

EMPLOYER - EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

GOALS:

- To understand expectations of employers.
- To look at expectations of group participants as employees.
- To suggest ways of dealing with situations and emotions when expectations are not being met.

RATIONALE:

All employers have expectations that they want employees to meet. Understanding these expectations will enable group participants to be better prepared for employment. It is also necessary to discuss expectations of group participants (as employees) to determine what is not realistic and how to deal with feelings in situations where expectations are not met.

Note: For further information, you may wish to refer to the *Employability Skills Profile* in Section 3 and *What Employers Want* in this section.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Employment Standards Act as a point of reference if required during lesson.
Flipchart, markers, copies of *Attributes for Success* for each participant.

METHOD:

Exercise 1: Classified and Help Wanted Ads

Divide participants into small groups of four to six. Tell each group to appoint a recorder and a reporter.

Part 1: Classified Ad - Group for Hire

Ask small groups to create a classified ad (six to ten sentences) to advertise their small group's services which are appropriate to the group. This can be based on real or imaginary skills: a band, dog sitting service, etc. This may require that the group start by assessing the skills each brings to the group.

Classified ads need to identify:

- What the small group can offer: a short description of their service.
- What one can expect when they hire the group.

Part 2: Help Wanted Ad - Group Needs Someone Who...

Tell small groups to create a help wanted ad to recruit someone to join their group. Included in the ad is an overview of what they expect of that person (for example: must be a team player, needs to have positive attitude, etc.)

Instruct small groups to appoint a reporter to present their ads to a large group.

Flipchart expectations from these exercises under ***Employer Expectations*** and ***Employee Expectations***.

Questions to consider:

- What other expectations do employees and employers have?
- What do you notice about these lists of expectations?

Note: You may wish to discuss several of the expectations and /or initiate a discussion about which expectations are realistic.

Theory: See Theory Box on ***Knowing What To Expect***

Distribute ***Knowing What To Expect*** to each participant. Initiate discussion of the major points in this handout.

Exercise 2: Case Studies

Divide large group into small groups. Give each group one of the case studies to work on. Inform small groups that they are to present their answers to large group for discussion.

Exercise 3: My Expectations

Refer group to the list of **Expectations** from Exercise 1. Ask each participant to select the top five expectations they have of employers and answer the following questions:

- Are these realistic expectations?
- What might I do if these expectations are not met?

EVALUATION:

REFERENCES:

Positive Works, Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, Edmonton, Alberta. 1992.

Available through:
Learning Resource Distributing Centre
12360 - 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5L 4X9

CREDIT:

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Case Study #1

Jean had been working at her job for about a month when she received her first pay cheque. She noticed that \$20.75 had been deducted from her cheque to cover the cost of her uniform. She was not aware that she would have to pay for her uniform and when she asked a co-worker about it, she was told that \$20.75 would also be deducted from the next five pay cheques as well. Jean has difficulty making ends meet as it is and the loss of this money is very upsetting. Jean is angry that she was not told about the cost of the uniform when she was hired.

How might Jean deal with this situation? What are her options?

Case Study #2

When Larry was hired, he was told he would get one hour for lunch, a fifteen minute break in the morning and fifteen minute break in the afternoon. Lately, the office has become very busy and Larry has been having difficulty getting his morning and afternoon breaks. Larry thinks that because he has worked through so many of his breaks, the employer now owes him a half day off.

Should Larry approach the employer about the time? Why or why not? What options does Larry have to remedy the situation? (Participants may need to refer to Employment Standards Act for this case study).

Case Study #3

Laurie has been working for a company for one and a half years. When she was hired as Junior Programmer, she was told that she would likely be promoted to Intermediate Programmer after about a year. To date, she has not received the promotion and she is feeling very frustrated. She is considering speaking to her employer about this.

Should Laurie pursue the promotion? What are Laurie's options?

THEORY

KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT

Although employers and employees work together toward getting the job done, the expectations and the values each holds are not always communicated or clearly understood. It's important to recognize this and be aware of some of these expectations.

Expectations of Employers

For most of us, once we've learned our jobs, employers can expect us to perform our duties to the best of our abilities and work with some degree of independence and responsibility by:

- Regulating our time without being reminded.
- Being the judge of our own work performance on a day-to-day basis.
- Knowing how to behave at work.
- Handling our personal problems without letting them interfere with our work.

Expectations of Employees

We contribute our skill, our knowledge and our commitment to the workplace. In return, we can realistically expect to:

- Receive adequate training
- Be treated fairly and with respect
- Have rules, policies and changes in our duties explained
- Be told what is expected of us as workers
- Be informed of things that affect us directly before, rather than after the fact
- Have tolerable and safe working conditions
- Have a reasonable workload
- Receive fair wages and benefits
- Have a reasonable amount of control over the work we do
- Be given the opportunity to make suggestions and have them considered
- Have our work fairly evaluated and to be given credit for it
- Have a reasonable opportunity to use our knowledge, skills, training or experiences
- Be told where our work fits into the overall scheme of the organization.

Job dissatisfaction often results however, when several of these expectations are not met. The most common cause of frustration and dissatisfaction stem from:

- Poor communication between management and employees including a lack of feedback to employees about their work
- Too a heavy a workload
- Lack of recognition for the work done
- Incompatibility of work values between employees and employers
- Personality conflicts in the workplace that are difficult to resolve
- Not having sense of belonging, acceptance or importance as a person.

Even though most employers want to meet the expectations of their employees, they may not be aware of what those expectations are, since they are rarely discussed openly. It is the responsibility of both employers and employees to communicate their expectations to each other - especially if they want them to be met!

Since supervisors and managers often set the over all tone of the workplace by making policies that affect the conditions and relationships of the workplace, it's generally their responsibility to be aware of factors that contribute to a low stress environment. One hopes employers see that too much pressure, constant overtime or too little input into decision-making is stressful for workers, but if they don't, then it's up to us as employees to make their concerns known to employers.

CREDIT:

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Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development (1992) *Positive Works*, p.21.