

UNIT

18

Social and Interpersonal Skills

REVIEW QUESTIONS

PART A

Indicate your answer by circling the correct response in each of the following.

1. You have been invited to a brunch in honour of a visiting dignitary but you are not sure what to wear. You should:
 - a) wear your jeans and a smart jacket
 - b) phone the hotel for advice
 - c) obtain advice from someone else who is going
 - d) assume that the affair is formal and wear a formal outfit
2. At a dinner party recently you noticed that, after eating the chicken, one of the guests picked up and gnawed at the bone to get the most of it. In your opinion, that person should have:
 - a) left it on the plate
 - b) asked for a "doggie bag"
 - c) apologized before picking up the bone
 - d) given it to the host's dog that was nearby
3. If you were the wine taster and were not satisfied with the wine you would:
 - a) say it was satisfactory
 - b) spit it out and complain to the waiter
 - c) give it to someone else to taste
 - d) quietly tell the waiter what was wrong and ask for a replacement
4. On an invitation the letters R.S.V.P. mean:
 - a) a reply is voluntary
 - b) please reply
 - c) no reply is needed
 - d) reply in writing only

5. If one of your new colleagues kept calling you by the wrong name, you would:
- a) pretend your name had been changed to the one being used
 - b) politely clarify your name for the person
 - c) ignore the colleague
 - d) complain to the other workers

PART B

Answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. What rules should you follow in meeting a client whom you have invited to lunch at a restaurant?

2. Within what time period is it necessary that letters be answered?

3. What is the acceptable guideline for responding to telephone calls, faxes, and e-mail?

4. How does a person know what to wear when dining out at a business-related social function?

5. If you are faced with many pieces of silverware at a dining table, what is the basic rule for using them?

6. How long in advance should formal invitations be sent out?

7. Within what period of time should a person respond to a formal business invitation?

8. What is considered to be a most important ingredient for success in developing interpersonal skills?

9. Comment briefly on how an employee can foster the good reputation of a company.

10. What is a *grapevine*? Can it be trusted as a source of information? Why or why not?

11. What is *small talk*? When is it used?

12. Outline four general guidelines for making business introductions.

13. Breakdowns in communications usually occur because of three factors. What are they?

14. List ten guidelines an employee should follow to demonstrate good interpersonal skills.

15. Is taking a long lunch break unethical? Explain.

16. If your personal ethics are frequently in conflict with those of your organization, what would you do?

17. List the guidelines for handling complaints.

18. List six methods of remembering names.

19. List the points to be taken into consideration when doing business abroad.

CALCULATIONS

Insert the answers to the following calculations in the spaces provided.

1. Since you are to sit at the head table at a formal dinner party, you decide to really do things in style, so you rent a formal outfit for \$100 and buy shoes and accessories for \$150. The limousine to take you to the dinner costs \$60 (including tip), and the taxi home (10 km) will cost you \$0.85/km plus a \$1.30 tip. How much will you spend altogether? The GST of 7% is applicable to all items except the limousine and taxi fares that include the GST.

2. Two administrative assistants are taking a social skills course that is costing the company \$350 for each of them. As well, the restaurant visits they are required to make cost \$15.50 each for lunch and \$47.50 each for dinner – they need two of each type. Taxes are included in all prices. When they finish the course, how much will the company have spent?

3. You took a client to a restaurant last week where the meal (a) cost \$68.20 and you tipped 10%. This week, you dined with another client at a different restaurant where the service was excellent and you tipped 20%. The meal (b) cost \$55. Which meal cost you more in total?

4. As part of developing interpersonal skills, you meet with your five staff members weekly for an hour. During this week's meeting however, the telephone rang three times (five minutes each call) and two people interrupted the meeting for two minutes each. How much lost time was there for all of you?

5. Your receptionist is very busy. He receives 36 visitors a day in a five-day week. If reception hours are 30 per week, how many visitors does the receptionist average per hour?

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1. The world is a busy place these days. Research current trends in interpersonal skills by reviewing magazine and newspaper articles. Present your findings in a written report.
2. Research what courses are available that can improve your interpersonal skills. Do colleges offer these types of courses? Are there private agencies that do? Find out what topics are covered, how long the courses are, how much they cost, etc. Present your findings in an oral report.
3. Contact local businesses to ask what they look for in a prospective employee. Is having a good understanding of interpersonal skills mandatory? Does it depend on the job, the company, etc? Discuss your findings with your colleagues.
4. Ask your family, friends, and business colleagues what methods they use (if any) to remember a person's name when they are first introduced. Discuss your findings with your colleagues.
5. Canvass your family, friends, and business colleagues for stories about difficult people with whom they have had to deal. Role-play the more "interesting" stories, after setting the scene. Then discuss how the situation might have been handled better. Keep track of the comments on a flip chart.

6. Find six newspaper advertisements for jobs in which interpersonal skills are specified. Why are interpersonal skills required in those jobs? How are those skills applied in each job? Discuss your findings with your colleagues.
7. Relating to Research Activity 6, if you have access to the Internet, you may want to search various business's web sites. Find out what positions they are advertising and what interpersonal skills are required.
8. Contact the human resources departments of three large companies and find out if they have any interpersonal skills development programs. Do they offer seminars? Do they hold informal meetings? Do they have a service-quality program? What do they look for in new employees?
 - a) Draw a conclusion from the information you have gathered as to what method has been most successful.
 - b) Assemble your findings into a written or oral report.
9. Why is networking (in the social sense) important? How is it achieved? What might be the possible benefits? Present your findings in an oral report.
10. You are about to enter into a partnership with a colleague to run a small business. What qualities will you both need to demonstrate if you are to work successfully together? Present your findings in an e-mail to your instructor.
11. With increased globalization, today's workers are more likely to be in contact with colleagues, customers, and suppliers who live and work in different countries and cultures. Research the do's and don'ts of conducting business in at least ten countries. Present your findings in both a written and oral report.

ON-THE-JOB ACTIVITIES

1. "We're taking this political correctness thing way too far!" Divide into teams and debate this topic.
2. If you have access to the Internet, you probably know there are many "chat rooms" where you can join in the on-line conversation. Are there any rules that you should follow when conversing on-line? Prepare a point-form list of rules.
3. You are working at home on an important project that is due tomorrow. The phone rings. You pick it up and the person on the other end immediately starts into their sales pitch. How do you end this conversation? Discuss your ideas with your colleagues.
4. "It's acceptable business practice to leave your cell phone on in a restaurant or during a business meeting." Discuss this topic with your colleagues and then draft a set of policies and procedures for cell phone use.
5. You never get a second chance to make a first impression. Recall situations where someone has made a poor first impression. Present the situations to your colleagues.

6. Sexist language is a common misuse of language. What are the correct terms that should be used for the following?

chairman	_____	stewardess	_____
mankind	_____	forefathers	_____
housewife	_____	manmade	_____
policewoman	_____	repairman	_____
saleslady	_____	fireman	_____
fisherman	_____	spokesman	_____

7. Start a list of terms you hear and use that are sexist in nature. Write each one down, along with the term or word that you should have used. Do this daily. At the end of the month, "publish" your list.
8. In each of the following situations, identify what is wrong with the response. What should the response have been?

Customer: "Why should I pay your exorbitant service charge?"
 Employee: "Our service charge is not exorbitant."

Customer: "Can you help me, please?"
 Employee: "It's my lunch hour."

Customer: "I really wanted a yellow one."
 Employee: "We don't have any that colour."

Customer: "I bought this yesterday. It's damaged. I can't find the receipt but can you replace it, please?"
 Employee: "No receipt, no return. That's the rule around here."

Customer: "I've taken the day off work to be at home for your technician. She still isn't here and it's 4 o'clock."
 Employee: "I guess she didn't get around to doing your call today."

Customer: "Why can't Sally look after this for me?"

Employee: "Sally doesn't work in this department any more."

Customer: "I telephoned you last month to say that I'd paid my bill. Your company lost my cheque. Why do I have to pay overdue charges when the fault was yours?"

Employee: "If the computer finds an overdue account, charges are automatically made."

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

In the space provided, indicate what you would do in the following situations.

1. A colleague asks you to do her photocopying for her whenever she sees you heading toward the photocopier.

2. A visitor demands to see the manager and refuses to give a name or business affiliation. Your instructions are that you are not to admit visitors without identification.

3. A visitor gives both a name and a business affiliation but you cannot understand one word of this announcement because of the speaker's strong accent or speech impediment.

4. You are speaking on the telephone. A co-worker comes over to your desk and starts drumming her fingertips on your desk while waiting for you to end your conversation.

5. On your return from a meeting, you see a colleague opening the drawers of your desk in search of something.

6. *The Financial Post* you need is missing from your desk for the fourth consecutive day – Blake has "borrowed" it again.

7. One of your co-workers keeps flirting with you and making off-colour remarks.

8. Your supervisor has a tendency to stand very close to you when giving you instructions. You are extremely uncomfortable in this situation.

9. A person in your department has leaked some highly confidential information about salary raises to the rest of the staff.

10. You are constantly being disturbed on the job by a co-worker who refuses to accept that you really do enjoy your job and want to get on with it.

11. You are a newly appointed department head. Your major objective is to ensure that employees become computer-literate. One employee steadfastly refuses to make the effort.

12. You and Tim started work at the same time. Two months ago, you were promoted and Tim wasn't. You notice a marked deterioration in your relationship with Tim. He makes barbed comments about managers vs. workers and is obviously envious of your success. You'd like to maintain the friendship.

■ *Unit 18 – Social and Interpersonal Skills*

13. You are convinced that you are doing twice the work of the person at the next desk, whose position is similar to yours.

14. Some of the staff are upset about the new dress code you have implemented following "abuses" of "casual days."

15. You are working at the reception desk. You know that the visitor who has just arrived will have to wait for half an hour to see the manager.

16. One of your co-workers is the office gossip. This person keeps telling you the latest "dirt."

17. You want to introduce your elderly father to your employer, who is 40 years old.

18. One of your co-workers is always negative. Sometimes you find yourself becoming negative, too.

19. One of your co-workers tells you that he has just discovered that his friend has AIDS. The co-worker asks you to cover for him because he is having difficulty in concentrating.
