

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **MODULE 5**

### **List characteristics of a responsible employee.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. List characteristics of a responsible employee.**
- B. Describe ways you can get along with your supervisor.**
- C. Describe ways you can get along with co-workers.**
- D. Describe ways you can get along with customers.**
- E. Describe work rules for your job.**

<b>MODULE 5: INFORMATION SHEET</b>
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*TO THE STUDENT: Read and study the following information sheet and then complete the student activities at the end of this module.*

#### **Characteristics of a responsible employee**

The employer pays the salary and has a right to specific expectations for employees. The following characteristics are a result of a recent survey of training station sponsors.

1. Cooperation. *Example: Helping other employees, if permissible, when your duties are completed.*
2. Initiative. *Example: Moving to additional duties that require more responsibility and more difficult skills; seeing things that need to be done and doing them without being told.*
3. Honesty. *Example: Returning from breaks and lunch on time; not taking stamps, pens, paper, tools for personal use, etc.*
4. Willingness to learn.
5. Following directions.
6. Neat appearance; good grooming.

7. Pleasant facial expression; smiling.
8. Not talking too much (especially on the telephone).
9. Politeness. Courteous; well-mannered; considerate conduct.
10. Patience.
11. Punctuality.
12. Good attendance.
13. Dependability, i.e. completing a task on time.
14. Enthusiasm.
15. Accepting criticism well; don't make excuses.
16. Loyalty; i.e. keeping business matters confidential such as price margins and cost codes.
17. Sense of humor.
18. Positive attitude.
19. Lack of jealousy.
20. Dependability.
21. Tactfulness.
22. Interest in the job.

**Ways a student can get along with the supervisor**

1. Accept the authority of the supervisor - do it his/her way.
2. Look for additional responsibility.
3. Don't permit personal life to interfere with job.
4. Handle merchandise and supplies respectfully.

5. Do not pretend to know all about the business.
6. Learn from your supervisor.

**Ways a student can get along with co-workers**

1. Know and call them by name.
2. Introduce yourself to other employees.
3. Greet, smile, and call by name other employees arriving for work.
4. Say good-bye when leaving work for the day.
5. Listen, ask questions, and thank the other employees who try to be helpful.

**Ways a student can get along with customers**

1. Overcome shyness.
2. Smile when greeting customers.
3. Try to remember customers' names, likes and dislikes.
4. Approach customer promptly and with confidence.
5. Help each customer with individual needs.
6. Realize that there will be some difficult customers.
7. Always be polite, tactful, and honest with customers.
8. Never argue with a customer - you can never win an argument with a customer; you may make your point but lose the customer.

**Work rules**

Work rules are usually more strict than those in school because a business is primarily involved in making money. Also, larger companies generally have more rules than smaller companies.

1. Punctuality (\*\*probably the most important work rule)
  - arrive five minutes early
  - dress and gather tools on your own time

- return from breaks on time
  - run personal errands on your own time
  - do not be a clock watcher
  - be willing to work a few minutes overtime without pay unless company policy or the use of time clock prohibits such action
  - never rush or walk away from a customer because it is break or dismissal time
2. Neat appearance and appropriate clothes for the job
- clean hands and nails are important
  - dangling jewelry may be distracting (NOTE: For safety reasons, wearing of jewelry in some occupations is prohibited.)
  - clothing fads, jeans and t-shirts may not be appropriate dress
  - precautions should be taken against body and breath odor
  - clean, styled hair is helpful in getting and keeping most good jobs
  - as little make-up as possible is more appropriate for work
  - you are never completely dressed until you put on a smile
3. Visiting on the job
- personal telephone calls should be kept at a minimum
    - using office cell phones, computers and email for personal correspondence is discouraged and should not be done on company time
  - friends and relatives must understand that they should not call or have lengthy personal visits during working hours
4. Missing work
- have good attendance at both school and work for good references
  - try not to miss work when you know there are a lot of tasks to be completed
  - call the employer as early as possible when you must miss work due to illness
  - do not miss work for extra curricular activities more than is absolutely necessary
  - always ask, not tell, the supervisor when you need time off from work
  - ask for time off as early as possible and then remind the supervisor again several days before taking the time off
  - thank the supervisor for letting you take time off from work
  - be willing to trade hours with co-workers who may want to be off at certain times
  - be willing to come to work on short notice when possible

5. Keep busy

- never just stand around
  - there are always things to be cleaned, straightened, stacked, marked, or displayed
  - every job, regardless of how dirty or unattractive, is important
  - use slack periods to learn more about your job
- never sit down on a job that can be done better standing up
- do not have to be told to do things
- work even when the supervisor is not around
- stay with a task until it is finished
- do not become upset if you must do a job over

6. Maintain poise

- stay calm; work quickly and steadily without getting flustered when things go wrong or work piles up
  - speak in a clear, distinct, refined voice; avoid slang, cursing and improper English
- avoid giggling, a loud voice, or distracting nervous gestures or habits
- do not talk about personal problems or complain about being tired or not feeling well

7. Personal management

- never ask for advance pay
- budget your money
- pay bills promptly and in full

**MODULE 5: STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

*TO THE STUDENT:* After reading the information sheet, complete the following questions.

**1. Read each of the following case study problems and decide which work rules have been violated, which rules have been kept, or how the problems could have been solved or avoided. Write your answers in complete sentences.**

- A. Roger works for a manufacturer of building and home improvement supplies. Because he often must do heavy, dirty work, it is not necessary for him to wear dress clothes. Therefore, he usually wears his old jeans with the knees worn out and one of his t-shirts with the picture of a marijuana leaf or a wine bottle. What work rules apply in this situation?
- B. Betty works in a small jewelry store with only one other employee. As soon as Betty arrives at work, the other employee can go on a break and then do some bookkeeping duties that cannot be done until someone comes to help the customers. However, because Betty has such little time between school and work, she asked if she could also have a break. Now Betty's mother calls frequently to give her a short shopping list to fill during her break, and Betty calls her mother to ask about borrowing the family car after work. What work rules are involved in this situation?

- C. Lucy works at a flower and gift shop. She is an excellent employee except for one problem. Lucy has difficulty getting to work on time on Saturday mornings after a late date on Friday nights. She doesn't hear her alarm go off and has also left work early several afternoons. After her teacher-coordinator talked to her training station sponsor, what work rules do you suppose the teacher-coordinator discussed with Lucy?
- D. Susan is a timid girl who works in the ladies' ready-to-wear department of a well-known chain of department stores. She is very good about assuming new responsibilities. For example, after she quickly finished marking a shipment of blouses, she asked the head of the department to show her how to operate the ticket printing machine and how to figure the cost code. However, when it came time to display the blouses, several of the plastic bags protecting the blouses were so badly wrinkled that they looked like old merchandise. Consequently, several of these blouses had to later be marked down in order to sell. What work rules are involved in this situation?

- E. Stanley just got fired. His explanation is the following: "The boss seemed to have a good reason for cutting back on the number of employees at this time, but I think he really just doesn't like me. The boss mentioned once that I didn't seem interested in the job. Heck, I'm going to be a lawyer. I just want to work in a men's clothing store to get through eight years of college. I don't need to know how to do all that stuff in the store. Besides, the boss always got mad if I just stood around a minute. He and the other employees are always standing around talking to each other when there aren't customers in the store. They expected me to do my work and their work, too, especially if it was dirty work." Stanley does not seem to be aware of which work rules?
- F. Bob had been observed using the office's postage stamps for personal letters. His employer ended up firing him. Was the employer justified in letting Bob go? Will Bob fully understand why he was dismissed without an understanding of the work rules?



**2. Answer the following questions in complete sentences:**

1. Describe three ways you can get along better with your supervisor.

2. Describe three ways you can get along better with your co-workers.

3. Describe three ways you can get along better with customers.

**MODULE 5: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE****Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Career Education and Work****13.3.11. Career Retention (Keeping a Job)**

- A. Analyze work habits needed to advance within a career.

**Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)****1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

**1.5.11. Quality of Writing**

- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell all words correctly.
  - Use capital letters correctly.
  - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
  - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
  - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

**1.6.11 Speaking and Listening**

- A. Listen to others.
- Ask clarifying questions.
  - Synthesize information, ideas and opinions to determine relevancy.
  - Take notes.

**Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)****PERSONAL QUALITIES**

Responsibility: Exerts a high level of effort and perseverance toward goal attainment. Works hard to become excellent at doing tasks. Displays high standards of attendance, punctuality, enthusiasm, vitality, and optimism.