**Career Lesson – Soft Skills Unit**

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| Teacher Name: **Lou DiCesare** | Duration (in minutes): **42 x4 = 168** |
| Grade Level(s): **9-12** | Subject/Course: **Career & Financial Management** | Unit: **Career exploration** |
| Resources needed:On-site people, facilities, tools, technology, materials, community connections | Laptops, traditional classroom, classmates, teacher handouts of interview questions |
| Learning Standards: | ***Standard 3b: Career Majors*** Students who choose a career major will acquire the career-specific technical knowledge/skills necessary to progress toward gainful employment, career advancement, and success in postsecondary programs.  |
| Big Idea & Authentic Purpose: Why does this matter to your students?How will this be helpful to your students? | Employers directly surveyed have indicated that soft skills have decreased from new applicants (high school graduates) significantly over the last 10 years. This four-day lesson/unit will teach them what soft skills are through 1) lecture 2) student driven analysis and 3) application. Having these skills will provide a foundation that will allow students who enter the working world to have a much greater capacity to be successful in the workplace and achieve growth faster than new employees that don’t have these harder to find skills. |
| Type of Career Content * Career specific
* Career psychology
* **Career skills**
 | Experts: The primary research obtained from the Teacher Ambassador program provided the expertise to the instructor to design, organize and execute this soft skills unit |
| Relevancy: How does it connect to students' lives?  | As students complete their last year of education, they will look to enter the workforce. Soft skills were a common theme that employers felt their new hires were lacking. The development of better soft skills while in high school would provide a better foundation for students to be successful when entering the workforce. This is according to the 24+ corporations we visited during the summer of 2023. The lack of these skills form young job seekers are apparent when interviewing for a job and is a large barrier for employment. This unit aims to address this skill deficit (as indicated by primary research conducted during the summer Teacher Ambassador Program) among high school students. |
| Objectives:Students will be able to apply their knowledge of what soft skills are by demonstrating this knowledge in a mock job interview. | Assessment: Students will be asked to conduct mock job interviews in class. Questions that students will be asked to answer will be constructed around the understanding of soft skills. The teacher will have a rubric to complete that will be focused on their observation of students answers to the questions posed in the job interview. |
| Knowledge Construction: How are students going to construct content knowledge and practice it Beginning of lesson Day 1 Pre-teach the 11 soft skills in the Forbes article (Teacher led/lecture)Day 2 & 3 Pair students up into groups of two. Each group portray a good and bad example of each of the 11 soft skills (They can do this as an in-class demonstration or video submission on Schoology,  etc.)Day 4 Job Interview: * Divide classroom in half.
* Have half of the students on one side and the other half on the other side.
* Set up 6 stations on each side of the room.
* Pair up students and assign 2 students to each station.
* Each station will have printed out two questions that focus on 2 of the eleven soft skill questions (one station will have 1 question).
* Within each pair of students, assign one student the role of Interviewer and the other the interviewee.
* After the two questions are asked and answered, the interviewee will rotate until all stations are completed. After which, the interviewer becomes the interviewee. And then complete the same rotation.
* Each side of the room mirrors one another
* All the while the teacher is walking around with an evaluation rubric assessing the performance/answers to document the learning that took place from the teacher-led lesson and student-led research.
 |

**Day 1**

Teacher to lead discourse on the highlights of this 2-23 Forbes article on Soft Skills: [https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/soft-skills-examples/](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.forbes.com%2Fadvisor%2Fbusiness%2Fsoft-skills-examples%2F&data=05%7C01%7CLouis.DiCesare%40labor.ny.gov%7C986f6b493de24120c99f08db87928b65%7Cf46cb8ea79004d108ceb80e8c1c81ee7%7C0%7C0%7C638252835687409805%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Cn3BkYTKTvD6N6knxGqfZ1%2Fw%2Bf%2Bebaa48O9cNSB0IM4%3D&reserved=0)

Teacher will define what Soft Skills are and describe the importance and relevancy to understanding these skills and using them in the workplace.

Teacher will provide a definition and examples of the 11 soft skills referenced in the article:

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| 1. **Communication**
* Active listening
* Verbal communication
* Nonverbal communication
* Written communication
* Presentation skills
1. **Leadership**
* Problem-solving
* Coaching and mentoring
* Management
* Strategic thinking
1. **Teamwork**
* Conflict resolution
* Mediation
* Accountability
* Collaboration
1. **Creativity**
* Brainstorming
* Imagination
* Curiosity
* Experimentation
1. **Time Management**
* Planning
* Goal-setting
* Delegation
* Time blocking
 | 1. **Adaptability**
* Flexibility
* Resilience
* Growth mindset
* Analysis
1. **Problem Solving**
* Critical thinking
* Analysis
* Strategic thinking
* Initiative
1. **Work Ethic**
* Punctuality
* Reliability
* Professionalism
* Discipline
1. **Critical Thinking**
* Analysis
* Evaluation
* Deductive reasoning
* Synthesis
1. **Conflict Management**
* Empathy
* Negotiation
* Mediation
* Conflict resolution
1. **Emotional Intelligence**
* Self-awareness
* Empathy
* Social skills
* Motivation
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**Day 2 & 3**

* Pair students up into groups of two.
* Each group portray a good and bad example of one of the soft skills (larger classes may have two different groups with same soft skill).
* Each group will present their good and bad example of their assigned soft skill.

Good example

Bad example

Good example

Bad example

Good example

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Bad example

Good example

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**Day 4 Job Interview:**

* Divide classroom in half.
* Have half of the students on one side and the other half on the other side.
* Set up 6 stations on each side of the room.
* Pair up students and assign 2 students to each station.
* Each station will have printed out two questions that focus on 2 of the eleven soft skill questions (one station will have 1 question).
* Within each pair of students, assign one student the role of Interviewer and the other the interviewee.
* After the two questions are asked and answered, the interviewee will rotate until all stations are completed. After which, the interviewer becomes the interviewee. And then complete the same rotation.
* Each side of the room mirrors one another
* All the while the teacher is walking around with an evaluation rubric assessing the performance/answers to document the learning that took place from the teacher-led lesson and student-led research.

**Soft skill interview questions to be used at the 11 stations**

Communication: Provide an example at school, at a part-time job or in sports of an example of how good a communicator you are with classmates, teammates, or co-workers

Leadership: Provide an example at a job or school where you demonstrated sound problem-solving skills

Teamwork: Provide an example at school or work where you were able to resolve a conflict with a customer, classmate, or co-worker

Creativity: We encourage new ideas at this company. Tell me an example of innovative, brainstorming thinking you were a part of either at school, part-time job or other organization.

Time Management: Tell me an instance where you set a goal and how you were able to meet that goal in the timeframe you established to meet it

Adaptability: Site a setback you once faced either at school, sports, part-time job and how you were able to overcome that setback demonstrating resiliency.

Problem-solving: Not waiting until someone tells you to do something and being proactive is the type of employee we are looking for (initiative). Describe a problem you faced at school, at work on a team and how you solved it

Work-ethic: Why would you say that you are reliable? Site specific examples.

Critical Thinking: Many times, during the work week, employees recognize a problem that has nothing to do with their day-to-day job. They seek out staff who would be affected by this problem to help solve it. Describe a situation in which you saw a problem that was not part of your responsibility and helped solve it anyway.

Conflict management: Have you ever seen a classmate struggle or co-worker having a bad day and sought to help make their day easier by helping them in any way? (Empathy)

Emotional Intelligence: Name three strengths and weaknesses you possess that you need to improve to make you a better employee

**#1**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Communication:** **Provide an example at school, at a part-time job or in sports of an example of how good a communicator you are with classmates, teammates, or co-workers.**

Record brief notes on what they said

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What did you like about what they said that would make you think favorably about hiring them?

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What did you think the candidate could’ve improved on in terms of what they said?

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**#2**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Leadership: Provide an example at a job or school where you demonstrated sound problem-solving skills**

Record brief notes on what they said

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**#3**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Teamwork: Provide an example at school or work where you were able to resolve a conflict with a customer, classmate or co-worker**

Record brief notes on what they said

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**#4**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Creativity: We encourage new ideas at this company. Tell me an example of innovative, brainstorming thinking you were a part of either at school, part-time job or other organization.**

Record brief notes on what they said

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**#5**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Time Management: Tell me an instance where you set a goal and how you were able to meet that goal in the timeframe you established to meet it**

Record brief notes on what they said

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**#6**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Adaptability:** **Site a setback you once faced either at school, sports, part-time job and how you were able to overcome that setback demonstrating resiliency.**

Record brief notes on what they said

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**#7**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Problem-solving:** **Not waiting until someone tells you to do something and being proactive is the type of employee we are looking for (initiative). Describe a problem you faced at school, at work on a team and how you solved it**

Record brief notes on what they said

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**#8**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Work-ethic:**  **Why would you say that you are reliable? Site specific examples.**

Record brief notes on what they said

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What did you like about what they said that would make you think favorably about hiring them?

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What did you think the candidate could’ve improved on in terms of what they said?

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**#9**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Critical Thinking:** **Many times during the work week, employees recognize a problem that has nothing to do with their day-to-day job. They seek out staff who would be affected by this problem to help solve it. Describe a situation in which you saw a problem that was not part of your responsibility and helped solve it anyway.**

Record brief notes on what they said

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What did you like about what they said that would make you think favorably about hiring them?

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What did you think the candidate could’ve improved on in terms of what they said?

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**#10**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Conflict management:** **Have you ever seen a classmate struggle or co-worker having a bad day and sought to help make their day easier by helping them in any way? (Empathy)**

Record brief notes on what they said

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What did you like about what they said that would make you think favorably about hiring them?

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What did you think the candidate could’ve improved on in terms of what they said?

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**#11**

Candidate’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Emotional Intelligence:**  **Name three strengths and weaknesses you possess that you need to improve to make you a better employee**

Record brief notes on what they said

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What did you think the candidate could’ve improved on in terms of what they said?

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**Interview Instructions**

1. The room will be divided into two sections
2. An even number of students will be assigned to each side of the room
3. For each section, managers will be assigned to a numbered station. Each station will represent a certain interview question that will be asked to each interviewee.
4. Once all interviewees rotate through all questions on their side of the room, students will then switch roles. Managers become interviewees and vice versa.
5. Mr. D. will be walking around the grading each student based on the following general interview rubric:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | APPEARANCE | PROMPTNESS | GENERAL/OVERALL | ATTITUDE | SOFT SKILLS ANSWERS |  |
|  | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 100.0 |

 6. Upon completion of the interviews, we’ll talk about what you saw (liked and disliked).