

Lesson 4.11

Developing a Work Ethic

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- 1) Define “work ethic” and identify the components.
- 2) Describe the benefits of a work ethic.
- 3) Practice a work ethic and reflect on the experience.

Materials Needed: ☐ Handout 4.11.1

Bell Ringer
(Activity for before and after the bell rings)

Pretend you are starting a company.

- What would your company do? (e.g., What product would your company make and sell?)
- What is a name for your company?



Bell Ringer

Pretend you are starting a company.

What product will your company make and sell?



What is a name for your company?



2 m
T=2

Essential Questions
(Questions to guide the lesson but answer later)

- What is a work ethic?
- What are the benefits of having a work ethic?
- How can we develop a work ethic?



Introduce Lesson & Essential Questions

Today we will explore what it means to exhibit a work ethic.

[Ask volunteers to read aloud the Essential Questions.]

- What is a work ethic?
- What are the benefits of having a work ethic?
- How can we develop a work ethic?



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T=3

What to Look for in an Employee
(Traits and personal characteristics that make a great hire)

Good news! Your company is taking off!
You need to hire employees in sales, production, and bookkeeping. You're meeting with a group of 3-4 other young entrepreneurs to discuss what to look for when hiring employees.

In your group:

- Share the name of your company and the product you're selling.
- Identify traits you will be looking for in new hires.
- Agree on at least five traits as a group; then rank order them from 1-5.

Discuss with Class

- Identify the top two employee traits for your group and why.
- What were common traits and characteristics across groups?



What to Look for in an Employee

[Have students form groups of 3-4 young “entrepreneurs”.]

Good news! Your company is taking off! You need to hire employees in sales, production, and bookkeeping. Meet with your group to discuss what to look for when hiring employees.

- State the name of your company and the product you're selling.
- Identify traits you will be looking for in new hires.
- Agree on at least five traits as a group. Rank order them 1-5.



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What is a “Work Ethic”?
(Defining the essence of work ethic)

In an earlier lesson, we learned that the top skill employers look for in a new hire is a “work ethic.”



- What is a “work ethic”?

work eth-ic (noun)
A belief in the importance and intrinsic value of work and its inherent ability to strengthen character

In - trin - sic (adjective)
Relating to the essential nature of a thing

In - her - ent (adjective)
A permanent quality of something or someone

The highest compliment that you can pay (me) is to say that I work hard every day, that I never do it.
— Wayne Gretzky
Highest scorer in the NHL



What is a Work Ethic?

A dictionary definition of *work ethic* is as follows:

A belief in the importance and intrinsic value of work and its inherent ability to strengthen character.

[Click to reveal the quote from Wayne Gretzky, widely purported to be the best hockey player of all time in the NHL.]

- How does Wayne Gretzky display a work ethic as provided in this definition?




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Components of a Work Ethic
(How character traits figure in a work ethic)

How many of these traits did you include on your group list?

- **Dependability**—Being on time, finishing your work, showing you can be counted on
- **Dedication**—Persisting in the face of obstacles
- **Accountability**—Taking personal responsibility for your actions and outcomes
- **Discipline**—Staying focused on goals, managing your time, avoiding distractions
- **Diligence**—Hardworking, being careful in your work
- **Humility**—Acknowledging everyone's contributions, showing gratitude and appreciation
- **Responsibility**—Taking on duties, being accountable for your work
- **Quality**—Doing your best work, not doing the bare minimum required in a job
- **Teamwork**—Working well with others to complete a project
- **Attitude**—Showing it is important to do a good job, that you value work



Components of a Work Ethic

Many different traits make up a work ethic. **[CLICK to reveal each trait and provide/ elicit examples of people who display the traits.]**

- How many of these traits did you include on your group list?



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How Do You Display a Work Ethic?

(Reflect on traits you display when working)

Think about the different types of work you do, including schoolwork, household chores, and paid work outside the home.

- On Handout 4.11.1, make a check next to the components of a work ethic you display.
- Double star** your three strongest traits.



The Opposite of a Work Ethic



How Do You Display a Work Ethic?

Think about the different types of work you do, including schoolwork, household chores, and paid work outside the home. On the handout, make a check next to the components of a work ethic you display. Star your three strongest traits.

[CLICK to next slide. Have students offer *antonyms* for each of the traits on the slide, e.g., *undependable, undedicated, shirker, etc.*]

- When have you observed these behaviors, which are the opposite of a work ethic, in a workplace setting (no names, please)?



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Video: What Employers Think



What Employers Think

(What did you think about the video?)

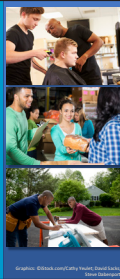
Discuss in your group and then as a class:

- What are the opinions and expectations of the employers in the video?

Quadruple A reflection: In this video, what do you:

- Agree with?
- Argue with?
- Appreciate?
- Think "Aha, I hadn't thought of that before?"

What are your expectations of an employer?



What Employers Think

[SHOW VIDEO (2:30 minutes). Have students discuss the following questions in their groups and then as a class.]

- What are the opinions and expectations of these employers? (Expect employees to be on time, ready to work, honest, respectful, take responsibility for their actions, etc.)
- Let's do a "Quadruple A" reflection: In this video, what do you:
 - Agree with?
 - Argue with?
 - Appreciate?
 - Think "Aha, I hadn't thought of it that way?"
- What are your expectations of an employer?



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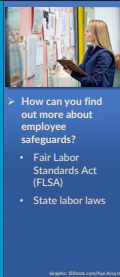
Employee Protections

(Balancing employer and employee needs)

U.S. labor laws protect employee rights.

Take this True/False Quiz to see what you know about these safeguards:

- Employee rights must be posted in the workplace. **True**
- Children under the age of 14 may be employed if they have a work permit. **False**
- Most hourly employees are entitled to overtime pay if they work more than 40 hrs/week. **True**
- Employers are required to pay double-time for hours worked on holidays. **False**
- Employers may fire employees for any reason. **False**



- How can you find out more about employee safeguards?
 - Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
 - State labor laws

Employee Protections T/F Quiz

U.S. labor laws protect employee rights. Take this True/False Quiz to see what you know about these safeguards.

- Employee rights must be posted in the work-place. (True. They must be visibly posted, e.g., on a bulletin board.)**
- Children under the age of 14 may be employed if they have a work permit. (False. If you are under the age of 18, you need a work permit, but, with the exception of agricultural work, children 14 and under may not receive a work permit. This protects children from being forced to work.)**
- Most hourly employees are entitled to overtime pay if they work more than 40 hours/week. (True. There are some state exceptions.)**
- Employers are required to pay double-time for hours worked on holidays. (False. Employers are not required to pay double-time on holidays, but many do.)**
- Employers may fire employees for any reason. (False. Employers may not fire employees based on race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.)**



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Wrap Up



Wrap Up

[Review the essential questions.]



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Wrap Up

(What did we learn today?)

- What is a work ethic?
- What are the benefits of having a work ethic?
- How can we develop a work ethic?



Reflection/Application

Select one trait that indicates a work ethic. Apply this trait whenever you can over the coming week. Then write about it:

- What indicator of the work ethic did you apply?
- What were the results?
- How did you feel afterward?
- Will you continue to apply a work ethic in your life? Why or why not?



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Reflection/
Application

