

Lesson: Respect Others – We can't choose who we work with ...

Level: Upper intermediate

Age: Upper Secondary / Adult

Time: 15 - 20 minutes

Language objectives: to role play a conversation about people at work, to practise *is always* verb + -ing, complaining about people, sympathising

Key life skills: social development, people management

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per group of three or four students cut up as indicated



Vocabulary

advertising agency, account executive, pay rise, scale for the job, financial incentives, office manager, copywriter, weekly hours, art director, promotion, board of directors, to get the credit for something, accountant, administration, designer, receptionist, design, brochure

Procedure

1. Ask the students how many people they work with each day.

2. Write the following on the board:

A: *It's impossible working with Jack: he's so*

_____.

B:

A: *I can't stand the way he's always*

_____ing.

B:

A: *It's dreadful: every time you*

he_____.

B:

A: *Why can't he learn to*

B:

3. Elicit as many possibilities as you can for the gaps. For example: *arrogant, interrupting, suggest an idea, steals it, treat people with respect.*

4. With shyer groups, drill the sentences for intonation. Encourage them to sound angry.

5. Elicit possible answers to the sentences by asking the students *What could you answer if someone said this to you?* – and write them in the 'B' slots. You should now have a mini-conversations on the board.

For example:

A: *It's impossible working with Jack: he's so boring.*

B: *I know what you mean. I feel just the same way.*

6. Ask the students to practise the mini-conversation in pairs.

7. Tell the students that they are going to practise a conversation about people.

8. Set up the situation. They all work in an advertising company called Bogus Brothers. They are having lunch together in the company restaurant. Everyone works with a person they find difficult. Everyone wants to talk about that person.

9. Divide the class into groups of three and give each group one of the cards. Allow a minute or two for reading and reflection.

10. If possible, ask the students to move around so that they are sitting facing each other as they would be in a restaurant.

11. Ask them to act out the situation.

12. Let it run for 5-8 minutes then call a halt to the activity. Ask students to share how their conversation went and to describe who they were complaining about to the rest of the class.

13. Do a class vote on which person from the set of cards would be the most difficult to work with. Ask the class to think of ways they could improve the situation, if they had to work with this difficult person.

14. Ask the students about the best people they have worked with in the past and what qualities made that person good to work with.

Follow-up

Ask students to brainstorm a list under the heading: *The qualities of a good colleague.*

Lesson: Respect Others – We can't choose who we work with ...



**TARQUIN PERIVALE,
JUNIOR ACCOUNT
EXECUTIVE**

He is late for work two or three times a week.

He never finishes anything on time.

He is always talking about how much better his last company was.

He has asked for a large pay rise even though he is near the top of the scale for his job: *"They can't expect me to be really motivated unless the financial incentives are there."*

Bogus
rother S



**ANNETTE GREENFORD,
OFFICE MANAGER**

She stays late every night – sometimes until midnight. She knows about everything that happens in the office. She thinks nobody does any work except her.

She has suggested a new system which will create more work for everybody: *"These days clients expect us to be here any time they call. The weekly hours really should be classified as a minimum."*

Bogus
rother S



**MARK HANWELL,
COPYWRITER**

He is always upsetting the women in the office with tactless remarks.

He talks about sport all the time. He frequently comes in tired in the mornings because of late nights.

He wants a promotion to Senior Account Executive (the highest-paid post in the department): *"Somebody with my energy and imagination definitely ought to be in management."*

Bogus
rother S



**JANE BRENTFORD,
ART DIRECTOR**

She can't remember the names of people in her department.

She is always talking about big plans but none of them come to anything.

She loses her temper every time someone disagrees with her.

She has been promoted to the Board of Directors: *"It's been great working with you, and I'll certainly make sure in my new job that you get credit for all the hard work you've put in."*

Bogus
rother S



**TONY HAYES,
ACCOUNTANT**

He is always criticising people.

He is obsessed with administration.

He has no sense of humour. He has suggested a system of fining people for administrative errors: *"Well, mistakes cost money and somebody has to pay for them. People should be more careful."*

Bogus
rother S



**MARGARET ACTON,
DESIGNER**

She doesn't listen to other people.

She bullies the newer employees and is rude to the receptionist.

She is always taking time off for minor illnesses.

She has refused to alter the design of a brochure which the client has complained about: *"I'm doing this job and I'm the expert. What he wants is old fashioned and ineffective."*

Bogus
rother S

Worksheet

