

15. Teamwork on the Job

JUST THE FACTS: The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand how teamwork is managed on the job - both from the perspective of the boss and from the perspective of the employee.



Time

15 - 30 minutes



Materials

- Copies of Activity 15a or 15b, depending on your time frame



Directions

This exercise offers two different activities. You may choose one or both, depending on time. One is scenario based and one is a role play.

Activity 15a: For this activity, read (aloud or independently) the library scenario. Discuss as a group what Shawn (the librarian) did well, and what she could have done differently. How might she handle herself in the future? Discuss how Nathaniel (the boss) should handle this situation. Consider the fact that he probably wants to help Shawn to improve and not necessarily punish her.

Activity 15b: For this activity, request volunteers to act out a role play. Allow a few minutes for the actors to read through the scene so they know what their character is like. After the scene is read aloud, ask the following questions:

- What was the real problem at the coffee shop?
- What could Jarrod and/or Steffy have done differently?
- Do you agree with how the manager handled the situation?
- What might you have done in this situation?



Conclusion

The importance of teamwork is undeniable. Ask the group to come up with a list of the benefits of teamwork and to illustrate or give examples of each. If the group has trouble coming up with a list, use the following as conversation starters:

- **Support** - Teamwork leads to camaraderie between team members. This will not only lead to better social relationships, but can also act as a support when things go wrong.
- **Varied skills** - Different team members bring with them different skills.
- **Distribution of work** - Distributing work not only reduces each individual's burden, but also increases responsibility and ensures better commitment to completing the task individually and as a whole.

- Creativity - Different people have different skills and possess different perspectives. Therefore any activity that involves teamwork benefits from the various creative thoughts and inspirations of different people.
- Accomplish faster - People working together will tend to complete a project faster than if one person was working alone.



Journaling Activity

Think about a time when you were part of a group/team and things worked really well, and a time when things didn't work out so well. What were the situations and what made the differences?



Extension Activity

Consider different jobs in your community. Arrange for field trips to some local job sites where participants can ask both managers and employees a few questions about teamwork (or ask an employer and employees to come in to talk about the impact of teamwork on the job). Alternatively, participants can do this independently and then share their experiences with the larger group.

Work with participants to develop a single set of questions to ask of managers and employees. Questions should be focused on the importance of teamwork and what happens when one or more chooses not to be a team player.

Activity 15A. Teamwork on the Job

SCENARIO:

Shawn works in a library. She and three other co-workers have been tasked to work together on a project. Shawn turns in the completed product, but she completed it without input or help from the others. Shawn said it was really tough to find time to meet together. She did text the others (asking about working together), but got no responses. Her supervisor, Nathaniel, knows that she is a promising young librarian who wants to advance to a leadership position. Nathaniel also believes that Shawn has the potential to be a good leader, but feels she is impatient when it comes to working with others.

DISCUSSION:

- What did Shawn do well?
- What could she have done differently?
- How might she handle herself in the future?
- How should Nathaniel handle this situation?
- Consider the fact that he probably wants to help Shawn to improve and not necessarily punish her.

Activity 15a. Teamwork on the Job

Narrator: Five characters will role play a situation to determine whose job it is to restock the condiments at the coffee bar.

Characters:	Jarrold	Steffy
	Pam	John
	Manager	Narrator

Jarrold: It wasn't my job! It was Steffy's job! The policy around here is that the new employee restocks cream and sugar station. She's the newest employee. It's her job!

Steffy: I don't get to work until 10:00. By the time I get here, the station should already be stocked. Otherwise, customers won't have the stuff they need for their coffee.

Pam: You're just trying to get out of doing your job.

Steffy: No! Jarrold gets here at 7:00. He should already have it done by the time I get here.

Jarrold: You're the newest employee.

Steffy: What's your problem?

Jarrold: What's your problem?

Steffy: I do my job.

John: But you're the newest employee. It's your job to restock.

Narrator: Voices are getting louder.

Steffy: But Jarrold gets here earlier. I am only trying to think about our customers.

Pam: Are you just trying to get out of your job?

Jarrold: You're impossible.

Steffy: No, you are!

Manager: Okay, okay! What's the problem? Steffy, continue restocking the condiment station. Jarrold, go ring up the customers.

Narrator: Both are taking a break from each other to calm down. Later in the day, the manager speaks to Jarrod and Steffy.

Manager: Steffy, Jarrod is right. The new person stocks the cream and sugar station.

Steffy: So you mean Jarrod shouldn't have to do this anymore?

Jarrod: Told you!

Manager: Jarrod! On the other hand, that rule was made when everyone came to work at the same time. However, since Steffy doesn't come into work until later in the day, the customers have a right to have a fully stocked station.

Jarrod: So Steffy doesn't have to do this job either?

Steffy: No, I get it! Whoever comes in earliest should restock the station from the night before.

Jarrod: Okay, so I don't have to restock the station all day? Just replenish from the night before. Steffy should then do it when she comes in - and then throughout her shift?

Manager: Exactly! Also, I would like you two to start treating each other with a little respect. It's good to have a sense of humor. What happened to yours? Every customer and employee that comes in here deserves to be treated with courtesy. Okay? And, by the way, the customer is always right and always comes first.

Narrator: (Next day) Their voices are calm and respectful.

Steffy: Jarrod, I am here now. I'll finish those. Why don't you go take a break?

Jarrod: Okay, thanks! I think I will. Hey look, there's a whole new kind of sugar that just came in. The boxes are in the back. I thought you might want to know.

Steffy: Thanks, Jarrod.