

Handout 1: Workplace Quiz

Instructions

Test your knowledge of workplace rules by completing the following questions.

1. John works for minimum wage in a local restaurant. In the past two weeks he has worked eight evening shifts of four hours each. He will get his first paycheque on Friday. How much will John earn?
2. Tyler earns \$12 per hour working part-time (less than 30 hours per week) at the local golf course. In the past week he has worked the following hours:

| Day | Hours worked | Total hours |
|----------|---|-------------|
| Monday | 8 a.m. – noon | 4 |
| Tuesday | 8 a.m. – noon 12:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | 9 |
| Thursday | 8 a.m.– noon 12:30 p.m.– 6:30 p.m. | 10 |
| Friday | 8 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | 5 |

Tyler thinks he should get overtime pay for Tuesday and Thursday. His boss disagrees. He has told Tyler he must work 40 hours before he gets any overtime. What do you think? How much money do you think Tyler will earn for working in the past week?

3. Sally, a Grade 10 student, is working in a bookstore during July and August. She earns minimum wage. Every Wednesday, she attends a one-hour staff meeting but doesn't work for the rest of the day. Her mother thinks she should get paid for attending the staff meeting. Sally doesn't. She was told when she was hired that it was a condition of employment. Besides, they feed her breakfast. Who do you think is right? Why?

4. Stacey works for minimum wage after school at a music store. She finds it hard to plan evenings out with her friends because she never knows what hours she will be working. She has asked her boss if he could give her a work schedule. He has told her she doesn't get one because she is part-time. Should Stacey get a work schedule?

5. Denise works as a cashier in a service station from 3-8 p.m. She would like to take a half-hour break at 6 p.m. to meet her boyfriend for supper. Her supervisor has told her she can have the break this one time only. She has told Denise she doesn't work enough hours to qualify for a meal break. Since she is working over the supper hour, Denise believes she is entitled to a meal break or at least a 15-minute coffee break. What do you think? Why?

6. Laurie started her new job as a sales clerk on Dec. 1 and works a regular schedule of eight hours a day, three days a week (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday). She earns \$12 per hour. She did not work on Christmas Day as the store was closed. Her friends tell her she should get holiday pay for that day. Her boss says no. What do you think? Do you think she should be paid for Christmas Day even though she didn't work it? How much money do you think she earned during Christmas week?

7. Sam earns \$12 per hour working as a parking attendant after school and on weekends. He works three-hour shifts on Monday afternoon, Thursday evening and Saturday morning. Remembrance Day falls on a Saturday this year. Sam thinks he should earn time and one half for working a public holiday. His friends think he'll only get his regular pay. Who do you think is right? Why? How much money do you think Sam will earn during the Remembrance Day week?

8. Cooper has earned \$4,000 this year working in a fast food outlet as a part-time server. His friend who works full-time at the same outlet has been paid vacation pay on each paycheque. Cooper hasn't. He thinks he isn't eligible for vacation pay because he's part-time. What do you think? Why?

9. Ian earns minimum wage working 15 hours a week at a local gas station as a gas jockey. He has been employed for six months. Business has been slow, so he has been given two weeks' notice that he will be laid off until July 1. Ian thinks the boss owes him severance pay. Because he will be rehiring Ian, the boss thinks he doesn't have to pay him. What do you think? Why?

10. Terry, a server, drops a tray, breaking \$86 worth of dishes. His next paycheque shows this amount has been deducted from his paycheque. His co-workers tell him his employer can't deduct items like dishes he breaks from his paycheque. He thinks so. Who do you think is right? Why?

11. Susan and Sean work as cashiers at the checkout counter in a grocery store. They do the same job, started the same day and work the same number of hours. Susan is very popular with the customers and works faster than Sean. The boss has decided to give Susan more money than Sean. Sean doesn't think this is fair. Do you think Sean is entitled to the same rate of pay as Susan? Why?

Handout 2: Workplace True/False Quiz

Instructions

Test your knowledge of employment standards in Saskatchewan by completing the quiz below.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. The minimum wage in Saskatchewan is \$10.50 per hour. | T | F |
| 2. All workers who work more than eight hours in a day must be paid overtime. | T | F |
| 3. The overtime rate is 1.5 times the worker's regular wage. | T | F |
| 4. Most workers must be paid for three hours at their hourly rate each time they are called out to work. | T | F |
| 5. Most workers are entitled to a coffee break within every four hours of work. | T | F |
| 6. Employers must give workers paid meal breaks. | T | F |
| 7. All workers are entitled to paid sick leave. | T | F |
| 8. Except in emergencies, employers must give their workers notice of changes to their work schedules. | T | F |
| 9. Workers who have worked for the employer for at least 13 weeks in a row must give their employers two weeks' notice when they leave their jobs. | T | F |
| 10. Workers who have worked less than 13 weeks are entitled to one week's notice when laid off. | T | F |
| 11. All workers are entitled to vacation pay. | T | F |
| 12. Most workers must be paid 1.5 times their regular salary for working on a public holiday. | T | F |
| 13. Cash shortages and the cost of replacing broken or damaged goods can be deducted from a worker's wages. | T | F |
| 14. Male and female workers doing similar work can be paid differently only when their years of service differ. | T | F |

Handout 3: Managing Anger Constructively⁹

| Steps | Do | Don't | Examples of things to say |
|--|--|--|--|
| Recognize and admit that you are angry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell yourself that anger is a natural, healthy, normal human feeling and it is OK to become angry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear, deny or reject your anger, feel guilty or apologize for being angry. Re-live the incident over and over again. Become aggressive, use physical force or yell when angry. | <p>Say to yourself:</p> <p>"It's OK for me to feel angry sometimes. It's not OK to get violent or abusive."</p> |
| Try to understand the other person's perspective and intentions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to stay calm and non-threatening. Tell the other person how his or her behaviour makes you feel. Ask if your reaction is what he or she wanted. Show you are listening and trying to understand. Try to decide if the other person is deliberately trying to make you feel angry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jump to conclusions about what you think the other person wanted you to feel. React until you have all the facts. Make less, or more, of the incident until you have as much information as possible. Ignore the other person's needs and feelings. | <p>Say to the other person:</p> <p>"When you told me yesterday that I didn't understand how public holiday pay was calculated, I felt like you were suggesting I didn't know what I was talking about. Is that how you feel?"</p> |
| Decide what to do with your anger. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the risks and advantages of expressing your anger directly to the other person. Determine the bad or good results that might occur if you sound off. Consider the risks and advantages of expressing your anger indirectly, to a friend, for example. Consider the risk of not expressing it at all. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forget to consider both short-term and long-term consequences. Forget to reflect on how much power the other person has over your job security/satisfaction. Forget to consider the consequences for your physical and mental health. | <p>Say to yourself:</p> <p>"How reasonable is this person? Can he or she make my life miserable if they don't like what I have to say? Is it better to talk directly or blow off steam some other way? Is it healthy to keep my anger to myself? Will it get worse?"</p> |

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| Steps | Do | Don't | Examples of things to say |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>If appropriate, express your anger directly.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait until there is enough time to discuss the problem; speak to the person in private. • Describe the other person's behaviour and describe your feelings of anger. • Be assertive (not aggressive) and try suggesting a solution that respects both persons' needs. • Ask the other person to tell you how he or she feels about the situation. • Show you want to let go of the anger and maintain a good relationship. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complain about the other person behind his or her back, verbally attack anyone's character or intelligence, or get physically aggressive. • Try to discuss the problem in front of other people or when the other person is busy or preoccupied. • Make less, or more of, what you are actually feeling. • Ignore the other person's needs and feelings. • Make it seem like you will hold a grudge. | <p>Say to the other person:</p> <p>"Do you have a couple of minutes to talk to me in private? This morning, you asked if I could work some overtime. When I said no, you indicated that you seem to be getting the short end of the stick regarding workload. I am concerned about the suggestion that I'm not carrying my fair share. I work hard, and I work overtime when I'm asked. Why don't we discuss this at the next staff meeting? Maybe we could set up a system for taking turns. How does that sound to you?"</p> |
| <p>Express your anger indirectly when it is inappropriate to express it directly.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get some physical exercise or use relaxation techniques. • Express your anger privately with someone you trust. • Accept that the problem might not go away and that you may need to end the relationship or stay away from the other person. • Try to think of the situation differently. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express your anger in a way that injures or damages you, another person or property. | <p>Say to yourself:</p> <p>"This person is the boss's friend. If he doesn't like what I have to say, the boss might hassle me. I've got to keep this in perspective. I don't like it, but it's not as if I have to put up with this for the rest of my life. This is only a summer job. After work today, I'll go to the rink and take some slap shots. I'll pretend he is the goalie! I'll feel better after some exercise."</p> |
| <p>Think about how you managed your anger.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulate yourself for managing your anger constructively • Recognize that you get better at anger management by practicing and reflecting on how you might handle similar problems in the future. • Stay focused on improving relationships others. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect yourself and others to be perfect. • Expect to find a perfect solution to all problems. • Give up on managing anger constructively. | <p>Say to yourself:</p> <p>"I'm really glad I brought that issue up. I did a good job of handling that situation. However, next time I might take a little longer to research the problem. I really didn't have all the information I should have had to talk to the boss about overtime pay."</p> |

Handout 4: So You're Upset⁸

Role play 1

Employer: I wanted to talk to you about the dishes you broke last week.

Worker: Oh yes, that wasn't my fault. Tom came out the door, and he hit me while I was carrying a large tray of dirty dishes from table 7. There were a large number of people there so I was really loaded down.

Employer: I don't know what Tom did, but I know it was you who dropped the tray full of dishes. It will cost me a lot of money to replace those dishes. And you know we have a policy that you have to pay for what you break.

Worker: But it wasn't my fault.

Employer: I don't care whose fault it is. I need to buy more dishes and that will cost me money. So I have deducted \$122.93 from your wages this week.

Worker: But that means I'll only take home \$50. I'm supposed to get my car repaired and it will cost me more than \$50. This isn't fair!

Employer: Well there isn't anything I can do about it. If you think it was Tom's fault, why don't you try collecting it from Tom?

Worker: Tom won't pay me for it. Why should he when the money is already coming off my paycheque? So you mean I'm stuck with paying for someone else's mistake?

Employer: Well, I don't know if I would put it that way. But I do know that I have a lot of broken dishes and I didn't break them, so I'm not paying for them. Besides, I think it's time you got back to work. You have a lot of customers in your area.

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Role play 2

Worker: I just got my paycheque, and I don't think I got paid all the money I'm owed for this pay period.

Employer: I don't have time to talk to you right now.

Worker: But I think I'm owed another \$50. You paid me straight time. You should have paid me double time for working Thanksgiving Day.

Employer: No, I shouldn't have. Your paycheque is right. Besides, I really don't have time to talk to you about it right now.

Worker: Well, in my last job when you worked on a holiday, you got paid double time.

Employer: Not in retail, you don't; it's straight time. You worked in construction before. This is different.

Worker: No, the rule is the same for all jobs. It doesn't matter where you work. According to my calculations, you owe me more money. I was counting on getting that \$50. I borrowed money from my brother, and I have to pay him back.

Employer: That is your problem. You have been paid all the money you were owed. Now, I think maybe it's time to get back to work. There are some customers at the front of the store waiting for some help.

Role play 3

- Worker:** I just got my paycheque, and I wanted to know what this deduction for linens is all about.
- Employer:** Oh that's the deduction for the uniform that I provided you. We take off five per cent of every one's gross earnings for the cost of buying uniforms.
- Worker:** Five per cent off every cheque? That's \$3 off every paycheque. That's \$15/month, \$180/year.
- Employer:** Yes it is. The uniform is really worth a lot. It costs \$150 to make. I pay for made-to-measure uniforms for my staff, and sometimes they work for six months and leave. Then I'm stuck with a uniform that no one else can use. Besides, you're a big person and wear a larger size, which takes more cloth, and that costs more.
- Worker:** Do I have to wear a uniform?
- Employer:** Most luxury hotels require their front desk clerks to wear uniforms. Most of their uniforms aren't half as nice as ours.
- Worker:** It hardly seems fair that I should have to pay for it. My friend who works in one of the downtown hotels doesn't pay for his. Are you sure I have to pay?
- Employer:** Yes, you do. Besides, the uniform shows the customer you are connected with this hotel, so you get tips because you are wearing it.
- Worker:** Yes, I get tips, but because of my service not because of my uniform.
- Employer:** I'm not so sure I would agree with you.
- Worker:** So I keep paying until I have paid you \$150?
- Employer:** No, you will be charged that deduction on every paycheque for as long as you work here. Don't forget that one will wear out and I'll have to have another one made. I also have to repair and launder it.
- Worker:** You mean I have to continue to pay for this uniform for as long as I work here?
- Employer:** Yes. You're getting the benefit, so you should pay for it.
- Worker:** I don't think that's fair.

Role play 4

Employer: That's not the right way to clean rooms. You have to have a system.

Worker: But that's how Anne taught me to do them.

Employer: I can't believe Anne would tell you to make a bed like that. She was really good at this job.

Worker: Well, she did!

Employer: Well, it's wrong. You better learn it the right way because you're taking far too long to do this work.

Worker: If you show me how, I'm sure I can speed up. But I need someone to teach me the right way.

Employer: What's the matter with you? Are you stupid or something? Everyone knows how to make a bed. Didn't your mother teach you anything? I guess a little kid like you wouldn't know how to do important things like make a bed. I suppose you'll have to get a college degree to know how to do that.

Worker: Of course my mother taught me how to make a bed. But it looks like you want it made differently.

Employer: I'll get my wife to show you if she has time. You'd think when you hire women to do housekeeping duties, they'd know a little bit about it. Don't mothers teach their kids anything nowadays? Get back to work. At least you can scrub the floors until she has time to come and show you. Or are you too young to even know how to do that?

Question sheet

1. What is the issue or problem in this role play?
2. What are the employer's and worker's rights and responsibilities in this situation?
3. In your group, complete the "Things to Do and Say" column. Determine what the worker could say and do at each step to constructively respond to this situation.

| Step | Things to do and say |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Recognize and admit that you are angry. | |
| 2. Make sure you understand what the other person intended. | |
| 3. Decide what to do with your anger. | |
| 4. Express your anger directly when appropriate. | |
| 5. Express your anger indirectly when it is inappropriate. | |
| 6. Think about how you managed your anger. | |

Handout 5: The Sounding Board

Instructions

Read through the scenarios assigned to you. Spend a few moments with your group members deciding how you might raise the issue. With a partner, role play raising the issue in the scenario. The third group member acts as an observer and provides feedback to the role players.

Scenario 1: You are working on a project with several students. One member of the group is not doing his or her share of the work.

Scenario 2: Your supervisor has dumped extra work on your desk and you're already swamped. You are scheduled to leave on holidays after work and need to get everything current.

Scenario 3: You've just learned that a co-worker has been paid overtime pay for working extra hours on Sunday. You also worked those extra hours and would like overtime pay as well.

Scenario 4: Your supervisor has told you a co-worker wants to change shifts because she has a doctor's appointment. The supervisor has given him your shift and you are to take his. This will interfere with some plans you have with your buddies.

Scenario 5: You have a co-worker who spends too much time on the phone talking to friends. She is always behind in her work and is constantly asking for help to catch up.

Scenario 6: The co-worker who shares your workstation and works the shift just before yours has been drinking coffee at the workstation. This is against the workplace rules. It also leaves a mess that you have to clean up. You have spoken to him about it and he has told you to mind your own business. The supervisor is a good buddy of his.

Scenario 7: Your supervisor is always joking about how big you are. You are very uncomfortable with the remarks and would like her to stop.

Scenario 8: You supervise a worker who is quite sloppy and you often have to spend extra time correcting his work. He is a creative worker and has many good ideas that have helped to keep things running smoothly. You've talked to him about his work without any results. He is also related to the boss.

Scenario 9: One of the workers you supervise has a bad attitude, constantly grumbling about everything. This co-worker is well liked, however it seems the bad attitude is contagious for everyone at work and morale is terrible.

Scenario 10: You think you are owed vacation pay for the last pay period. Your boss doesn't like having his authority questioned.

Handout 6: Raising Issues Constructively¹¹

Making the decision

You are having a problem with your boss or one of your co-workers and you would like to do something about it. For many people, the most difficult part of conflict is raising the issue with the other party. Before you get started, here are some things to think about.

- Is the issue significant enough to be raised? What might happen if you don't address it?
- Are the timing and the location appropriate?
- Are the right parties available?
- Do you need to schedule a meeting?
- What is the best location?
- Are all the parties in the right frame of mind?

How to raise the issue

- Identify why you want to talk to the person.
- Use “I” language and make an objectives statement about the facts as you see them (I think, I perceive, I believe, it seems to me).
- Avoid attacking, blaming or judging.
- Express curiosity.
- Focus on actions or behaviour – not the person.
- Avoid using absolutes (always, never).
- Describe how the situation makes you feel. Discuss what you need, not your position or what you want as an outcome. (Don't try to solve the problem.) Focus on the change needed in the future, not on the past.
- Listen to the other person. Find out what she or he needs (active listening). Try to get an agreement and commitment to talk more about the issue.

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Formula approach

- Step 1:** State the facts or situation as you see it.
“It seems to me that....”
“It is my perception that....”
- Step 2:** Identify how the situation makes you feel and/or how it affects you.
“I feel frustrated/upset/....”
“It’s affecting my....”
- Step 3:** Get agreement that there is an issue and/or a commitment to discuss it.
“Can we find some time to talk about it?”
“I’d like to see if we can resolve this.”

The steps in the process do not necessarily need to be completed in the order listed.

Other methods to try

1. Try showing that the issue is a common concern and resolving it would be beneficial to both of you. (“I think we might both be more productive if we could solve this problem.”) This is called **mutualizing**.
2. Indicate that it is normal to have conflict in a workplace where people have different values, perception and standards. Conflict is difficult and a normal reaction to it is to feel uncomfortable. This is called **normalizing**.
3. Don’t make excuses for how you feel about the situation or that it may be adversely affecting you. Making excuses is called **rationalizing**.
4. If possible, start with some positive observations if they can be made sincerely. Once you have done that, avoid, if possible, following up with “buts” and “howevers.”

Blockers

Any response that diminishes or shuts down attempts to raise the issue and work towards resolution is a “blocker.” Blockers can be intentional and unintentional.

- *Anger, denial, blaming.* “If I get mad, maybe she’ll go away” is an example of an **intentional block**.
- *Immediate concurrence, apologies or quick solutions.* “If I apologize, she’ll leave the issue alone” is an example of an **intentional block**.
- *Receiving a placating response.* “Oh that really isn’t very important” is an example of an **unintentional block**.

Dealing with blockers

The first step is to recognize blockers when they are used and have a plan for dealing with them.

1. Think about the types of responses you might get and how you might deal with them. For example, if she immediately apologizes, tell her that you really appreciate the apology and want to talk about what “we” can do to ensure the problem doesn’t occur again.
2. Establish an environment where blockers are unnecessary or even inappropriate. For example, if he begins to get mad and swear, tell him you don’t want to raise the issue in a way that he finds upsetting. Ask him if there is another way to deal with the situation that feels better for him. Tell him that it is important that both of you are happy with how this is done, as you have to continue to work with one another.
3. Know your limit for dealing with blockers. For example: “If she gets depressed and really down about this, I just can’t deal with it and will have to move on and not worry about it.”
4. Shift the discussion from the issue to how you feel the discussion is going and what you perceive is happening at this moment. For example: “I see that you have turned your chair and are looking out the window. I wonder if you might be concerned about something.”
5. Raise the issue clearly, concisely, and directly. Allow the other person time to respond. Encourage two-way discussion. The longer **you** talk, the greater the likelihood that you have lost the other person’s willingness to participate.
6. Ask for a response if you don’t get one. For example, ask if they understand your concern and if they have any thoughts or questions about what has been said.
7. Re-emphasize that you are looking for a mutual understanding. People sometimes habitually block as one way of dealing with criticism and rejection.
8. Reflect before responding to the block. Take time to assess what is being said and how you are reacting to it.
9. The specific approach you decide to use when dealing with blockers will depend upon:
 - Your personality
 - The relationship you feel you have with the other party
 - The type of relationship you feel you might like to have with the other party
 - Your assessment of the other persons’ personality