

Lesson 1

Dependability and Reliability

Regardless of your career or position, being dependable and reliable is essential. Employees with these traits show their supervisors that they are responsible, care about their work, and can be counted on. Dependable and reliable employees fulfill their obligations on time, carefully and effectively complete their tasks, and follow all regulations and policies that are in place.

Skill Examples

Being Punctual After submitting their résumés to several companies where they are interested in working, Brandon and Justine have both been asked to come in for an interview.

Read the two examples and answer the questions that follow.

EXAMPLE 1 Brandon's Interview

Brandon has a job interview for a bank teller position tomorrow morning at an unfamiliar location. He was instructed to arrive at 8:00 A.M. and to ask for Allison Griffin. He was also told that he would be required to take a brief math test. Brandon spent the night before his interview practicing for his math test, making sure his suit was ready to wear, and planning his route to the bank. Before going to bed, he double-checked his alarm clock to make sure it was set correctly for 6:00 A.M. Brandon arrived for the interview on time.

Remember!

Organization When you are organized and plan ahead, you make it easier to fulfill obligations and meet deadlines. Careful planning can also help you identify any potential problems and address them quickly and efficiently. In *Example 1*, Brandon makes certain that everything is ready for the next morning. This helps him be certain that he will not be rushed the morning of the interview and that he will arrive for his interview on time.

1. How might Brandon's actions influence Allison Griffin's opinion of him?
 - A. She might think that Brandon has strong math skills.
 - B. She might think that Brandon is unreliable and cannot be counted on.
 - C. She might think that Brandon follows instructions and fulfills obligations.
 - D. She might think that Brandon is not motivated to work at the bank.
 - E. She might think that Brandon does not dress professionally.
2. What would probably have happened if Brandon had not spent the night getting ready for his interview?
 - F. He would have performed well on the math test.
 - G. He would have had to meet with Allison Griffin on a different day.
 - H. He would have showed he was dependable and reliable.
 - J. He would have been unprepared and late for his interview.
 - K. He would have had to meet with a different bank employee.

EXAMPLE 2 Justine's Interview

Justine has a job interview tomorrow morning with a local community college for a clerical position. She was told to arrive for the interview at 9:00 A.M. with three copies of her résumé and a list of references. She was also told that she would be expected to take a computer skills test. Justine stayed up late to prepare for the interview and prepare a list of references. The next morning she selected her clothes and planned her route to the interview. Justine then remembered that she needed to print the extra copies of her résumé. By the time she printed the copies she was late leaving and missed her train. She arrived for the interview at 9:30 A.M.

3. What impression might the interviewer have of Justine based on her behavior?
 - A. She would be a reliable and dependable employee.
 - B. She communicates effectively.
 - C. She does not follow instructions and is unreliable.
 - D. She has excellent computer skills.
 - E. She is very motivated to work at the college.
4. What would probably have happened if Justine had been better prepared the morning of her interview?
 - F. She would have performed better on her computer skills test.
 - G. She would have been on time for the interview.
 - H. She would have selected a more professional outfit.
 - J. She would have been able to reschedule the interview.
 - K. She would have been able to walk to the interview.

Think About It Think about Brandon's and Justine's actions. What impression do you think each made on the interviewer? Which one of them is more likely to be hired? In forming your answer, think about the following questions:

- **Preparation** How did Brandon and Justine prepare for their interviews, and how did it affect them the morning of their interviews?
- **Responsibility** In what ways did both Brandon and Justine demonstrate responsibility to their interviewers?

Remember!

Self-Management

Sometimes it is not possible to meet every deadline or fulfill all your obligations. Both work-related and personal obstacles occur all the time. When you realize that you are unable to fulfill an obligation, it is important to clearly communicate this to the appropriate people. In *Example 2*, Justine misses her train and knows she will be late. By calling her interview contact to say she will be late and by working to find a solution to the problem, Justine can show that she is dependable and reliable.

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Dependability and Reliability

Skill: Demonstrate dependability and reliability within workplace settings.

Key Competencies

- **Follow through on commitments and meet deadlines.**
- **Be punctual.** Show up for work and appointments on time.
- **Pay attention to details.** Always check your work to make sure that it is free of errors and that all details have been considered.
- **Comply with policies.** Follow all company directions, policies, and procedures.

Build Background

The scenarios presented in this lesson, students should be able to identify which behaviors demonstrate the importance of dependability and reliability. Ask students to give examples of people they know who are dependable and reliable in the workplace and those who are not. This lesson focuses on the competencies listed above; help students understand these competencies by providing a context for each one.

Skill Examples

Review and discuss the *Remember!* notes on pp. 6–7.

(Answers: 1. C; 2. J; 3. C; 4. G) Read Example 1 aloud to the class. Ask students if they feel that Brandon is well prepared for the interview or if he should have done something different. Mention that he studied for the math test and arrived on time. Then ask students to review the questions that follow and establish answers they feel are correct. Discuss the correct answer and address any common incorrect answers. Ask how the answer demonstrates dependability and reliability. Repeat these steps for Example 2, focusing on how Justine was late to the interview. **Read Aloud**

Think About It

Ask students to indicate what actions made Brandon and Justine appear reliable and dependable and why. Ask students to think about a workplace situation when they were expected to be prepared and punctual, how they solved the problem, and whether they could have found a better solution. Then have students imagine what might happen if a bank teller, a gardener, a chef, or an office clerk were late to work.

Try It Out!

Review and discuss the *Remember!* notes on pp. 8–9.

Complying With Policies Go over each step of the *Decision-Making Process*. Ask students to brainstorm additional alternatives, such as borrowing the shoes from a friend. Then ask students to explain what would have happened if Carlos decided not to address this compliance problem and arrived in the wrong shoes.

Fulfilling Obligations Help students indicate Janie's problem by identifying her obligations and the obstacles involved in fulfilling them. Walk students through creating a *Decision-Making Process* chart.

Step 1: Ask students to name the tasks that Janie typically completes in a day, new tasks requested of her, and the priorities of each task.

Step 2: Ask students if there is any other relevant information that they can locate and add to the chart.

Step 3: Have students generate alternatives to the problem. For example, Janie could try to shift some of her tasks until the next day.

Step 4: Allow students to choose a solution and explain why the suggested solution displays reliability.

Step 5: Ask students to explain what would have happened if Janie had chosen this solution.

Have students answer the questions that follow and establish answers that they feel are correct. (Answers: 1. A; 2. J)

Reflect

Students' answers to the questions should focus on the consequences of Carlos's and Janie's actions. Have students discuss workplace situations they have experienced relating to complying with policies and fulfilling obligations and how their decisions reflected dependability and reliability.

On Your Own

Have students review scenarios A–D and walk through the *Decision-Making Process*. Refer to the Answer Key on p. 122.

SCENARIO A: Being Punctual Students should recognize that the correct solution involves planning ahead in order to get to the job before the official start time or to get approval from a manager to be late. **Read Aloud**

SCENARIO B: Complying with Policies Students should understand that the problem involves deciding whether to go to work despite a fever or stay at home until they have been without a fever for 24 hours.

SCENARIO C: Fulfilling Obligations Students should identify the problem as having conflicting work and personal obligations.

SCENARIO D: Attending to Details Students should identify the problem as not being sure whether all of the corrections have been entered into the document. Discuss the pros and cons of staying late in order to check the document for key details. **Role Play**

ELL Strategy

Create Sentence Frames Tell students that sometimes they will hear jargon and technical terms that are not familiar to them, such as *electronic file* in Scenario D. In these instances, they may need to ask a coworker to explain the meaning of the unfamiliar term. Have students work with a partner to ask each other the meanings of the technical terms they hear. Supply sentence frames, such as *Can you explain _____? or Please show me the _____.*