

If I Was in Charge

Use: After page 185

Format: Small group to whole group

Time: 20–30 minutes

Materials: Copy of worksheet on next page, pens

1. Remind the class that workplace cultures vary considerably and that they often have good points and bad points. Then remind them that a positive work environment makes for better workers and more success.
2. Divide the class into groups of two or three.
3. Give each group a copy of the worksheet on the next page. Tell each group that they are partners and are starting a new business venture. Because it is a brand-new business (and because it is all pretend), they will be creating the company culture for their new company from scratch, just the way they want it.
4. Groups should first decide on a business idea. If you'd like, you can limit their options by providing choices, such as ice-cream parlor, advertising agency, or roofing business.
5. Then, using the worksheet, groups should plan what the company culture might look like. Group members should be open to each other's suggestions, but also debate the value of each idea and the effect it will have on employees, customer service, and work quality.
6. Allow 15–20 minutes for groups to create their company cultures. Then bring the class back together and have volunteers share their ideas. With each group that presents, ask the other students, "Would you want to work for this company? Why or why not?"
7. When everyone has finished, take some time to remind students that fitting in with the company culture is important, but it's also valuable to realize that there are some work environments that might not be a good fit. Stress the importance of finding a job with values, attitudes, and goals that they agree with.

_____ 's Company Culture

Company Policies

Unwritten Expectations

Attitudes of Bosses/Owners

Attitudes of Employees

Company Goals

Company Values

Confronting Confrontation

Use: After page 191

Format: Pairs to whole group

Time: 30–40 minutes

Materials: Copies of role-play scenarios (on following page)

1. Break the class into pairs.
2. Pass out a role-play card to each pair. Be sure that you pass out a “Poorly Handled” and “Professionally Handled” version of each scenario.
3. Allow time for students to discuss the scenes they were given and ideas on how to role-play it.
4. Invite one of the pairs with a “Poorly Handled” situation to go first.
5. Tell students that when they are not performing, they should pay close attention to the scene in progress and note the strategies being used to solve the conflict.
6. Allow two to three minutes for each scene.
7. After each “Poorly Handled” situation is presented, have the pair with the “Professionally Handled” version role-play the same scene.
8. After both pairs have presented, discuss the differences between the two presentations. What did the “Professionally Handled” group do differently? What strategies did the class see for handling confrontations? Consider making a list on the board.
9. Move on to the next scenario, starting with the “Poorly Handled” version. Do this until every group has had the chance to role-play its scenario.

Role-Play Scenarios

Scenario 1 (Poorly Handled)

Two retail clerks (A and B) at a clothing store don't get along. Person A overhears Person B say that he or she is arranging the clothes all wrong and "isn't the brightest bulb in the box." Person A goes to confront Person B about what was said.

Scenario 1 (Professionally Handled)

Two retail clerks (A and B) at a clothing store don't get along. Person A overhears Person B say that he or she is arranging the clothes all wrong and "isn't the brightest bulb in the box." Person A goes to confront Person B about what was said.

Scenario 2 (Poorly Handled)

A restaurant server has arrived late to work for the third day that week. The supervisor is fed up and is ready to let the worker have it. The supervisor calls the worker aside to address the issue.

Scenario 2 (Professionally Handled)

A restaurant server has arrived late to work for the third day that week. The supervisor is fed up and is ready to let the worker have it. The supervisor calls the worker aside to address the issue.

Scenario 3 (Poorly Handled)

A worker, a customer care representative for a phone company, often feels singled out by the boss, who points out mistakes in front of other employees and gives him or her the tasks that no one else wants. The worker asks to meet with the boss behind closed doors to discuss the issue.

Scenario 3 (Professionally Handled)

A worker, a customer care representative for a phone company, often feels singled out by the boss, who points out mistakes in front of other employees and gives him or her the tasks that no one else wants. The worker asks to meet with the boss behind closed doors to discuss the issue.