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## Professional Workplace Relationships

### Instructions

Read the following scenario and respond to the questions in sentences or point form. You can refer to class notes as needed.

### Scenario #1

* You were just hired by Apple World Computers.
* Some departments are manufacturing, creative, sales, and warehouse.
* You work in the creative department.
* You do not know anyone that works for this company.

### *Questions:*

1. *What is the first step you could take to begin to build a professional relationship with a colleague? You must include at least two details to explain your approach.*

I could find out who works in my department by asking the HR people. Or else, I could ask my supervisor who my co-workers in my department are.

If I knew them to see them, then I could introduce myself to them. This could come in handy if I am having trouble doing the work; I could then ask that person for help if needed.

1. *Over the last three weeks, you have had a few pleasant work-related chats with a coworker. Today, during a coffee break, you approached his desk, and he seems preoccupied with his computer (i.e., he keeps looking at it while he talks to you). What would you do? Explain why.*

I would simply tell him I can come back later, as he seems rather busy at the moment. He might say that if it’s important, an email might be the best way to tell him. So, I could do that instead.

### Scenario #2

* You work in a friendly office with 10 total team members.
* Most people say, “Good morning!” to each other and “Goodbye!” at the end of the day.
* There is a new coworker who has just been hired to the team named Sam.
* Sam is shy and does not always say “Good morning!” and “Goodbye!” to you and your coworkers.
* Some people think Sam is rude and wonder if they really want to be there.
* There is an email thread on your team, with Sam left off, complaining that Sam seems unfriendly.
* You know Sam is shy and you want to help Sam feel welcome on the team.

### *Question:*

*What are 3 or 4 ideas you can try to help Sam feel welcome?*

* I could invite him for coffee and engage him in conversation
* I could offer to help him if he’s having trouble with the work
* I could then explain to the boss why he seems so standoffish

Scenario #3

* John and Mary are part of your team that is working on a special project.
* The two of them had a disagreement in your last meeting and it is now creating tension and making you feel uncomfortable in the workplace.
* John comes to chat with you when nobody is around, and he is complaining about Mary.

### *Question:*

*How will you respond to John? Include 3 details to explain your response.*

* I would suggest that John talks to the supervisor first about his concerns
* The supervisor could talk to Mary separately as well
* If the supervisor thinks it necessary, he could set up a meeting with both John and Mary

### Social media and the workplace

Review the [linked document](https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/uploads/documents/Fact%20Sheets/Social-Boundaries-Information-Sheet-_1.pdf) and answer the questions provided.

*Question:*

**“Keep personal social media persona separate from your professional image…”**

* + - 1. *What does this statement mean?*
* not friending co-workers on your personal social media account
* allowing business clients to message you on your business social media account only
* by friending your co-workers, you run the risk of your boss hearing about anything you’ve posted online
  + - 1. *List in point form 2 ways you can keep your personal social media persona separate from your professional image.*
* Keep two separate accounts; one personal, the other for business
* Don’t friend any of your co-workers on your personal account

### Enhanced Skill Development\*

*Enhanced skill development questions provide students with the opportunity to think deeper about the topic. The activity below is more complex, and the extra practice will further polish professional relationship skills. If you completed the lab questions above before the end of class, it is expected that you will complete the following scenario questions.*

Read the following scenario and respond to the questions in sentences or point form. You can refer to class notes as needed.

### Stay in your own lane

* Jan has been working at Ace Trucking for 5 years.
* Jan has taken on a lot of responsibility at Ace, and her supervisor relies on her expertise to keep Ace running smoothly.
* Jan and the supervisor often talk daily to resolve issues. Their conversation is friendly and relaxed, and they sometimes make inappropriate jokes about clients.
* Once a week, they meet face-to-face for discussions. Jan is used to openly sharing her thoughts and opinions and feels like the supervisor is her friend.
* The supervisor schedules a meeting with all 10 employees to provide information on new scheduling requirements. During the meeting, Jan is interjecting with her own thoughts and opinions, which are not always in agreement with what the supervisor is saying.
* The supervisor leaves immediately after the meeting. Their body language gives Jan the feeling that they are angry.
* Jan feels she has done something wrong and is worried she might lose her job.
* The next day, the supervisor requests a meeting with Jan.

### *Questions:*

1. *Why do you think the supervisor might be angry? Provide 2 details to explain.*

He might be angry with Jan because she was making irrelevant comments during the meeting. Maybe Jan was also repeating some of her inappropriate jokes about customers during the meeting too.

1. *Do you think Jan ‘stayed in her lane’? Explain why or why not.*

I think Jan should have kept her comments to herself during the meeting.

1. *Do you think the supervisor ‘stayed in their lane’? Explain why or why not.*

It would depend on how obvious his body language was. Did he merely have an angry look on his face (yes, he was in his lane), or was he slamming doors and other things on his way out of the meeting (no, he wasn’t)?

1. *Explain how the supervisor and Jan can continue to build their professional relationship and ensure they both ‘stay in their lane’. Provide 2 details in your response.*

They can have a frank discussion in their meeting. If necessary, they can involve the big boss of the company if more disciplinary measures are needed.