

UNIT 1: FIRST IMPRESSIONS



INTRODUCTION

First Impressions is the first unit in the *Habits of Work* curriculum, and also the first unit in part two, *Learning About Work*. The lesson activities are designed to be pick-and-choose to suit the needs and interests of your students. See Appendix A in *Learning About Work* for a short summary of the full curriculum.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

1. Introduce themselves, demonstrating good posture, a firm handshake, good eye contact, and clear articulation.
2. Maintain good hygiene at their work site.
3. Dress appropriately for their work site.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTOR

First impressions matter. Depending on their circumstances, students may or may not understand what it means to make a good first impression in the workplace, nor how important it is when looking for a job.

Just as there are cultural differences between home and school, there are cultural differences between school and work. These need to be made explicit. For example, eye contact has gender and cultural significance. It's not about what is good or bad; it's about the cultural expectation. What have students been taught and how do they feel personally about eye contact? Knowing this first and knowing next what the workplace expects is important.

Makeup, hairstyle, and shaving are all personal choices, and we don't want to dictate these for students. The goal instead is awareness: How do personal choices compare to the cultural norm at their workplace, and how do similarities and/or differences affect the impressions they make?

Readings

A couple quick reads about first impressions: www.gladwell.com/blink/index.html and www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/FirstImpressions.htm.



Other Resources

There are lots of good Expert Village videos on YouTube. Search for “nonverbal expert village.”

UNIT PREPARATION CONSIDERATIONS

Tasks

 Several of the work site activities involve the student interviewing someone. Identify a natural support person at the work site whom the student can question regarding hygiene, makeup, hair, and other personal appearance topics. The site manager might know just the person that is right for this kind of conversation.

Some of the lessons in this unit are gender-specific (e.g., makeup, facial shaving). We suggest splitting the group by gender for these lessons and matching a female teacher with the girls and a male teacher with the boys.

If possible, collect examples of work site dress code policies that can be shared later in class.

If you do the Cleanliness Kit activity, gather samples of what might go in the kits to provide concrete visuals of the possibilities.

Speakers

Scan the classroom-based introduction activities for speaker ideas. Contact these people early to arrange dates and times. Other speaker sources beyond those specifically mentioned in the activities are your local Rotary club or SCORE (a national nonprofit group of business professionals whose mission is to “provide resources and expertise to maximize the success of existing and emerging small businesses”): www.score.org/explore_score.html.

Prior Knowledge

You may need to preteach some of these concepts depending on the lessons and activities you select:

- stereotypes (e.g., opera singer, rap artist)
- dress for different purposes (job, safety, casual, formal)
- cultural norms
- parody
- faux pas



SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IDEAS

Following are ideas for a summative assessment for this unit:

1.  Journal prompts (learning outcomes 1, 2):
 - What would you do to make a good first impression now? How is this different from what you thought before we started this module?
 - Comment on culture similarities and differences between home, school, and your work site.
2. Make a personal checklist you would use to get ready for a first visit to a work site (learning outcomes 2, 3).
3. With partners, put on a skit (learning outcomes 1, 2, 3) showing:
 - Mistakes people make.
 - Useful things people can do to make a good first impression.

UNIT KICKOFF

1. This website has several pictures of teens in appropriate and inappropriate interview attire. Print them for discussion or send students to the website as an assignment. Note that the gallery lacks photos of males dressed inappropriately.
jobsearch.about.com/od/teenstudentgrad/ig/Interview-Attire/
2.  Show this 2:09-minute surprise-ending YouTube video, “How to Dress for a Job Interview”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6xufGeyaMU
3. Surprise the class. Ask them to imagine you are a substitute. Pretend to start the class making a good impression, and then make a bad one.

LESSONS

This unit is divided into the following lessons. The lessons contain choices for activities and are organized into an instructional sequence around a workplace assignment.

1. First impressions
2. Dress and dress code
3. Handshake
4. Eye contact
5. Introducing yourself
6. Hygiene
7. Hair



The last two lessons are gender-specific:

8. Makeup
9. Shaving

Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
I. First impressions	Introduction – individual	 Journal. List five good ideas for making a good first impression. “I will try to remember to ...”
		Acronym memory. Create an acronym to help you remember what to do to make a good first impression, e.g., HEN (handshake, eye contact, neat appearance).
	Introduction – classroom	 Journal. Discuss what you would do to make a good first impression with a potential employer. Write a summary journal entry after the class discussion. Identify what will be easy for you to do to make a good first impression and what might be challenging.
		Agreement circles. Form students in a circle. The teacher reads statements that are good choices and bad choices for making good first impressions. Students step in to the circle if they believe the statement is a good choice. Students remain on the outside of the circle if they believe the statement is a bad choice.
		Discussion. With the class, discuss what assumptions you make about a person with tattoos, jeans, piercings? What might an employer assume? Discuss how dress codes can vary by type of business, and even within a business (e.g., warehouse vs. front desk). You may need to preteach the term <i>stereotype</i> .
	Workplace activity	Mental notes. Notice the appearance of other people. What impressions do you get?
 Ask your supervisor to describe their first impression of you.		
Follow-up – individual	 Journal. Write an entry completing the following: “Making a good first impression will ...” and “I feel sorry for someone who does	



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>First impressions, continued</i></p>		<p>not make a good first impression because ...”</p> <p> Journal. Write a journal entry describing any changes you might make as a result of what your supervisor told you: “The new me will ...”</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Alternative scenarios. Based on your workplace experience and the feedback from your boss, create an alternative scenario – a replay of the events that happened at work with changes you would make to create a stronger first impression. Act out the two scenarios. See if your peers can identify the changes you made in your alternative scenario.</p>
<p>2. Dress and dress code</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p> Watch the 1:48-minute monologue on the impact of what you wear, “Non-Verbal Communication Tools: Non-Verbal Communication: Clothing”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xsng2YOhMA&feature=channel</p> <p>Journal. Look in your closet. What would you wear to an interview? Describe the outfit in a journal entry, or draw and label the outfit, or take a photograph with you in your interview clothes and put it in your journal.</p> <p> Watch the 2:21-minute straightforward video, “How to Tie a Tie: The Half Windsor”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSxNp4txj8c</p> <p>Practice tying a tie. Take a digital picture of yourself wearing the tie and send it to your teacher.</p> <p> Explore the website, “37 Ways to Tie a Scarf” at www.scarves.net/how-to-tie-a-scarf/, which has both videos and written instructions. Try one of the techniques. Take a picture of yourself wearing the scarf and send it to your teacher.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Dress code, continued</i></p>	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p>Cut out pictures of people wearing different styles of clothing. (Or, find digital images of people wearing different styles of clothing.) Examine them and decide what impression you have about the person. Show your pictures to another student. Play the Guess My First Impression Faux Pas game.</p>
		<p>Brochure. Create a collective brochure for the fictional How to Dress for Success Clothing Company. Using cutouts from magazines and flyers, create a dress for success brochure. Each student can create his or her brochure beginning with a description of their workplace and then a dress for success image. You could do this activity on the computer as well.</p>
		<p>Paper dolls. Make paper dolls using clothes cut out of magazines or catalogs.</p>
		<p>Mystery of the dress code. Every work site has a dress code, whether it's formally written down or not. Share examples of policies. Brainstorm a checklist for gathering cues about the unspoken dress code. Create an acronym to help you remember what to look for at your workplace.</p>
		<p> Special guest: Human Resources or Chamber of Commerce representative. Prepare one to two questions to ask about what's appropriate to wear at different sites, e.g., garage, retail store, office, farm.</p>
		<p>Interview Readiness Day. Come to class dressed as if you were coming for an interview. Discuss how you made your choice.</p>
		<p>Discussion about stereotypes. Stereotypes about females. Discuss why going for an interview in bare legs and a short skirt could be worse than having a nose ring or tattoo. Stereotypes about males. Discuss something comparable, e.g., torn baggy jeans, stained T-shirt, pants worn low.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Dress code, continued</i></p>	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p>Mental notes. Observe what the informal dress code is. Remember to use the acronym to help focus your observations.</p> <p> Ask the work site contact to explain the actual dress code. Ask what happens when an employee dresses inappropriately.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write a journal entry explaining how the work site handles dress code problems.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write a journal entry describing the informal dress code. What did your observations tell you? What evidence do you have?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Find someone who ... Students generate a list of findings about the informal and formal dress code. Try to find as many other students who have the same findings about the informal and formal dress code at their workplace. Follow the activity with a discussion.</p>
<p>3. Handshake</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p>  Watch the 2:16-minute humorous video on how to give a good handshake, “How to Meet Jeff Gordon”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZV_VpXVMVqw&feature=related</p> <p>Shake hands with five different people. Note the impression you get of them from their handshake.</p> <p>Write a journal entry. Use adjectives to describe the handshakes. “The handshake felt like ...” “It made me feel like ...”</p>
	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p>Brainstorm different kinds of handshakes (e.g., strong, weak, limp fish, too long, game). Demonstrate them with each other. Practice appropriate handshakes for the workplace. Remember that types of handshakes can be both gender and culturally based. This is a good time to talk about the culture of the workplace and workplace expectations of handshakes.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Handshake, continued</i></p>		<p>Pass the handshake game. A student shakes the hand of another student (e.g., exaggerated, weak.) Students greet each other during the handshake with their name: “Good afternoon, Rick“ and “Good afternoon, Jenn.” Drop hands and try again with an appropriate handshake.</p>
	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p>Mental notes. Shake hands with 10 to 15 people and notice the different styles. Notice who gives what kind of handshake and what message it conveys.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write a journal entry describing who gave what kind of handshake and what message it conveyed. Create a graph of the handshake types.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Game. Each student gets one handshake card (firm handshake, limp handshake, the never-ending handshake, the high-in-the-air handshake, the I’m-distracted-or-too-busy handshake) and a set of reaction statement cards (this person is confident, this person is unsure of him- or herself, this person is violating my personal space, this person doesn’t have time for me, this person doesn’t respect me). Play a matching game.</p> <p>Cue cards. Hand out sets of handshake cards (as above) to small groups. Choose two students to demonstrate different handshakes. Groups decide what they’re seeing and hold up the correct cards.</p>
<p>4. Eye contact</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p>  Watch the 2:04-minute monologue on eye contact, well-illustrated by the actor’s eyes in the video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwbUy3MHZGg</p> <p>Journal. Make a chart with two columns: one, what is happening with the eyes and two, how that makes you feel. Watch the video again and complete the chart, stopping and starting the video as needed.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Eye contact, continued</i></p>	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p>Dyad. Try a conversation with and without different kinds of eye contact. What is the difference between eye contact and staring? When do you avert your eyes? When does eye contact make you feel comfortable? When does eye contact make you feel uncomfortable?</p>
	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p>Mental notes. Who makes eye contact with you? With whom do you feel comfortable or uncomfortable making eye contact? Practice making good eye contact.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write about what it’s like to focus on good eye contact: “It makes me feel ...” “My first reaction is ...” “I wonder ...” “Sometimes I will ...”</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Narrative pantomime. The teacher reads a made-up scenario (the teacher or student can create the scenario) that takes place at work, and the students act out the scenario silently to demonstrate the idea using movement with a particular focus on changes in eye contact.</p>
<p>5. Introducing yourself</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p>Develop an introduction script. “Hello, I’m Tom. I’m a junior at Conant High School and ...” Make an ID card-sized cue card for yourself.</p>
	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p>Cut/Take 2. With a partner, develop introduction scripts as above. Now put them together and act them out. Audience: “Cut!” State what is going well and what needs to be worked on with a few suggestions. “Take 2.” Incorporate the changes and act it out again.</p>
		<p>Telephone introductions. With a partner, develop a script to introduce yourself and express interest in an internship. Practice calling and leaving a message.</p>
<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p> Try out your script on your supervisor. Ask for suggestions to improve it.</p>	



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Introducing yourself, continued</i></p>	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write a journal entry about performing your script. What went well? What suggestions did your supervisor have? What changes do you want to make next time?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Instant replay. Compare experiences with other students who tried out their script. Identify themes that emerged from this discussion and brainstorm how to overcome challenges. Then try Instant Replay. Act out what happened in the workplace. Next, act out what you would do differently if you could rewind the experience.</p>
<p>6. Hygiene</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p>List what you would put in a cleanliness kit in case of emergencies at work. For women there will be feminine hygiene products that will need to be included.</p>
		<p> Journal. Discuss the importance of explaining dirty hands or nails (e.g., gardening, painting). The reason? Explaining it right away heads off questions and wrong assumptions about you.</p>
		<p> Journal. Write a journal entry about your reaction to people with hygiene issues (bad breath, greasy hair, body or smoking odors, dirty fingernails. “When someone is close to me and I smell bad breath, the first thing that comes to mind is ... and then I think ...” Do the same for the other hygiene issues.</p>
	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p>Discuss odors (breath, hair, body, smoking), why they’re unpleasant, and what you can do to prevent them.</p> <p>Cleanliness kit. Work in groups to design what should be in a cleanliness kit and then make a poster to share with the class. Each student then assembles their own personal kit to leave at work in case of emergencies. Note that some students can use their kits for needed medical supplies as well.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p>Hygiene, continued</p>		<p>Game. Sit in a circle. First, the student must complete the following sentence: “I’m [student name], and I’m going to my workplace tomorrow. In my cleanliness kit I am going to bring ...” The next student completes the same sentence but has to restate what the first student said she or he would bring. Continue around the room. To help students, you can write the students’ names on the board and what they will bring. If the class is small, you can go around the circle several times.</p>
	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p>Show your supervisor your cleanliness kit and ask if and where you can keep it at work.</p> <p> If your work site has a nurse, ask that person how they would deal with a person with body odor, bad breath, or smoking odors.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. After a couple weeks with your kit, make a list of items in your kit. Check off what you have used and add what you need.</p>
		<p>Make a personal hygiene checklist to leave in your bedroom for use when you go to a work site. Include a shower and hair washing schedule or log.</p>
<p>7. Hair</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Explore this hair care online magazine from Australia: www.virtualhaircare.com/virtual%20salon/frame_vs.html. Write down 10 hair facts that interest you.</p> <p> Watch the 3:39-minute video of the song “Hair” from the 2009 Tony Awards: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNnUITJ4V0o</p> <p>Think about how people identify themselves with their hairstyle. Hunt around the Internet for pictures of famous people whose hair reflects something about their personalities. Paste the pictures in your journal with short captions, “John Doe’s hair tells you he is ...”</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Hair, continued</i></p>	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p> Invite a local hairstylist to demonstrate good grooming techniques. As part of the discussion afterward, talk about things you might want to add to your cleanliness kit.</p> <p>Agree/disagree matrix. Write the statement, “People who don’t brush their hair are poor workers” on the board. Poll the group for agreement or disagreement. Put the results away for discussion after students have observed at the workplace.</p>
	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p>Mental notes. Observe people’s hair, including style, cleanliness, and neatness. What assumptions do you make about the person?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write a journal entry about your hairstyle and care and what changes you might make, if any, to improve how you’re regarded as an employee, including how often you wash your hair. Take before-and-after pictures and paste them in your journal. Explain the reasons for the changes.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Agree/disagree matrix follow-up. Now that you have spent time observing hairstyles at the workplace, complete a new class matrix. Meet in small groups to discuss the results and changes.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Group check-in. Who has used their kit? What would they have done without it?</p>
	<p>8. Makeup</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Makeup, continued</i></p>		<p>makeup: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dla-VKbVW04</p> <p>Write a journal entry commenting on what makes this a parody. What does it mean to be too extreme?</p>
		<p> Watch the 4:12-minute basic eyebrow tutorial: www.youtube.com/watch?v=PugziVUikEg</p> <p>Draw four faces with eyes and eyebrows. Circle the one you like best and explain why.</p>
	Introduction – classroom	<p>Poster. Cut out pictures from magazines and make a poster showing women wearing makeup both appropriate and inappropriate for a work site.</p> <p>Present your poster to your group, explaining your reasons for choosing each picture. You could also do a Google image search to find pictures.</p>
	Workplace activity	<p>Mental notes. Observe what a few different women are wearing for makeup, if any. What is the range of styles? Do they fit the workplace?</p>
	Follow-up – individual	<p> Journal. Write an entry describing what you noticed as far as makeup use and style at your work site.</p>
9. Shaving	Introduction – individual	<p> Watch this 1:03-minute video on dealing with problem areas to avoid razor cuts: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWquUXC2Te8</p> <p>Journal. Try this technique. Write a journal entry about how it worked for you.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
Shaving, continued		 Watch this 2:22-minute instructional video on shaving (not electric razor): www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmNwyGzUOCM Journal. Try something from this video. Write a journal entry about the experience.
	Introduction – classroom	Discuss the timing of when you shave and how closely. Discuss personal preference versus workplace expectations. Look at pictures of people with different facial hairstyles and discuss the kind of workplace where you might find them.
		Activating prior knowledge. What jobs have rules about facial hair? (For example, firefighters can't have beards because they have to be able to wear air masks.)
	Workplace activity	Mental notes. Is there a norm? What assumptions do you make about the men you see based on their facial hair?  Ask your supervisor if there are rules or guidelines about acceptable facial hair at your workplace.
	Follow-up – individual	 Journal. Write a journal entry describing your personal plan for how you will or will not shave for work.
	Follow-up – classroom	Group check-in. Use chart paper and draw outlines of faces, maybe six in a row. What is the range of facial hairstyles you observed at the work site? Compare observations with others in the class.

CONNECTIONS TO NH CAREER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The NH Career Development Curriculum Framework (October 2006) establishes seven curriculum standards “that define what New Hampshire students should know and be able to do relative to career development” at the end of grades four, eight, 10 and 12. Listed below are the End of Grade 10 and End of Grade 12 proficiency standards addressed in this unit, some more intensely than others. *Habits of Work* provides practice towards these standards. Student



competence will depend on the activities you choose and the depth of student practice. You may need to develop individual activities in order for students to achieve competence.

End of Grade 10

- 1.1 Access information from multiple sources and information-retrieval systems.
- 1.3 Demonstrate the ability to summarize ideas and information.
- 1.4 Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of organizational structures such as cause-and-effect patterns, paraphrasing, and charts and graphs to communicate ideas and information.
- 1.5 Demonstrate the ability to effectively and logically support individual ideas.
- 1.6 Use cross-referencing while gathering information.
- 1.8 Recognize, evaluate, and respond appropriately to persuasive forms of communication.
- 2.2 Identify the issues involved in making a decision or solving a problem.
- 2.3 Gather and use appropriate materials and resources in making individual and career decisions, including printed materials, human resources, and information accessed through technology.
- 2.4 Use logic to draw conclusions from available information.
- 2.5 Develop a plan that reflects research and builds on relevant precedents.
- 2.6 Evaluate an event or activity in terms of expressed purposes.
- 2.7 Generalize rules or principles (underlying patterns and relationships) from a set of conclusions, objective data, written text, or system's review, and apply those rules and principles to a new situation.
- 2.8 Devise strategies for improving the performance of a system.
- 2.9 Test the effectiveness of the strategies employed.
- 3.1 Independently identify resources and tools needed to achieve learning goals.
- 3.3 Describe how skills developed in academic and vocational programs relate to career goals.
- 4.1 Demonstrate the ability to use peer and adult feedback.
- 4.2 Demonstrate an understanding of how individual characteristics relate to achieving individual, social, educational, and career goals.
- 4.5 Apply decision-making skills to career planning and career transitions.
- 5.1 Demonstrate confidence and positive self-concept in beginning work-related experiences, practice or actual.
- 5.3 Develop the ability to use constructive criticism.
- 6.1 Locate, evaluate, and interpret career information.
- 6.2 Identify and explain the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees.
- 6.4 Demonstrate the use of a range of resources to gather information about careers.
- 6.5 Identify individuals in selected occupations as possible information sources, role models, or mentors.
- 6.6 Consult with and observe adult role models at work to identify elements of their work and determine the need for specific knowledge and skills.
- 6.7 Demonstrate skills and behaviors necessary for a successful interview.
- 7.1 Evaluate the relationship between their individual interests, abilities, and skills, and achieving individual, social, educational, and career goals.
- 7.2 Demonstrate a positive attitude toward work and learning.



7.4 Apply employability and job-readiness skills to internship, mentoring, shadowing and/or other world-of-work-related experiences.

End of Grade 12

- 1.1 Utilize others' critiques as a resource in achieving goals.
- 1.2 Demonstrate the ability to analyze how well evidence supports a conclusion or thesis.
- 1.3 Present, explain, and defend positions, using visual aids when appropriate.
- 1.4 Demonstrate the effective use of the conventions of the English language in communication.
- 1.5 Demonstrate the ability to adjust communication style and language so that it is appropriate to the situation, topic, purpose, and audience.
- 2.1 Apply decision-making skills in a wide variety of situations.
- 2.2 Analyze the design and management of a system.
- 2.3 Develop a systemic plan and communicate the plan clearly.
- 2.4 Develop and test strategies to optimize the performance of a system.
- 2.5 Demonstrate how to analyze the interrelationships of events/ideas from several perspectives.
- 3.1 Evaluate the processes used to achieve goals and improve the qualities of resulting products.
- 4.1 Demonstrate behaviors that maintain physical and emotional health.
- 4.4 Demonstrate the ability to make decisions consistent with one's own belief system.
- 5.1 Demonstrate consistent, responsive, and caring behavior.
- 5.2 Demonstrate the ability to respect the rights of, and accept responsibility for, oneself and others.
- 5.3 Demonstrate effective and flexible team skills as a team member or leader.
- 6.1 Use their analyses of role models to improve the planning and implementation of projects.
- 6.5 Analyze the effects of the changing workplace on the individual, employers, workers, labor organizations, the economy, and society.
- 6.8 Describe the impact of factors such as population, economic and societal trends, and geographic location on occupational opportunities.
- 6.9 Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which work, family, and leisure roles are interrelated.
- 7.1 Analyze the issue of gender equity and traditional and nontraditional occupations and how these relate to career choice and a positive workplace environment.
- 7.2 Share and discuss their individual educational and career plan, including decisions to be implemented after high school.