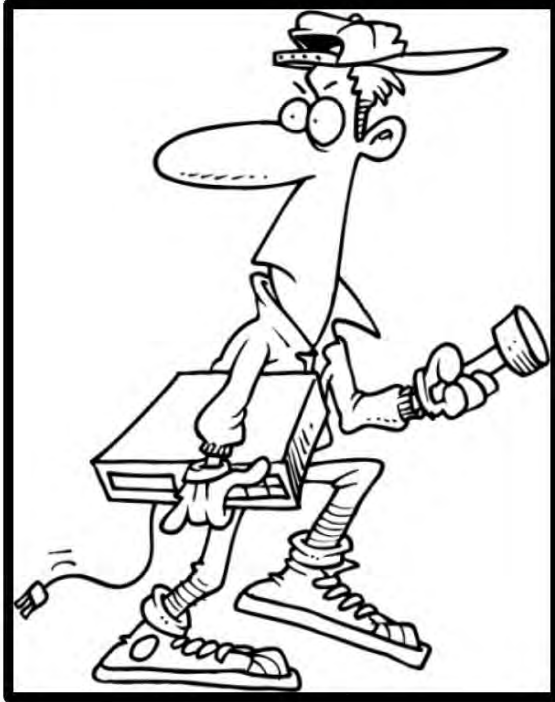
threatening
bullying
harassment



personal use of the computer
illegal use of the computer
wasting time on the job



offensive language
complaining, angry
insubordinate







MODULE 4 - ACTIVITY #37

HOW AM I DOING?

In the activity, employed MAC participants will have the opportunity to assess how they are performing in their jobs.



HANDOUTS

Handouts:

HOW AM I DOING IN MY NEW JOB?

PERSONAL HYGIENE ON THE JOB

The MAC Coach may want to select handouts from the activities listed in the Background Information, to use for discussion during this activity.



VOCABULARY USED IN THIS ACTIVITY

alarm clock
breakfast
budget
child care
co-worker
finances
friendship
groomed
health
hygiene
independence
jewelry
mistakes
neat
neglect
paycheck
positive attitude
relatives
responsibility
role model
self-reliance
shift
transportation
team player
temptations



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This activity should be conducted after employed MAC participants have been on the job for a few weeks.

The activity is designed for individual consultation with MAC participants who have been working or volunteering, so that they can assess how they are doing so far.

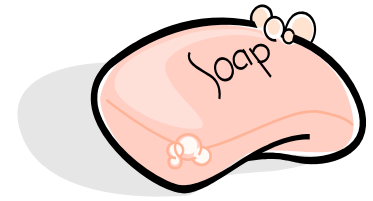
Use the handout *HOW AM I DOING IN MY NEW JOB?* to help them reflect on how they are handling the logistics of employment and assess their on-the-job behavior.

This activity should also be used in conjunction with a number of other activities, even if it involves reviewing topics already covered.

- The MAC Coach should refer to the handouts in Module 3 – Activity #24 *Paychecks and Checking Accounts*, #25 *Budgeting*, and #30 *Managing Work and Family* to further assist MAC participants who are working.
- As new employees in an ever-changing economy, it would not be surprising if some of the MAC participants express concern about how whether they are secure in their jobs. The MAC Coach should review the basic guidelines in Module 1 – Activity #4 *Building a Strong Work Ethic* and Module 4 – Activity #33 *Professional Behavior at Work* to ensure that they are demonstrating positive work habits to reduce the risk of losing their jobs. Module 4 – Activity #36 *Don't Get Fired!* may also need to be discussed.
- In addition, the MAC Coach can refer to Module 5 – Activity #38 *Building Self-Esteem* and Activity #48 *Managing Stress* for ideas about how to reduce stress and build confidence.
- Some MAC participants may need to discuss new relationships developed at work. Use Module 4 – Activity #32 *Friendships at Work* to review this topic.
- If the MAC participants are working on becoming more self-reliant and independent, refer to Module 1 – Activity #5 *Understanding Independence* and Module 3 – Activity #22 *Building Self-Reliance*.

ACTIVITY STEPS

1. This activity should be conducted with individual consultations. You can review the basic concepts described in the handouts HOW AM I DOING IN MY NEW JOB? and PERSONAL HYGIENE ON THE JOB with the entire group. Then meet individually with each participant to go over the checklists.



Emphasis should be on identifying strengths.

When identifying areas of improvement, add ideas to the Action Plans.

2. Discuss how the MAC participants are handling the following, now that they are working:
 - transportation
 - child care
 - finances
 - health
 - friendships
 - self-reliance and independence.

The MAC Coach may want to use the handouts from the activities listed in the Background Information to review key points with the MAC participants.

How Am I Doing In My New Job?

Check off the items that are true about YOU.

- ☐ I have a plan for transportation, and a backup plan.
- ☐ I have two alarm clocks.
- ☐ I keep my uniform clean and have work clothes ready to go.
- ☐ I make sure to eat a good breakfast.
- ☐ I pay attention to good health habits and hygiene.
- ☐ I try to meet many people, forming friendships slowly and carefully.
- ☐ I get to work on time – in fact, I am often early.
- ☐ I take breaks only when they are allowed.
- ☐ I am a good team player and help out other workers.
- ☐ I do not stop working until my shift is over.
- ☐ I ask questions often, and consult with respected co-workers.
- ☐ I maintain a positive attitude, even if I don't really feel like it.
- ☐ I have a budget and I stick to it, even on payday.
- ☐ I resist temptations to spend my paycheck right away.
- ☐ My relatives see me as a good role model.

What else do I need to do to make sure that I am ready for my new job?

PERSONAL HYGIENE ON THE JOB

- Hair combed and in an appropriate style
- Hats...usually best left behind. Worn outdoors only
- Face clean. (Girls should wear minimal make-up)
- Scent free (no perfume or after-shave lotion)
- Wear deodorant every day
- Teeth brushed and flossed
- Simple jewelry, if allowed
- On a buttoned shirt, only the top button is open (women's shirts should not be low cut)
- Neck clean – take a shower or bath every day
- Buttoned dress shirt and tie, if appropriate
- Hands clean with limited jewelry
- Clean and well manicured fingernails
- Clean uniform or work clothes
- Belt – put through all the loops
- Pants – ironed and worn at the waist and not lower
- Shoes – shined
- Most important!! Your smile!

