Lesson Plan

Big-picture Thinking

Understanding Organizational Vision, Mission, and Values

Objective: Students will define organizational vision, mission, and values and explore the role of each in the workplace.

Workplace Readiness Skill: **Demonstrate big-picture thinking.**

*Demonstration includes*

* *defining* ***big-picture thinking*** *as an understanding of one's role in fulfilling the mission of the workplace and a consideration of the social, economic, and environmental effects of one's actions*
* *identifying the organization’s structure, culture, policies, and procedures, as well as its role and position within the community, industry, and economy.*

Correlations to Other Workplace Readiness Skills:

* Demonstrate integrity.
* Demonstrate work ethic.
* Demonstrate career- and life-management skills.
* Demonstrate professionalism.

Correlations to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL):

English: 6.2, 6.6, 6.7, 7.1, 7.2, 7.6, 7.7, 8.2, 8.6, 8.7, 9.1, 9.5, 9.6, 10.1, 10.5, 10.6, 11.1, 11.5, 11.6, 12.1, 12.5, 12.6

History and Social Science: CE.1, CE.4, GOVT.1, GOVT.16

Instructional Steps:

1. ***Introduce the lesson by asking students to name a company with which they may want to work, either now or in the future.*** List them. Explain to students that every organization, whether it be a school system or a corporation, has a *vision*, a *mission*, and underlying *values*. Display Teacher Resource #1: Definitions, with the terms covered up. Ask students if they can determine which definition refers to *vision*, to *mission*, and to organizational *values*. Discuss the three and how they are related. To provide an example, consider using the vision and mission statement for your school division or school.
2. ***Research sample vision and mission statements.*** Going back to the list of companies, ask each student to conduct a brief Internet search to find one or two companies’ vision and mission statements. Explain that many companies will frame their vision and mission in a published statement. These usually can be found on the “About Us” section of a company’s website. Ask students to write down the mission and vision statements they find, and share with the class. Ask, “After reading the company’s vision and mission statements, would you be more or less likely to want to work for that company?”
3. ***Relate the concepts of vision and mission to the workplace.*** Group students into groups of four or five and ask them to share the vision and mission statements from their Internet research. Ask groups to discuss the differences they notice among the various statements, and consider the role of vision and mission in a prospective employee’s decision to join a company. Complete Handout #1: Vision and Mission in the Workplace.
4. ***Determine corporate values based upon a case study.*** Explain that corporate vision, mission, and values are more than just statements and words. They should apply to the everyday practices and decisions of the company. Share the case study in Teacher Resource #2: A Case Study in Values and Corporate Decision-Making, and use it as a springboard for discussion. Ask, “Based on the case study, what values are important to the manufacturer? How are corporate decisions and behaviors linked to values? How can a company ensure it is staying true to its core values?”

Formative Assessment**:**

* Assess student understanding as demonstrated in the class and small group discussions.
* Evaluate student understanding of concepts within the lesson as demonstrated by responses on Handout #1: Vision and Mission in the Workplace (student responses will vary based upon the companies they research/choose).

Options for Adaptation/Differentiation:

* To offer scaffolding to students and to complete this activity in a shorter amount of time, frame the initial discussion about vision, mission, and values around one sample organization, such as a school or district.
* To offer an extension opportunity, ask students to complete the activity entitled “Corporate Sight” on page 86 of [Leadership for the 21st Century](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/leadership/leadership_curriculum.pdf) (<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/leadership/leadership_curriculum.pdf>), Virginia Department of Education.
* Ask students to work in groups to create mock companies. Students must identify a product or service that their company offers, define the company’s underlying values, and must describe its vision and mission. Incorporate art and design by asking students to design a logo for their company that reflects its vision, mission, and values.

Suggestions for Follow-up:

* Invite a manager from business and industry to discuss the mission and vision of his/her company, including how the mission and vision are used and shared within the organization.
* Ask students to write a journal reflection using the following prompt:

*Jill has worked hard in her chosen career field, information technology. She is finally ready to make the big jump—Jill is starting her own IT consultancy. Before doing so, she has a lot of planning to do. Before she dives into such things as budgeting or hiring employees, Jill wants to begin by defining her company vision, mission, and values. How should Jill proceed? What might she need to consider as she formulates her vision and mission statements? How should Jill’s personal values translate into her company values?*