
WORK SKILLS WORKSHOP

Group Activity Suggestions for Practitioners



CESBA

WORK SKILLS MANUAL

Group Activities for Practitioners

Contents

Group Activities for Module 1	4
Beginning Icebreaker – Speed Networking.....	4
Introduction to the OALCF, pages 7 and 8.....	4
Vision Boards, pages 19–20	7
Place Value Cups, page 21	7
The Great Internet Race, page 30.....	7
End of Module 1 Activity – The Golden Ticket.....	8
Group Activities for Module 2	10
Sign Scavenger Hunt, page 7.....	10
Reading a Classroom Policy, page 18.....	10
Group Activities for Module 3	13
Personality Style Role Play, page 13	13
Communication: Having Fun with Communication Barriers, page 21.....	13
Personal Space Activities, page 23.....	2
Presenting to Others, page 28	2
Creating a Classroom Policy, page 31	2
End of Module 3 Activity - Board Game Afternoon	2
Group Activities for Module 4	3
Price Tags, page 9.....	3
Rounding Exercise, page 13	4
Musical Fractions, page 15.....	4
Cooking or Pizza Day, page 16	4
Area and Perimeter, page 31	5
End of Module 4 Activity – Numeracy Review.....	5
Group Activity for Module 5	5
PowerPoint Presentation, page 41	5
Group Activities for Module 6	6
Time Activity, page 12.....	6
Time Management and Organizational Skills Activity, page 12.....	6

Task Priority Activity, page 14.....	6
Task Priority Print Out.....	7
Decision Making, Pros and Cons	8
Stress Relief Activity.....	8
End of Module Activity – The Interview.....	8
Group Activities for Module 7	11
The Plane Crash, page 17	11
Problem Solving	1
Workplace Harassment, page 21	1
Anticipating Needs – Our Class Counts Exercise, page 28	1
End of Module Activity – End of Course Discussion.....	2

Group Activities for Module 1

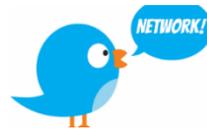
Welcome the class to the course. Introduce yourself and tell them a bit about who you are and what to expect over the next few weeks.

Beginning Icebreaker – Speed Networking

Create four questions to help students get to know each other.

Examples

- What is one word that describes your mood right now?
- What would you like to get from this course?
- What kind of job are you interested in?
- What are your hobbies?
- How was your weekend?
- What is your favourite food?



Split the class into two groups. Each group sits at desks (or at tables) with one empty chair. Each person moves from spot to spot chatting with the person next to them for 2 minutes—introducing themselves and asking questions. After 2 minutes an alarm sounds, and the participant moves to another chair and talks to another person.

Introduction to the OALCF, pages 7 and 8

You will need a blackboard or large sheets of paper. Write down the competencies of the OALCF and brainstorm examples. You can write out examples ahead of time on cue cards and ask students what heading they think the examples would go under. See the table on the next page for ideas.

Some topics can go in more than one category. This may start a great discussion about why they are in both. Many engaging with others' tasks also involve communication, so it will be interesting to see where students place the examples.

Find and Use Information	Communicate Information and ideas	Understand and Use Numbers	Digital Use	Self-Management	Engage with Others
Reading a company policy	Making a To Do List	Totalling a receipt	Finding information online	Setting goals	Working as a team
Finding information online	Writing a text to your supervisor	Figuring out a sale price	Writing a text to your supervisor	Making decisions	Conflict resolution
Reading a work schedule	Creating a store display	Measuring a floor	Typing an email	Being punctual	Doing a group project
Reading a pill bottle	Giving a presentation	Making change	Making a post of Facebook	Dressing well for work	Encouraging coworkers
Understanding signs at work	Giving directions	Calculating sales tax	Making a spreadsheet	Finding someone to cover your shift	Covering breaks
Reading a workplace memo	Answering the phone	Reading a graph	Typing a document	Going above and beyond at work	Going to meetings

OALCF Print Out

For a more interactive team activity, use the tasks below and the chart on the next page and have the students cut and paste the tasks into the tables in the spot where they think they belong. Separate your students in teams of two or three so that they can work together.

Working as a team	Making a To Do List	Being punctual (on time)	Finding information online	Setting goals	Reading a company policy
Finding information online	Using Word to write a letter	Encouraging coworkers	Doing a group project	Creating a store display	Conflict resolution
Measuring a floor	Making decisions	Reading a work schedule	Making change	Totalling a receipt	Writing a text to your supervisor
Giving directions	Dressing well for work	Typing an email	Answering the phone	Giving a presentation	Figuring out a sale price
Covering breaks	Reading a pill bottle	Reading a workplace memo	Making a spreadsheet	Finding someone to cover your shift	Understanding signs at work
Calculating sales tax	Making a post of Facebook	Going to meetings	Typing a document	Going above and beyond at work	Reading a graph

Find and Use Information	Communicate Information and Ideas	Understand and Use Numbers	Digital Use	Self-Management	Engage with Others

Vision Boards, pages 19–20

You will need magazines and poster board for the vision board activity in Module 1. A fun group activity would be to have the students present their board to their groups after completing them.

Since some students might spend longer on their boards than others, set a time limit for making the boards, approximately two hours.

Place Value Cups, page 21

This is a fun exercise to do before assigning the math assessment in Module 1. It will also help students review place value before taking the assessment.

You will need Styrofoam cups and markers.



Making a Math Manipulative

1. On each cup the student writes the numbers 0 to 9 around the cups. Students can use a different colour for each cup if they want.
2. On the bottom of each cup write the place values (write ones on one cup, then tens, hundreds, thousands, ten thousands, and hundred thousands).
3. Place the cups together and look at them sideways as in the picture.
4. Twist the cups to give different number combinations.

Practice: Ask the class some questions to try out their cups.

The Great Internet Race, page 30



Give students three topics and have them search online to find information on them. It can be something fun and simple or something that involves more reading. This tests their ability to find and use information online. Have the students time their efforts.

Here are some examples:

Easy and fun

- When is national ice cream day?
- When were windshield wipers invented?
- How old is the oldest living person?
- How tall was the world's tallest hat?
- Is there a website that tracks the Loch Ness monster?

More challenging

When were labour unions first started in Canada?

Find your postal code by searching your address on the Canada Post website.

What are the high and low temperatures for today?

When did Canada become a country?

End of Module 1 Activity – The Golden Ticket

At this point, students have networked with each other, worked as a team, and presented their vision boards to the class. It is a good time to start seeing how well they are listening and getting to know one another. The Golden Ticket group game will help you see how well your participants are interacting.

The Golden Ticket

Each student is given a golden ticket.

On the back of their lottery ticket, they must write four things they would do with the money if they won the lottery. The tickets are collected and handed out randomly to each student. Each student must find the person whose ticket they have by getting up, walking around, and asking people questions. The first two participants to find the ticket's owner gets a prize of the instructor's choosing.

Follow-up discussion: Why do people play the lottery? Is having that much money a good thing? Were many people's answers the same?

The Golden Ticket Lottery

2 - 6 - 14 - 18 - 22 - 37

What I would do with the prize money?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

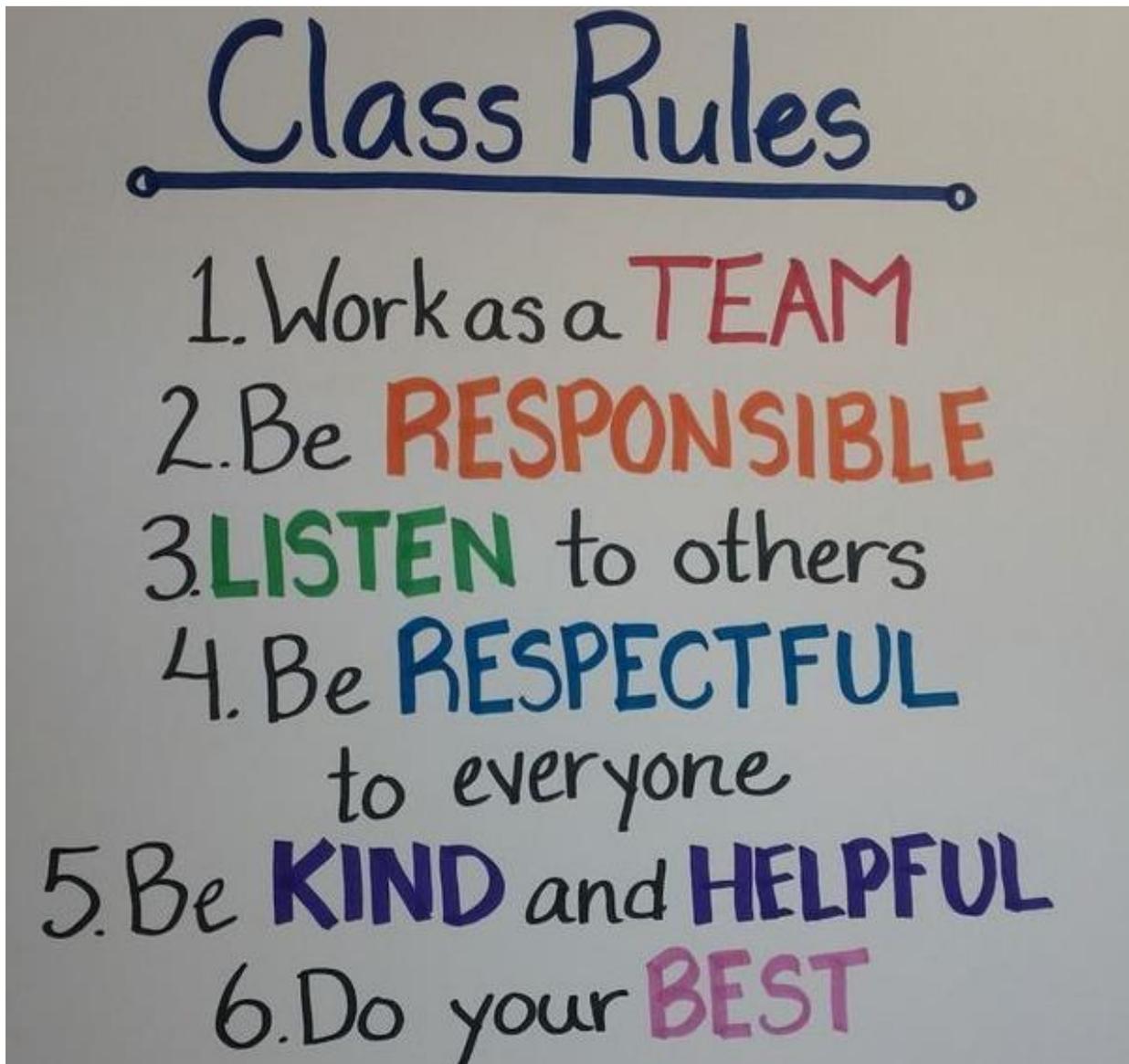
Group Activities for Module 2

Sign Scavenger Hunt, page 7

Have the students search for signs in and around the building on page 4. Discuss the signs each person found and what they meant. How many did each person find? Who found the most?

Reading a Classroom Policy, page 18

This will help students find information in a simple document. Print out the classroom policies on the following pages. There are two from current classrooms and one from the past. Discuss the differences between class life then and now. Notify students that there will be a follow-up activity to this policy discussion offered in Module 3.



Program Rules

Show up on
time.

Meet deadlines
Turn work in
when it is due.

Have positive
attitude.

Respect
always for
yourself,
staff and
others.

Take responsibility
for your actions.
No excuses.

Be
prepared.

Rules for Students

1872

1. Respect your schoolmaster. Obey him and accept his punishments.
2. Do not call your classmates names or fight with them. Love and help each other.
3. Never make noises or disturb your neighbors as they work.
4. Be silent during classes. Do not talk unless it is absolutely necessary.
5. Do not leave your seat without permission.
6. No more than one student at a time may go to the washroom.
7. At the end of class, wash your hands and face. Wash your feet if they are bare.
8. Bring firewood into the classroom for the stove whenever the teacher tells you to do this chore.
9. Go quietly in and out of the classroom.
10. If the master calls your name after class, straighten the benches and tables. Sweep the room, dust, and leave everything tidy.



Group Activities for Module 3

This next activity should be presented before learning about communication barriers. It is always a huge hit with students.

Note: By now you know your students well enough to know who has the best sense of humour to be able to pick the main person in this exercise. Consider which students will respond well to the activity and play along.

Personality Style Role Play, page 13

Place your students in groups of three. Each group is given a personality style and asked to create a workplace skit (role play) about it. Create a workplace scenario that shows the following:

- Assertiveness
- Passive aggressiveness
- Aggressiveness
- Passiveness

Have the groups act out their scenario. The other groups must guess that style it is.

Communication: Having Fun with Communication Barriers, page 21

One person is chosen to leave the room. While gone, this person must think of four interview-type questions that they'd like to ask someone in order to get to know them better (for example: Where do you see yourself in five years? What is your best quality?). While they are out of the room, each learner is given a piece of paper (available on the next page) and told to act that way during their "interview." None of the learners will get to see what the other person has, but they do know that each one of them will be presenting a communication barrier of some sort.

The person asking the questions will not know what the class is doing until after the first interview. They will expect the students to answer normally. This situation usually gets many laughs.

After each round of questions, the class will discuss what happened, and the interviewer will provide thoughts on how it made them feel.

Barriers

Abruptness/not welcoming	Slouching
Pretending to listen	Listening but thinking ahead
Invading personal space	Interrupting
No eye contact	Texting
Uncomfortable eye contact	

Each learner may need a bit of practice or explanation for each direction.

During the conversation, look down at the floor, answer the questions but never look up.

During your chat, keep moving your chair closer and closer to the person who is asking you the questions. Get as close as you can!

During the interview, lean back (slouch) all the way in your chair and look at the ceiling.

While answering questions, stare at the interviewer.

Keep looking at your watch. Look at it a lot.

Look around the room and keep asking her/him to repeat what he or she has said.

Do not smile. Answer the questions as fast as you can.

Do not let the person asking you questions finish what they are trying to say, keep talking over them.

Take out your phone or borrow one, during the discussion text and play with your phone.

Personal Space Activities

Have the students try the personal space activity in the Module.

Discussion topics: How important is personal space to you? Why is personal space so important in the workplace?

Presenting to Others, page 28

Students are asked to present the information they collected on page 22 using the tips from the video.

Discussion topic: How did presenting to others in the course make you feel?

Creating a Classroom Policy, page 31

Review the group exercise from Module 2 on classroom rules. Split the participant into groups and ask them to design a list of class rules. There are no parameters for this assignment and the students can be encouraged to put anything in the policy that they like (material should be respectful to others in class and should not target any one student). When the groups have finished, have the class share them with each other. Put the policies on the wall and tell the students to put a checkmark beside the one that they like best. Take the one with the most votes, type it up and post it in your classroom.

Discussion topic: What classroom rules from these policies are also important in the workplace?

End of Module 3 Activity - Board Game Afternoon

Plan an afternoon where the students can split into group and play board games with one another. This is a terrific way to encourage communication. Board games also enhance social skills like turn taking, strategy building and good sportsmanship.

Encourage the students to read the rule guides out loud to one another and discuss ways to play. This will help with communication and it is good practice for finding and using information from texts. If you do not have a budget to purchase board games, see if someone will lend you some or check local thrift stores.

Some board game suggestions include the following:

- Ticket to Ride
- Payday
- Sushi Go Party
- Kingdomino
- Forbidden Island
- Codenames
- Dixit
- Game of Life
- Apples to Apples

Group Activities for Module 4

Price Tags, page 9

Split your students into pairs and give them money to use (this can be printed out money or play money purchased from a local bargain store). Cut out the price tags below and give some to each group along with the play money.



Part 1: Each student must make exact change to pay for each price tag and give it to the other student.

Part 2: Each student pays for their purchase with a twenty-dollar bill and the other students makes change.

Rounding Exercise, page 13

Tell the students that they will be shopping online. The students need to find a good interview outfit from an online shop or in online flyers. They will need to purchase a jacket, pants or skirt, shirt, and shoes. If you would like, have them print out their choices, so that you can discuss what they chose for themselves afterwards as a class. Each student has a budget of \$280.00.

The students must round each item to add it. They should try to use the rounded numbers to estimate how much the outfit will cost, if possible without using a calculator. The students can subtract this total from the budget.

When they have finished, have them use the calculator to total up the items and see the difference in cost.

Musical Fractions, page 15

For the exercise on this page, you will need glass cups and access to water. If it is easier, have the students do this exercise in teams.

Cooking or Pizza Day, page 16

If you can buy extra materials for the classroom a cooking day or ordering pizza will provide a wonderful way to discuss fractions. The amount of pizza slices eaten or left in the box can be written as fractions.

If you would like to do a fraction treat day but do not have access to an oven, here is a fun recipe from delish.com for a s'mores cheese ball.

Ingredients

- 16 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 c. powdered sugar
- 1/3 c. marshmallow crème
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- Pinch kosher salt
- 2/3 c. mini chocolate chips

For Coating

- 1/4 c. mini chocolate chips
- 1/4 c. marshmallow bits
- 1/4 c. crushed graham crackers
- Whole graham crackers, for serving

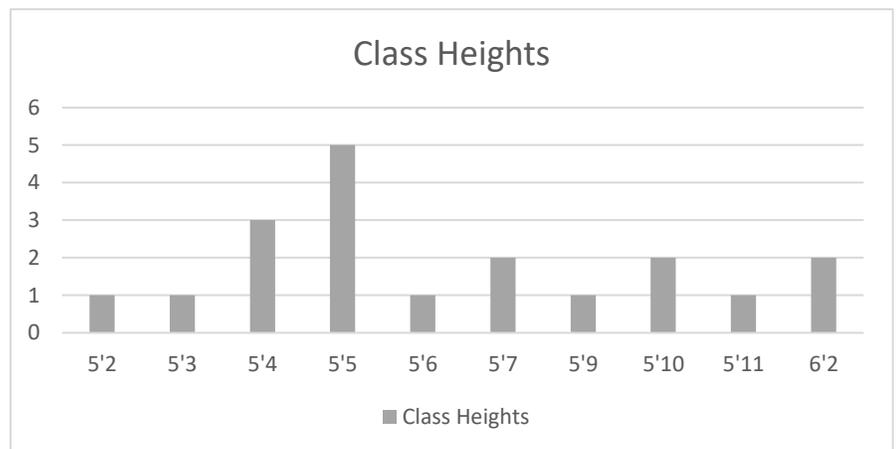
Directions

1. In a medium bowl using a hand mixer, beat together cream cheese, powdered sugar, marshmallow crème, vanilla, and salt. Fold in mini chocolate chips, then place in refrigerator to firm up, about 30 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, make coating: Combine mini chocolate chips, marshmallow bits, and crushed graham crackers on a shallow plate. When marshmallow mixture is firm, shape into a large round ball and roll in coating. Serve with graham crackers.

Area and Perimeter, page 31

You will need a tape measure for this exercise.

1. Ask the students to measure the area and perimeter of the classroom. Compare results.
2. Split the students into groups and have them measure each other's heights. Collect the data from each student. Topics for discussion: Who is the tallest? Which measurement is the most common in the class?



In their groups, have the students draw a bar graph of student height like the one in the following example.

End of Module 4 Activity – Numeracy Review

Have each student create a ten-question math review based on all the lessons in Module 4. Place students in pairs. Have them exchange review papers and then hand their work into each other for marking.

Group Activity for Module 5

PowerPoint Presentation, page 41

Schedule times for students to present their PowerPoints to the class. For each presentation, choose three students to ask the presenter questions at the end of the presentation.

Group Activities for Module 6

Time Activity, page 12

Before beginning the time management lesson, ask people to close their eyes for one minute and when they feel a minute is over to open them. Nobody can watch the clock and do not let them know when a minute has passed.

Students will all open their eyes at different times.

Discussion topics:

- understanding of time
- measurement of time
- how time can pass more quickly for some and more slowly for others
- how people experience time and use it in different ways

Some people have an accurate sense of time passing and others need clocks or timers. This is a good introduction to time management.

Time Management and Organizational Skills Activity, page 12

You will need two decks of cards: one deck in perfect order and all facing the same way, the other deck shuffled up with cards facing in all directions.

Ask two students who are comfortable being volunteers to come to the front of the room. Have the students face away from each other (standing with their backs to one another). Hand each student a deck of cards and tell them not to look through the deck until you say to go. You will instruct the students to race to find the Queen of Hearts. Usually, the student with the organized deck will locate the chosen card first. Ask for more volunteers and repeat the same experiment.

After, ask the students with the messy decks if they thought the competition was fair. Ask the class what can be learned from this competition. Explain the importance and ease of having things in order. Discuss how this helps save time.

Task Priority Activity, page 14

At the end of the Time Management Module, split your class into teams of four if possible. Give the students a time limit of ten minutes and a list of tasks. After ten minutes, have each team count their point values.

Discussion topics: How many points did you have? How did you prioritize your tasks? How did you as a group decide what tasks you wanted to do first? Did you do the tasks you were more comfortable with first?

Print the list from the following page. Students need to checkmark each task after it is completed.

Task Priority Print Out

Team Task Challenge

- Create something for the instructor to wear, such as a hat or tie or scarf (10 points; bonus 5 points if the instructor wears it)
- Find out something unique about each person on the team and write it down (5 points)
- Sing a song together (15 points)
- Make a paper airplane and keep throwing it until it makes it from one side of the room to the other (10 points)
- Get everyone in the room to sign a single piece of paper (5 points)
- Find out what each member of your group wanted to be when they grew up (10 points)
- Assign a nickname to each member of the team (5 points)
- Make name tags from the new nicknames and have each team member wear them (10 points)
- Have each team member walk like a Tyrannosaurus Rex to the door and back (10 points)
- Name your team and come up with a slogan (5 points for the name, 5 points for the slogan)
- Design a team logo (5 points)
- Re-create the sounds on a farm with your voices (10 points)
- Create a 5-step group handshake (10 points)
- Make a list of at least six items that your team wants out of the workshop (15 points)
- Take a selfie of your group (5 points)
- Form a conga line and conga from one end of the room to another (5 points; bonus 10 points if anyone from any other team joins you)

Total points:

Decision Making, Pros and Cons

In pairs, ask the students to come up with a list of pros and cons for having a standard uniform at a workplace.

Afterwards, ask each group for their conclusions based on their pro and con lists.

Stress Relief Activity

As a class, discuss the importance of relaxing and dealing positively with stress. Ask your class to choose some stress relief activity ideas for the whole classroom. You can take suggestions or ask people in groups to write suggestions down. Explain to the class that you will choose one of the ideas and make class time for a stress-relief exercises during a workshop day. Suggestions can and might include walking, yoga, watching a movie, playing a game, and so forth.

Ask the students to share their ideas and then you can choose one of their suggestions and a time to do this activity.

End of Module Activity – The Interview

The Interview, Soft Skills Exercise

Print out the handout on the following page for your students. Students are asked to apply information that they have learned during the course to hire five employees and choose one person that they definitely would not hire.

Have the groups share their information with the class after the exercise. Discuss each applicant with the students.

Discussion questions: What business did you create? What did you name it? Why did you choose to hire these people? Why would you not hire this person? Who had the same answers? Does everyone agree or disagree?

The Interview Print Out

You and your partner are president and vice-president of a company (decide who will be the president and who will be the vice-president). Also, name your company and decide what you will manufacture or sell, or whether you will be a service industry. You need to hire five employees from the list and information below. These five employees will be working together as a team on an important project. You and your partner must discuss and agree on each person that you hire.

Juan – In the job interview, Juan told you lots of inside gossip about his present company, which is one of your competitors. Juan had good posture and smiled and made eye contact throughout the interview.

Harmony – Harmony has tattoos of green vines that cover most of her face. She also has various tattoos up and down both her arms and on her neck. At the end of the interview, Harmony gave you three wonderful references.

Christina – Christina was texting her babysitter throughout the interview. She has good references from her past job and experience that would work well in the business.

Joel – Joel has an exceptional educational background and spent the whole job interview bragging about all his successes and achievements. When asked why you should hire him, he responded, “Because I am the best person for the job.”

Jackson – Jackson meets all the job requirements. Jackson also came into the interview with a stain on his jacket sleeve and his shirt not properly tucked in. He was also wearing jeans and sneakers. He stood very closely to you both while shaking hands at the end of the interview.

Carlita – Carlita spent the whole interview telling jokes. When asked a question she would answer it by telling a funny story. You laughed a lot but noticed that you did not have much information written down about her after the interview.

Pierre – Pierre mentioned that he has noticed some things wrong with your company that he would like to change if you give him the job. He came with a portfolio and said please and thank you.

Hardy – Hardy was wearing a very expensive suit and watch but was only applying for the entry-level position. He was excited to learn but did not have any experience that fit your business. He mentioned wanting to be management in five years. When asked if he had any questions, Hardy asked whether he could be paid 50 cents above what the wage was for the job.

Gus – Gus took notes during the interview, asked to make sure he understood things, and then asked you five questions at the end, check marking each question as you answered it. Gus followed up after the interview with a short thank you email.

Barry – Barry spent the entire interview slouched back in his chair and was constantly checking the time. You had to repeat a lot of your questions and he gave very brief answers.

Maria – Maria answered most of your questions the way you hoped she would. She has a lot of experience as a volunteer helping people in the community. She admitted that she left her last job because she was fired from it, but answered that she would rather not say when you asked her why she had been let go.

Clara – Clara had read your company mission statement and spoke about how she felt she would fit in well with the company. She had researched your business and knew when it was started. She answered all your questions in detail with examples, but accidentally knocked the expensive crystal vase off your desk on her way out of the room. She felt bad and offered to pay for it.

Ahmed – Ahmed came in and shook your hand. He answered all questions well. When you searched him on Facebook after the interview, you found a lot of negative posts about his past work by his supervisors and coworkers.

Ling – Ling arrived 15 minutes late to the interview saying that her ride cancelled last minute. She was very nervous but answered your questions well. She struggled a little with problem-solving questions. After the interview Ling sent you flowers with an apology note for being late.

Our five choices and why:

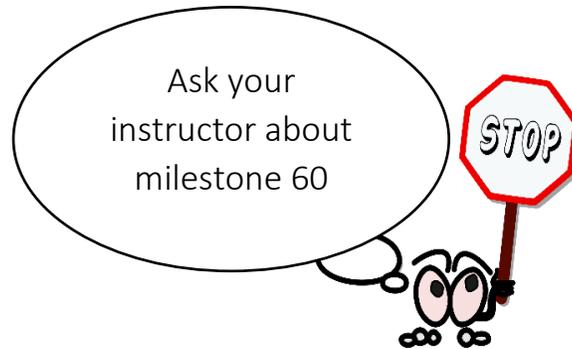
One person we would not hire and why:

Group Activities for Module 7

The Plane Crash, page 17

This survival exercise is often used to bring groups together. It works best in larger groups of six or more. You can type in this link to find this exercise online.

<https://www.whiteman.af.mil/Portals/53/documents/AFD-130408-063.pdf>



Post-Teamwork Assessment

If you would like to know opinions on group activities, distribute these confidential evaluation forms for each student who participated.

Teamwork Evaluation

Date: _____ Name: _____

Exercise: _____

Group members: _____

Self-Evaluation	Scale of 1 to 5 (5 being excellent)
My team respected each other.	
My team used our time to do the work.	
My team shared ideas and responsibilities.	
My team all contributed to the task.	
I would be willing to work with this team again.	

1. What role did you take on in this group? _____

2. Did a leader emerge? _____

3. Were you the leader? _____

4. If not the leader, did you feel that your voice was heard? Explain.

5. Do you feel that your group was effective? Why or why not?

Problem Solving

The Lemon, page 17

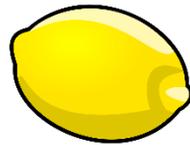
Split your class into groups of three or four and give them the following problem.

- There is one lemon available for five people.
- A cook wants to use the lemon rind for a recipe.
- A child wants to use the lemon to make lemonade.
- A busker wants to juggle the lemon.
- An artist wants to paint the lemon.
- A cashier wants to sell the lemon.

As a group decide what the best way is to use this lemon, so that everyone in this scenario is happy.

Answer

Answers may vary.



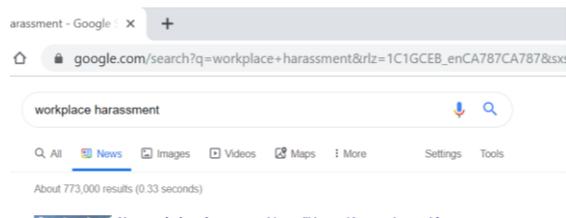
The most popular answer is as follows:

The cashier sells the lemon to the painter who paints the lemon and then gives it the busker. The busker juggles the lemon and then gives it the child to squeeze for lemonade. The child then gives the lemon rind to the cook who uses it in their recipe.

Workplace Harassment, page 21

Split your group into teams of two.

Ask the pairs to search online for workplace harassment but to click on **news** instead of **all** in the search engine.



Have the students work together to choose, read, and summarize an article. Travel the classroom to be sure that not every team is doing the same article.

Anticipating Needs – Our Class Counts Exercise, page 28

If your group is larger than eight students, split them into groups of five.

The students sit with their backs to each other. One student will begin a count by saying 1, another student will say 2 without knowing if any of the other students will try to say the number 2. Students cannot say two numbers in a row. If more than one student says the number 2 the students must start back at one. If only one student says 2 then it will be up to one of the next students to say 3. The group sees how high they can count without more than one student saying the number at the same time.

The students will have to anticipate if other students will say the next number. Generally, the students can count higher with practice as they become used to each other in the group. Students may try to go in order or start taking turns. The students cannot talk during the exercise other than to say the numbers. They will not be able to discuss strategy, so it always interesting to see if one forms.

Afterwards have the students discuss thoughts about the exercise.

End of Module Activity – End of Course Discussion

Step 1: Ask the students to gather in groups and come up with some thoughts about their experiences in the course. They can share favourite moments or write quotes about the workshop. They can discuss they see themselves in the future.

Step 2: Have each group research two quotes that they feel best describes team work.

Step 3: Have the groups present both steps to the class and have an informal discussion about their time there. You can share your thoughts and favourites with them as well during this time.