

# Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

*A Manual and*  
**TWELVE INTERACTIVE TRAINING VIDEOS**

*Demonstrating the Importance and Practice of*  
**ESSENTIAL SKILLS IN THE  
SMALL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT**



Build Your Skills  
Shape Your Future



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**Canada** 

“The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.”

Some of the information passages included in this manual are copies of Essential Skills information that is published by the Government of Canada.

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## The Aim of Our Project

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If you fall into the category of employer, employee, or customer, you understand the need today for good working relationships within a business as well as with the public. As the workplace becomes a busier, more competitive arena for small businesses, and time and skilled labour are at a premium, we noticed that certain skills involved in making a business run smoothly and efficiently were at risk of being overlooked. Our project, *Paving the Way to Lasting Employment*, deals with three of the nine Essential Skills (listed below). These Essential Skills, **Oral Communication, Working With Others, and Thinking Skills**, are also referred to as the Soft Skills because of the quality with which they are delivered — the way in which we use these skills.

Over a period of months we interviewed and surveyed small businesses, and held discussions with the general public — including employers and employees — to examine and identify which needs were not being met by employees, which responsibilities were being overlooked by employers, and how these factors had the potential to affect the success of a business.

Some other issues that arose, during this process, as important questions for today's employers and employees were the **Use of Cell Phones** on the job for personal calls and texts, **Absenteeism**, and **Workplace Theft**. These issues spill over into categories such as Working with Others (and respecting your coworkers' needs), and Thinking Skills.

The three Essential Skill groups also feed naturally into an area that we found necessary to shine light on for the benefit of both employees and small business owners: the **Creation of an Accurate Job Description** when advertising for a position.

## An Overview: The Nine Essential Skills

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Through extensive research, the Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in nearly every occupation, throughout daily life in different ways and at different levels of complexity. All nine Essential Skills are needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. The Essential Skills are:

- 1 Reading Text
- 2 Use of Documents
- 3 Writing
- 4 Numeracy
- 5 Oral Communication
- 6 Thinking Skills including:
  - a) Problem Solving
  - b) Decision Making
  - c) Critical Thinking
  - d) Job Task Planning and Organizing
  - e) Significant Use of Memory
  - f) Finding Information
- 7 Working with Others
- 8 Computer Use
- 9 Continuous Learning

For an overview of all the Essential Skills resources that are available to employers and employees, go to: [http://www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools\\_resources/tools.shtml](http://www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools_resources/tools.shtml)

## The Soft Skills Covered in the Videos

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### Oral Communication

Oral Communication pertains primarily to the use of speech to give and exchange thoughts and information by workers in an occupational group. It has to do with the way employees and employers communicate with each other and just how that communication affects the work environment, it has to do with the way employees and employers communicate with their clientele and how that communication influences whether a customer will recommend the business to others, and will return to do business again. Consumers now have the option to shop on-line, and may choose to do so to avoid facing any unpleasant customer service interactions. These factors affect the survival of a company, and can determine whether or not it will thrive.

Effective oral communication skills include speaking with confidence and providing clear and concise information using listening, questioning, reiteration and problem-solving skills. Examples include:

- ▶ greeting people and taking messages
  - ▶ providing information
  - ▶ reassuring, comforting or persuading
  - ▶ seeking information and resolving conflicts
  - ▶ facilitating or leading a group
- 
- ▶ **Cashiers** greet customers, tell them the total of their bill and respond to their questions about products and hours of operation.
  - ▶ **Security guards** exchange information with incoming staff during the shift change and talk to members of the public when providing access to the building or grounds.

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- ▶ **Photographic and film processors** interact with customers to take orders and talk with suppliers to order supplies and to check back orders.

### Working with Others

Looking at the list of Essential Skills we also saw that Working with Others was of utmost importance in the field of employment. It affects the efficiency of a workplace, and the safety of customers and workers. It also creates an atmosphere of respect and goodwill, which influences how a business is perceived by the community.

#### Types of Work Contexts:

##### *Working alone*

- ▶ Employees work alone providing products or information on progress to others.
- ▶ **Home-based production workers** work alone within their home environments.

##### *Working independently*

- ▶ Workers are not physically alone but work independently, co-ordinating their work with that of others.
- ▶ **Receptionists** in a large office and production line workers with responsibility for a very specific part of the process are in physical environments that include other workers. However, they work essentially on their own.

##### *Working jointly with a partner or helper*

- ▶ One worker co-ordinates and co-operates with only one other co-worker at a time.
- ▶ A **tradesperson** works with an apprentice.
- ▶ A **dental assistant** works with a dentist.



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### *Working as a member of a team*

- ▶ A team is a group of workers who produce a product or accomplish a task through combined effort and organized co-operation.
- ▶ **Members of a film crew** work together to create a feature film or documentary.

## Thinking Skills

Thinking Skills, which is broken into six categories listed below, tend to be those skills which we assume our employees and employers and coworkers are naturally endowed with. However, different people have different strengths when it comes to thinking skills. Some people are great organizers, others make great leaders or decision makers. Thinking Skills include six different types of interconnected cognitive functions:

**Problem solving** involves problems that require solutions. Most problems concern mechanical challenges, people or situations.

- ▶ A **mechanic** solves problems, e.g., the car shakes when driven over 80 kmh, by eliminating probable causes until the correct one is identified and remedied.

**Decision Making** refers to making a choice among options. Decision making occurs during problem solving, but not all decision making is part of problem solving. It is, therefore, presented as a separate thinking skill. This is not problem solving.

- ▶ **Buyers** for retail outlets regularly make decisions about which suppliers to buy from, i.e., they select among the options for particular types of merchandise.

**Critical Thinking** refers to the ability to take information, assess and interpret it, draw conclusions and then to use the new information in a constructive manner.

- ▶ Based on market research, a **small business owner** would align his services and product with customer demographic, need and demand.

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**Job Task Planning and Organizing** refers to the extent to which workers plan and organize their own tasks. It does not refer to involvement in the planning function for the organization in which they work.

- ▶ **Receptionists** and **Nannies** must order their work according to the tasks of the day, and the needs of the client, management, and the needs and moods of the child.

**Significant Use of Memory** includes any extensive, job specific or otherwise unusual use of memory for workers in the occupational group. It does not include normal memory use that is a requirement for every occupation.

- ▶ **Rural route carriers, cashiers** and **luggage** attendants must remember the order and codes of articles to sort and distribute.

**Finding Information** involves using any of a variety of sources including text, people, computerized databases or other information systems.

- ▶ **Ticket Agents** as well as a majority of customer service positions involve finding information.

### Continuous Learning.

By viewing this series of *Paving the Way to Lasting Employment* videos you are also practicing this Essential Skill, since you are participating in an ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge.

More and more jobs require continuous upgrading, and all workers must continue learning in order to keep or to grow with their jobs. To learn continuously you must have the following skills:

- ▶ knowing how to learn
- ▶ understanding your own learning style
- ▶ knowing how to gain access to a variety of materials, resources and learning opportunities

The videos also deal with several other work related issues.

## Other Work Related Issues

### **Creation of an Accurate Job Description**

It is important to list all necessary skills and duties for a position, so there are no surprises when the barista finds himself cleaning the washroom at the end of the shift. Even terms like “works well alone, personable, good at prioritizing” gives a prospective employee a more solid idea of what the small business owner is looking for.

### **Theft**

The unauthorised removal or use of client, employer/ employee or coworker property is a serious breach of trust, and punishable by law. This kind of activity weakens the employer-employee relationship on many levels. It harms the client-business owner relationship and ultimately affects the survival of a business.

### **Personal Cell Phone Use on the Job**

The personal use of cell phones in the workplace during working hours can affect productivity, company morale, as well as one-to-one employee relationships. Cell phone use can also be distracting and affect safety in the workplace.

## How to Use the Videos

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This manual is intended as an accompaniment to the *Paving the Way to Lasting Employment* videos. There are twelve interactive videos covering the Workplace Essential Skills mentioned on the previous page. By looking at this manual you will be able to see the skills areas that are covered in each video and decide which video might be the best for the point you are highlighting within your working environment.

After you have found a video that deals the points you are covering in your workplace, select the video on the DVD or via the web address link, and watch the video. You will be able to pause/ play the video and you will also be able to select individual outcomes for the various scenes within some of the videos.

You will see that on the screen of the video, questions will appear before and/ or after various scenes. Take time to pause the video and read and think about the questions on screen, and to answer them aloud with your viewing audience/ colleagues. In some of the videos you will be prompted to continue to the following scenes. If you are watching the videos alone, make sure to remember the issues you found pertinent to your situation or issues you would like to discuss with others, be they coworkers, employers or employees.

The manual can be used before and after viewing the videos, the questions in the manual are different than the questions you will see presented on screen. The questions in the manual are broader in their scope, to encourage ongoing discussion and a continuing dialogue regarding workplace issues.

By looking at the chart on the facing page you can get an idea of the concentration of skills in each video, then turn to that video and you will see a specific breakdown of the skills being presented as well as a synopsis of the video and accompanying exercises.

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## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment Videos

Category	Customer Service			Retail Setting			Administrative			Labour		
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten	Eleven	Twelve
<b>Oral Communication</b>	***	**	*	**	**	*	*	**	*	*		*
<b>Working with Others</b>	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Thinking Skills</b>	***	**	**	**		***	**	****	*	*	**	*
<b>Job Description</b>					*							
<b>Absenteeism</b>										*		
<b>Cell-phone use</b>									*		*	
<b>Theft</b>											*	

To activate the videos click on the buttons (  ) to the left of the image on each page.

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video One

The following scenario represents a typical customer service setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Greeting Customers
- ▶ Providing Information

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Taking Deliveries

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Job Task Planning and Organizing
- ▶ Decision Making
- ▶ Significant Use of Memory

Who Gets Served?

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2

CHOICE 3

Summary Questions



#### Synopsis:

This scenario takes place in a neighbourhood coffee shop. The employee is confronted with several important choices all presented at the same time, while customers wait in line to be served:

- ▶ A customer wants to know the specific ingredients of a product
- ▶ The delivery man needs to be served before the product spoils and before he gets a parking ticket
- ▶ The phone is ringing

In this scenario we see the employee attend to each task with differing results.

#### Watch For:

- ▶ Body language and tone of voice of the employee.
- ▶ The way the employee demonstrates her thinking skills.

#### Think About:

- ▶ The consequences for each choice.

#### Remember!

*Effective thinking skills can't solve all problems.*

*If you are in a stressful situation try not to lash out or panic; it will only make the problem worse. Stay calm, take a moment to think clearly, breathe, and then proceed.*

*Keep that wonderful sense of humour handy!*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 When you are faced with many decisions how does that affect your oral communication?
- 2 What kind of rapport do you have with your clientele and your support network (i.e. service people)?
- 3 How do you prioritize your duties at work? What part of your job is the highest priority?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Two

The following scenario represents a typical customer service setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Making Requests
- ▶ Giving Feedback

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working as a Member of a Team

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Job Task Planning and Organizing
- ▶ Decision Making

Who's in Charge?

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2

SCENE 2



#### Synopsis:

In our neighbourhood coffee shop, the boss has to run out to do some errands, and she asks one of the employees to take over her duties, as well as handle the tasks involved in closing up the business at the end of the day. The employee demonstrates several options:

- ▶ Complying and continuing to work
- ▶ Asking for help from her coworkers
- ▶ Assigning duties to the other employees

Since the employee is not happy with her coworkers' attitudes she exhibits some disagreement. When the boss returns, the coworkers ask the boss why that particular employee was assigned the tasks. The boss demonstrates different approaches to this situation, from suggesting they discuss the issue in private, to a straightforward answer. Finally, at the end of the employee's day, she gives feedback and conveys a range of feelings with the boss's decision to leave her in charge.

#### Remember!

*It's good to give feedback as close as possible to the time the incident took place — but make sure to take the time necessary to collect your thoughts so that you can deliver your feedback in a clear and direct manner.*

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The way that the employee encourages her coworkers to help her.

#### Think About:

- ▶ Your workplace and the “chain of command.” Are you willing to take direction from your coworkers rather than just your boss?

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 What opportunities exist in your workplace to strengthen your working relationships?
- 2 Would you be pleased if your boss entrusted you with more responsibilities? Would you welcome the opportunity to exhibit your capabilities?
- 3 Do you feel you are well trained enough to take on more responsibilities?

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### Video Three

The following scenario represents a typical customer service setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Praising and Criticizing

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working Independently

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Job Task Planning and Organizing
- ▶ Decision Making

Taking Initiative

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2

CHOICE 3

SCENE 2

Summary Questions



#### Synopsis:

In the kitchen of the coffee shop, the employee has taken initiative to create a more efficient workspace, by rearranging kitchen tools, food products and some larger objects that were interfering with the work flow in the kitchen, and crowding work surfaces. The employee did not explain her plan to the boss and when the boss shows up we see her reaction:

- ▶ Pleased and pleasantly surprised
- ▶ Displeased and visibly upset at the change
- ▶ Pointing out that other important chores have not been dealt with.

The employee then adjusts her behaviour to the message she believes the boss has given her.

#### Watch for:

- ▶ The boss's reaction to the employee's actions.

#### Think about:

- ▶ The impulse to take initiative. Are you doing it to make a situation run more smoothly or because you are personally dissatisfied with a certain set up or situation at work and do not want others' feedback.
- ▶ Reasons an employee would want to take initiative — are there motivating factors?

#### Remember!

*Presenting a new or better idea requires tact, and the desire to make your workplace more efficient, and is not a means to show your boss or co-workers that you know a better way to work and that you have no confidence in their leadership skills.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Why do you think a supervisor would resent somebody making changes without being consulted?
- 2 Have you observed a business where employees lack initiative?
- 3 Do you think initiative comes naturally, or do you have to work at it?



## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Four

The following scenario represents a typical retail setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Providing Information
- ▶ Redirecting Inquiries

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Finding Information
- ▶ Significant Use of Memory

Finding Information

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2

CHOICE 3

Summary Questions



#### Synopsis:

The employee of a retail business that supplies feed to residents of a small rural community is approached by several customers, one wanting information on product ingredients, one wanting to know why his regular order is not in place, and one wanting to know the price of a product. The employee obviously has no knowledge of any of the requests and is frustrated because he has no access to the computer, the books or records. He reacts in different ways, one as best he can, and the others in a way that could damage the future success of this business.

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The tone of voice and body language when the employee becomes stressed in this particular situation.

#### Think About:

- ▶ Instances in your workplace where demands of your employer and customers could potentially become very stressful situations.
- ▶ The kind of demands that could be put on you.
- ▶ What a positive version of this situation would look like.

#### Remember!

*Your workplace can be one of the most common sources of stress.*

*We have less control over what we do, since it is our clients and our employer who dictate the activities of our workday.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Does your employer give you opportunities to deal with workplace stress? (i.e. breaks)
- 2 Do you have an efficient way of accessing business related information? Does your employer keep accurate, uncluttered and accessible records?
- 3 In your workday, do you welcome questions regarding help or information, or do you try to avoid being in a position where you have to provide information and answer questions?
- 4 Could a dissatisfied customer more easily order a product off of the internet than have to deal with a provider that has trouble serving the customer?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Five

The following scenario represents a typical retail setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Giving Instructions
- ▶ Workplace Misunderstandings

Also, for Employers this video presents the necessity for integrating Essential Skills requirements into a

**Job Posting** dealing with issues such as:

- ▶ Where can I find the workers that I need?
- ▶ How much should I pay them?
- ▶ Creating Essential Skills Profiles
- ▶ Job Descriptions that Fit your Business Needs

- ▶ A hiring checklist link: [http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools\\_resources/tools\\_audience/hiring\\_checklist.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools_resources/tools_audience/hiring_checklist.shtml), is designed to facilitate employers' hiring decisions. Finding out which Essential Skills a potential employee can bring to the workplace is important. It can help determine if the skills a candidate demonstrates match the skills required for the position.

Matching Skills

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2

Summary Questions



#### Synopsis:

The supervisor asks the employee to complete certain duties before leaving work. These duties were not stipulated in the job description and the employee is reluctant to perform them as he has some health issues. Several options are explored from giving the employee another chance, to finding other duties for the employee to perform.

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The ways the employee conveys to his employer that he is not happy with his work situation.
- ▶ Opportunities for the employee to approach the conflict in a mature way.

#### Think About:

- ▶ The skills you may have that your employer is unaware of.

#### Remember!

*Not only is it important for an employer to post the necessary skills for a specific position, but it is equally important that an employee know the skills that he can bring to a job.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Do you feel like you are using all of your skills at your job?
- 2 Do you have skills you could strengthen in order to get a more suitable job?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Six

The following scenario represents a typical retail setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Reassuring, Persuading

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working as a Member of a Team

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Problem Solving
- ▶ Significant Use of Memory
- ▶ Decision Making

Is Customer Right?

Responses 1, 2

Policy?

Resolution



#### Synopsis:

A customer has approached the employee and would like to have some help with an incorrect order. The customer insists that it is the business's mistake and the employee finds the records that illustrate the mistake lies with the customer. The employer tells the employee that it is his problem, providing no helpful options and leaving the employee no recourse but to offer no help to the client, leaving the client disgruntled and angry with the employee. At the last minute, the boss steps in and offers to provide the customer with whatever it is they are requesting.

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The way the employee deals with the customer's complaint; do you think he has taken the right approach?

#### Think About:

- ▶ Your relationship to your co-workers, your supervisors and those you may supervise: would you go to bat for them or leave them on their own to work through a mix-up or misunderstanding?

#### Remember!

*Even though the customer may always be right, it does not mean we can't practice clear and assertive communication skills. It helps to "expect the unexpected" when it comes to dealing with customer concerns.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Do you think that "the customer is always right" continues to be a wise slogan to do business by?
- 2 If you make a mistake at your place of work and it costs the business money and/or time, who do you think should pay?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Seven

The following scenario represents a typical administrative setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Resolving conflicts

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working as a member of a team

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Critical thinking
- ▶ Finding information

Motivation & Manners

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2

Summary Questions



#### Synopsis:

The supervisor has asked his employees for the results of a survey but the employees have been unmotivated to carry out his instructions. The supervisor repeats his request in various ways which may or may not inspire the employees to carry out his request. Later, an employee approaches the supervisor about the manner in which he made his request.

#### Watch for:

- ▶ Reasons that would make carrying out the boss's initial request of completing this survey uninspiring and not very interesting or motivating.

#### Think about:

- ▶ Times at work when you don't make the connection between something that is being asked of you, and the reason it is being asked.

#### Remember!

*There are many quotes about good manners and in this video the following may be the most suitable:*

*"Good manners are just a way of showing other people that we have respect for them."*

*"When you take the time to listen to others' concerns you benefit the company by creating an atmosphere of respect."*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Is there a location or area for privacy at your workplace where you can discuss matters with your boss or coworkers?
- 2 Is there a time when you can discuss issues and not feel rushed by others, or your own schedule?

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### Video Eight

The following scenario represents a typical administrative setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Greeting Clientele and Taking Messages
- ▶ Requesting Cooperation from Co-workers

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working Independently

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Critical Thinking
- ▶ Finding Information
- ▶ Problem Solving
- ▶ Job Task Planning and Organization

Juggling Duties

SCENE 2

Consequences 1, 2

Responses 1, 2



#### Synopsis:

In this administrative setting we have two clients who are confused and dissatisfied with the lack of attention to their needs. The receptionist is friendly but is having trouble keeping the appointments on schedule. The receptionist tells the two coworkers that the system is not efficient. Although her coworkers are reluctant to make changes, the receptionist creates a system whereby she can keep track of the other employees and they can report their in-out activities.

#### Watch for:

- ▶ The kinds of mishaps and traps that even a well meaning employee can fall into when they get distracted by a client.
- ▶ The employee reaction, although she came up with a solution that may not be accepted 100% by others.

#### Think about:

- ▶ Your own workday and how certain activities can get side tracked by other employees, or by customers and clients with special needs.

#### Remember!

*Although we may think our interpersonal skills are well developed, there are times when we need to trust an outside source to evaluate our performance in an objective manner.*

*It is important to measure the amount of time we spend with clients, and monitor how much attention we can give them in busy times.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Are your co-workers receptive to your ideas on creating a more efficient workspace?
- 2 Are there times in your work day when you have trouble prioritizing your tasks?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Nine

The following scenario represents a typical administrative setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Expressing Disagreement

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working as a Member of a Team

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Critical Thinking
- ▶ Job Task Planning and Organization

Hold the Phone

Responses 1, 2, 3

SCENE 2

SCENE 3



Also for employers and employees this video presents issues arising from **Cell Phone and Social Media Use** on the Job.

It is important for employees to understand the rules and regulations regarding cell phone use as laid out by their employer. Different employers will have different guidelines and stipulations regarding cell phone use. Employees must also respect current legislation regarding cell phone use in their province (i.e. making calls while driving, in an area where this is prohibited).

#### Synopsis:

A coworker and her supervisor are scheduled to work on a project but the supervisor is taking personal calls during the time allotted for the meeting. The employee has several options: to confront her employer about his cell phone use; to reschedule the meeting; to work with no confrontation. Later, the employer takes credit for the employee's work and the employee reacts to this action. The employee also makes the employer aware of the company policy surrounding cell phone use.

#### Remember!

*"The hardest job kids face today is learning good manners without seeing any."*

— Fred Astaire

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The supervisor's body language, and when and where he takes and makes his call.
- ▶ The ideas the co-worker has brought to the initial meeting.

#### Think About:

- ▶ Ways to deal with co-workers who spend time on their cell phones making personal calls.

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Are there some jobs where you think it is okay to spend a lot of time making personal calls?
- 2 Are there times of day at your place of work when you think it is easier to make a call than at others?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Ten

The following scenario represents a typical labour setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Providing Information

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working Jointly with a Partner or Helper

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Decision Making

Hiring and Firing

CHOICE 1

CHOICE 2



Also for employers and employees this video presents issues arising from **Absenteeism**

It is important for employees to be familiar with, and understand, company policy regarding absences due to health or other issues.

#### Synopsis:

The boss is getting a prospective employee to fill out an application. He wants to know if she is willing to go through some training. Another employee, who had not called in sick, then shows up after several days away from work, and the boss has to decide if it is financially a good idea to fire a trained employee. He risks keeping him on and, in this situation, pays the price.

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The questions the prospective employee asks the supervisor.

#### Think About:

- ▶ Owning a small business and the risks involved in having only a few employees.

#### Remember!

*When you are absent, someone has to step into your position.*

*When your boss is thinking of replacing you, don't forget that no one is indispensable.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 As an employee, do you take into account the amount of sick days available to you, when you apply for a job?
- 2 What kind of commitments are you willing to make in order to keep a full time job? What would your employer have to offer to make such a commitment worthwhile?

## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Eleven

The following scenario represents a typical labour setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working as a Member of a Team

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Decision Making
- ▶ Problem Solving

Also for employers and employees  
this video presents issues arising  
from **Theft In The Workplace**

Whose Property?

SCENE 2

SCENE 3

Responses 1, 2

SCENE 4



It is important for employees to understand the rights and responsibilities accorded them by their employer and to understand the impact of taking advantage of these privileges.

#### Synopsis:

Two employees are painting a house and one does not know where to dump toxic leftover paint. He asks his coworker, who is preoccupied on the phone. The employee then dumps the waste on the ground of the client's property without thinking of the consequences. Later, at the end of the day, the employee takes some of the product meant for the client. The boss confronts the employee and the employee accuses the boss of doing something similar with extra inventory.

#### Watch For:

- ▶ The way cell phone use can create dangerous or careless situations in the workplace.

#### Think About:

- ▶ Other ways that the clients' property can be damaged by careless and negligent work habits.

#### Remember!

*Make sure you know who owns the property you use at your place of employment, including things, from work uniforms to implements used for a job.*

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 Have you been a witness to theft in your workplace? What action did you take?
- 2 Do you think employees and contractors are responsible for the well being of client's property, even if it is not directly involved in the task at hand?



## Paving the Way to Lasting Employment

### Video Twelve

The following scenario represents a typical labour setting calling for a basic level use of:

#### Oral Communication

- ▶ Giving Direction and Instructions

Micromanaging

Responses 1, 2

#### Working with Others

- ▶ Working as a Member of a Team

#### Thinking Skills

- ▶ Job Task Planning and Organizing



#### Synopsis:

It's the beginning of a shift and the workday for this small landscaping gardening business. The boss has assigned tasks for the two employees. The employees set about their tasks with specific plans in mind as to how to order their chores. The boss checks in with the employees, watching their progress and assessing their work part way through. The employees respond to the boss's criticism and negative assessment of the work being done.

#### Watch for:

- ▶ The clothing that the employees wear to their job.
- ▶ The way the boss brings his concerns to the employees' attention.

#### Think about:

- ▶ The benefits of working in a team and of healthy open communication.
- ▶ The amount of trust you give to your own co-workers and/ or employees.
- ▶ Why a boss might not trust the work his employees do.

#### Remember!

*"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."*

— Sir Winston Churchill

*"Teamwork divides the tasks and multiplies the success."*

— Unknown

#### Keep the Discussion Going

- 1 As a customer have you witnessed a situation in which a boss and his employees are not in agreement on how to perform a task?
- 2 Do you think it is the sign of a good employee to take direction and instruction and not ask any questions?

NOTES

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