

Chapter 12: Job Survival

Objectives

- Understanding company culture and why it matters.
- Understanding how you can meet a company's needs.
- Learning what you can do to keep your job.

Working Vocabulary

- **Company culture:** A company's values and accepted behaviors.
- **Confrontation:** A direct conflict with another person.
- **Job security:** Coming to work and doing your job without fear of losing it.

For Discussion

In today's volatile job market, employers and employees alike will say that there is no such thing as job security. However, when it comes time to lay off some employees and keep others, managers and owners make decisions based on the qualities they have observed in their employees. Your actions, accomplishments, and attitudes make an impression. They can go a long way toward ensuring that *you* are one who keeps his or her job.

Think about a job that you have lost in the past (if any). What was the reason for that job loss? What might you have done differently (if anything) to keep from losing that job? Sometimes the circumstances are beyond your control, but often there are things you could have done to make yourself stand out from the crowd—to prove that you were invaluable to the company.

Remember that unless you are the owner of the company, you have a boss. More than likely, that is the person who decides if you keep or even advance in your job. While it may not always be easy—especially if you have conflicts with him or her—impressing your boss is the key to your job security. You need to be cooperative and likeable. You need to work hard and go out of your way to make your boss's job easier and increase profits. Most importantly, you need to find a way to make yourself indispensable. Think about your current job or a past job. Is there anything you can do or anything you could have done to make yourself stand out?

Presentation Suggestions

Use with Pages 182–188

Begin by introducing the vocabulary words. Have the class read the top of page 182 silently. Ask students to make a list of circumstances that are beyond their control. Then have students complete the Stop and Think on page 182 individually and read the paragraphs that follow.

Ask a student to read the Example on page 183 out loud. Answer the question as a whole class. Consider making a list on the board or overhead. Label the list *Job Security Strategies*. Tell students that you will be adding to the list as the class goes on and to make a copy for themselves to keep in their folders. Have students complete the Stop and Think on page 183. Consider having them share their answers in pairs.

Take a moment to review the definition of “corporate culture.” Ask students to share examples of the culture of workplaces they have been a part of in the past. Odds are that students will present a wide variety of “cultures” that you can compare. Use this as an opportunity to discuss how different workplaces can be. You can have students complete the Stop and Think on pages 184–185 either before or after this group discussion.

Have a student read the two paragraphs on page 185 out loud. Then have students complete the Stop and Think on 185 individually. Alternatively, you can use the exercise “**If I Was in Charge**”.

Use the Stop and Think on page 186 as a prompt for a class discussion. Then review the bullet points. Feel free to add to the list of things that can put a job in jeopardy.

Take a moment to remind the class about the importance of goals. Ask them to review their own personal goals. Then ask them how their personal goals connect to the goals of the kind of company they work for or would like to work for. Have students complete the Stop and Think on page 187 individually. Then have students work on the Stop and Think on page 188 in pairs or small groups.

Use with Pages 188–194

Direct students to read the information under “Keeping a Job Is All About the Boss” on page 188. If there is time, you might have them share stories about past bosses and potential conflicts students have had with supervisors. Be sure to discuss the consequences of those conflicts. Remind students that job security is all about making the boss happy. Some students may resist this idea, but it’s important for them to understand that, in some ways, job security is a popularity contest.

Direct the class to read the Example on page 189 to themselves. Then invite students to share their responses to Michael’s situation. Review the bullet points and then move immediately to the Stop and Think on page 189. Have students complete it individually.

Ask a student to read aloud “Handling Confrontation” on page 190. Have students discuss and then complete the Stop and Think that page. Allow time for students to share voluntarily with the whole class. Ask, “What strategies have you used for handling a confrontation professionally?” Review the list on page 191. Consider adding to it on the board or overhead with students’ own suggestions. If there is time, complete the **“Confronting Confrontation”** role-play.

Direct students to complete the Stop and Think on page 192. Ask the class what it means to be “likeable” at work. Starting with the bulleted list on pages 192–193, have students add as many strategies for impressing the boss as possible. If you have started the “Job Security Strategies” list suggested earlier, you can simply add these items to it.

As a continuation of that discussion, you can ask students what it means to “go above and beyond,” whether at work, at school, or at home. Have them give examples of when they exceeded expectations. Then have them complete the Stop and Think on page 194 individually. Allow time to share responses as a whole class.

Until Next Time

Change can be stressful. And the workplace is always changing. What changes have you noticed in the last five or ten years in the way people do business? What kinds of jobs are getting harder to find? What kinds of businesses always seem to be hiring? What new skills do today’s jobs require that yesterday’s jobs didn’t? Think about the changes that are occurring right now in the world of work for the final class.