



School Nutrition Staff: You Are a Team

Participant's Workbook

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Participant's Workbook

Time: 4 ½ hours

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USDA Professional Standards Code: 4000 (Communications and Marketing)

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Institute of Child Nutrition

The University of Mississippi

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Training-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
30 minutes	Introduction	Ice Breaker Pre-Assessment	Participant's Workbook
Lesson 1: You Make It Happen!			
60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are Important! How You Can Make It Happen Responsibilities of School Nutrition Staff 	How You Can Make It Happen Four Roles of School Nutrition Staff Reflections	Participant's Workbook Chart paper Markers
Lesson 2: Communicate for Success			
60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How We Communicate Nonverbal and Verbal Communication Active Listening 	Communication Case Study Reflections	Participant's Workbook
Lesson 3: Work as a Team			
60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work As A Team Benefits of Teamwork Conflict Resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why Teamwork? How I Plan To Reduce Conflict 	Participant's Workbook
Lesson 4: What Is Your Job Worth?			
60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibilities in the School Nutrition Program The Importance of Your Job to Your Program Your Role in Your Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Your Responsibilities Why is My Job Important to Me and My Program Reflections Post-Assessment 	Participant's Workbook
Total Time: 4 hours and 30 minutes			

Professional Standards

4000 – Communications and Marketing

Employee will be able to develop plans that include involvement with school and community members, empower school nutrition leaders, and address excellent customer service.

4110 – Develop strategic plans and marketing plans that reflect program goals and enhance interaction with stakeholder.

4120 – Promote the Child Nutrition Program.

4130 – Empower school nutrition professionals to provide excellent customer service.

4140 – Develop communication skills.

4150 – Communicate within the school and to the community through multiple approaches to inform and educate stakeholders.

4160 – Create an environment that engages students to select and consume healthy foods with

Key Area Code: 4

Training Objectives

By the end of this training, participants will be able to accomplish the following objectives:

- Explain the importance of learning about the target audience.
- Define and identify various forms of diversity.
- Define and demonstrate cultural awareness, sensitivity, and competence.
- List two primary ways we communicate.
- Identify forms of verbal and nonverbal communication.
- Describe active listening and why it is important.
- Explain what it means to be part of a team.
- Describe the benefits of teamwork.
- List ways to resolve issues and avoid conflict in the workplace.
- Explain your responsibilities in the school nutrition program.
- Describe the importance of your job to you and your school nutrition program.
- Share why your job plays an important role in the school nutrition team.

Ground Rules

ICN has developed the following Ground Rules to help this training run smoothly and allow all participants to benefit from the instruction and information.

- **Show up on time and come prepared.** Be prompt in arriving and in returning from breaks. Come with a positive attitude.
- **Stay mentally and physically present.** Be present and stay on task. Listen attentively to others and avoid disruptive side conversations.
- **Let everyone participate.** Be patient when listening to others speak. Treat all participants with the same respect that you would want from them.
- **Listen with an open mind.** Stay open to new ways of doing things, and listen for understanding. You can respect another person's point of view without agreeing with them.
- **Think before speaking.** Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Avoid using idioms, three-letter acronyms, and phrases that can be misunderstood.

Introduction-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
5 minutes	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Provide foundational information and course purpose 	Participant's Workbook
5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping • Logistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign-in sheets • Workbooks/pens or pencils • Ground rules • Building logistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's Workbook • Ground Rules posters
10 minutes	Getting to Know Each Other	Ice breaker activity	Participant's Workbook
10 minutes	Training Assessment	Training Pre-Assessment	Training Pre-Assessment
Total Time: 30 minutes			

Introduction

The desired outcome of the school nutrition program (SNP) in any school is to meet the nutritional needs and wants of its primary customers—the students—day in and day out, while they are under the care of the school. This includes:

- Meeting their school-day nutrition needs
- Helping them develop healthy eating habits
- Enhancing their readiness for the classroom

Achieving the desired outcome requires quality food and quality customer service, and the school nutrition team is important to both.

Quality food and quality service provide the foundation for customer satisfaction and a financially sound program. The school nutrition team (i.e., staff members who are responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the SNP) is on the front line in achieving quality. They are the ones who:

- Serve the customers as they come through the line
- Set up the serving lines and keep them stocked for quick service
- Keep the tables in the dining area neat and clean
- Check the food temperatures
- Keep the dishes, trays, and utensils clean and accessible

Not only is the school nutrition team on the front line, but they are also in the kitchen area, seeing that food is received and stored correctly, prepared correctly, and ready to serve at the peak of freshness. So, with such important responsibilities, whether a school nutrition program achieves excellence or mediocrity is largely in the hands of the school nutrition team. Each one of you is the key to program outcomes.

The best-planned menus, highest quality food, most efficient production schedules, equipment and recipes, and fantastic marketing plans are all handed over to you, the school nutrition team to implement. Despite all that is done by the director, manager, or principal in planning, managing, and scheduling, the moment of truth occurs when the student steps into the cafeteria, passes through the serving lines, and ultimately tastes the food. That moment of truth is in your hands—you are important! So, the overall goal and purpose of this course is to help you:

- Recognize the importance of your role in achieving program goals
- Become effective team members who are self-starters and feel empowered to achieve program, professional, and personal goals

ACTIVITY: Ice Breaker

Materials: Ice Breaker worksheet, pen or pencil for each participant

Time: Approximately 10–15 minutes (time will vary based on group size)

Instructions: The head represents something you are knowledgeable of, hands represent something you are good at doing, hear represents something you feel passionately about, and home represents where you are from/work. Take 2–3 minutes to complete the worksheet.

Ice Breaker

Instructions: Below, you see the words head, hands, heart, and home listed. Head represents something you are knowledgeable of. Hands represent something you are good at doing. Heart represents something you feel passionately about. Home represents where you are from/work. In the spaces provided, describe your head, hands, heart, and home.

Head: What is something you are very knowledgeable of in relation to your job?

Hands: What is something you are good at doing in relation to your job?

Heart: What is something you are passionate about in relation to your job?

Home: Where is home/work?

Before we begin, you will need to take a **Pre-Assessment**. The assessments you will complete today are simply tools to help us determine whether the learning objectives for this course were met. Do not worry if you are unsure of the correct answers—you will have an opportunity to learn any unfamiliar information during the training.

We do not need your name, so you will need to come up with a 4-digit identifier. Your identifier should be something you can easily recall at the end of the training when it is time for you to complete the post-assessment. Please write your 4-digit identifier on the top of your assessment. The identifier will enable us to match your pre-assessment with the post-assessment you will complete later.

Lesson 1: You Make It Happen!

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
Objective: Explain why school nutrition staff are important to the school nutrition program.			
20 minutes	You Are Important!		Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe how the school nutrition staff helps the school nutrition program reach its goals.			
20 minutes	How You Can Make It Happen	How You Can Make It Happen	Participant's Workbook
Objective: List four specific responsibilities of the school nutrition staff, as well as the skills needed to fulfill those responsibilities successfully.			
20 minutes	Responsibilities of School Nutrition Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Roles Of School Nutrition Staff • Reflections 	Participant's Workbook
Total Time: 1 hour			

Lesson 1: You Make It Happen!

Objective: Explain why school nutrition staff are important to the school nutrition program.

The business of school nutrition is all about operating within a defined budget to serve students healthy, appealing meals in a pleasant dining environment.

Have you ever thought about what it takes to help our business, the school nutrition program (SNP), reach those two primary goals and be a success?

I think we can all agree that we want to serve customers, appealing nutritious meals in a pleasant environment, and we want our SNPs to operate in the black. These two primary goals go hand-in-hand, when all of us follow standard procedures and use good work practices, children are more likely to eat school meals regularly, and the program is bound to achieve those two outcomes. So, not only is what you do important, but also how you do it.

This course was designed to remind you of your importance. Think about the ice breaker we just did. You are the head, the heart, and the hands of the operation—you have the knowledge, the passion, and the skills to make your SNP successful. You are important!

We've already discussed how the business of school nutrition is all about operating within a budget to serve students healthy, appealing meals in a pleasant dining environment, and we know you make that happen—however, have you stopped to think about specific ways you make that happen?

Objective: Describe how the school nutrition staff helps the school nutrition program reach its goals.

ACTIVITY: How You Can Make It Happen

Materials: **How You Can Make It Happen** worksheet

Time: 20 minutes

Instructions: Work as a group and pass your worksheet from team to team. Add more ideas to each team's sheet.

How YOU Can Make It Happen

Instructions: Work as a group and pass your worksheet from team to team. Add more ideas to each team's sheet.

Decisions I can make to help my SNP be a success:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ways I can ensure meals are healthy and appealing:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ways I can ensure customers' dining experiences/environment is pleasant:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ways I can nurture the customers at my school:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Ways I can connect with parents and teachers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Objective: List four specific responsibilities of the school nutrition staff, as well as the skills needed to fulfill those responsibilities successfully.

Your first responsibility is to get along with people. This includes all the other school nutrition staff, students, teachers, administrators, and parents. At times this may be challenging because many of these people are likely different than you. You interact with people who are young and old, male and female, racially diverse, and who come from various cultures and backgrounds. Not only that, we all have different personalities.

Every day it is your responsibility to use and share important information. You do this as part of most of the tasks you complete.

Can you think of any ways you use and share information?

What decision do you make that might affect your work?

The last responsibility is for you to know your job and how to do it. To keep customers happy and coming back to the cafeteria, it is critical for you to know how to complete each of your assigned tasks correctly and efficiently. If you are unsure about what you need to be doing or how to do it, ask. For example, if you do not know how to use a piece of equipment properly, ask your manager or supervisor for a training session on that piece of equipment.

Now that we have covered your important responsibilities, let's discuss three key skills that will aid you in being successful at your job. These skills include:

- People skills
- Personal skills
- Technical skills

People skills are skills you need to interact effectively with a diverse group of people. Some of the people you work with are your coworkers, the manager/supervisor, students, teachers, and parents.

You use your people skills:

- When you work with people older or younger than you, of different race or gender, individually or in groups

- When you work with people who come from different ethnicities or cultures
- When communicating – talking, listening, using body language such as smiling or frowning, tone of voice, and personal appearance
- When working as a team – delegating, cooperating, and leading
- When using selling techniques that encourage students to make healthy choices
- When providing information to students by placing posters in the dining area or signs on the cafeteria counters

Another type of skill you need as part of the school nutrition staff is personal skills. Personal skills are the ones you use to get the job when you apply. Personal skills include your work ethic, attitude, education, and physical health.

You use your personal skills to:

- Reflect your honesty and dependability, your willingness to learn and to accept directions, and your flexibility and willingness to change when needed
- Reflect your commitment to getting to work on time and using time wisely
- Show your neat and clean appearance, your ability to self-manage, and your creativity. Show you are just fun to be around
- Show your commitment to the program and your willingness to go the extra mile
- Show your cheerful, friendly approach; your helpful positive attitude

We have talked about the people skills and personal skills you need as a school nutrition staff/employee. In addition to these skills, you also need technical skills.

Technical skills refer to what you do. They include:

- Knowing and using standard operating procedures for:
 - Receiving and storing food
 - Cleaning
 - Cashiering
 - Safety and sanitation
 - Record keeping and reporting
 - Using equipment
- Knowing how to prepare and serve quality food that is nutritious, appealing, and displayed attractively
- Knowing the right utensils to use to serve the correct portions

- Knowing how to follow standardized recipes and directions
- Knowing how to prepare, serve, and store food safely

Skills You Need

What roles do you play as a school nutrition staff/employee?

- Interpersonal role – getting along with people
- Informational role – using and sharing information
- Decisional role – deciding how to do the job
- Technical role – knowing how to do job tasks

You are important to the school nutrition program.

- You are committed to helping students develop healthy eating habits.
- You prepare and serve quality meals and food that looks and tastes good.
- You prepare food following standardized recipes and procedures.
- You make sure the food served is safe.
- You serve your customers with a friendly and caring attitude.
- You encourage students to select a reimbursable meal and to eat a variety of healthy foods.
- You use standard work practices that help control costs and stay within the budget.
- You help create a workplace that makes other school nutrition staff want to be part of the team.
- You interact with students, faculty, and parents.
- You represent the school nutrition program when away from work.
- You make many decisions that affect the quality and budget of the school nutrition program.

As a member of the school nutrition staff, you need three types of skills to be successful in your job.

- People skills
- Personal skills
- Technical skills

As a school nutrition professional, you are the smiling faces that customers see every day. You bring the final product and service to the students. You bring meaning to the efforts that others make in planning, purchasing, and budgeting.

You are the heart and hands of the school nutrition program. The way you work as a team, using your knowledge and skills, is what makes a program successful.

ACTIVITY: Four Roles of School Nutrition Staff

Time: 15 minutes

Instructions: List examples for each role of the school nutrition staff on the **Four Roles of School Nutrition Staff** worksheet.

Four Roles of School Nutrition Staff

Instructions: List examples for each role of the school nutrition staff

Role	Description	Examples
Interpersonal	Getting along with people	
Informational	Using and sharing information	
Decisional	Deciding how to do the job	
Technical	Knowing how to do job tasks	

Reflections

Instructions: Spend a few minutes thinking through what you have learned in this lesson. Write some of your reflections here so you can come back to these thoughts later.

Lesson 2: Communicate for Success

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic(s)	Activity	Materials
Objective: List two primary ways to communicate.			
20 minutes	How We Communicate		Participant's Workbook
Objective: Identify forms of verbal and nonverbal communication.			
20 minutes	Nonverbal and Verbal Communication	Communication Case Study	Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe active listening and why it is important.			
20 minutes	Active Listening	Reflections	Participant's Workbook
Total Time: 1 hour			

Lesson 2: Communicate for Success

The atmosphere in a kitchen can be hectic, with everyone working to complete their tasks on time. Without proper communication, the possibility of misunderstandings, burns, falls on wet floors, and cuts from sharp instruments can occur. Effective communication is the key to keeping things running smoothly, reducing injuries, and getting the food ready on time.

Can you think of any other reasons effective communication is important?

Objective: List two primary ways to communicate.

If you think about it, we communicate in many ways—telephones, text messages, emails, letters, and social media, just to name a few. Communication is an extensive topic; books have been written about it, and experts have studied it for years. We could spend an entire day discussing it, but we only have a limited amount of time to dedicate to it today, so we will focus on some key aspects of communication that will aid you at your job.

The way people most commonly communicate can be categorized as verbally or nonverbally. Simply put, the words you say; how your voice sounds; and your hand, facial, and other body gestures are all ways you communicate. Let's discuss verbal and nonverbal communication in more detail.

Objective: Identify forms of verbal and nonverbal communication.

In your job, do you use more written or spoken communication? What are some examples of when you typically communicate in writing or using symbols? What about using spoken words?

Regardless of whether your verbal communication is written or spoken, it is important to use the right words if you want the other person to understand what you mean. For example, rather than asking Susie to bring you a steam table pan and making Susie guess what size pan you need, be specific—ask Susie to bring you a two-inch steam table pan.

When communicating with spoken words, it is also very important to recognize there is a message in your voice. How you speak to another person can impact the receiver's perception of what you say. Your volume and tone of voice and the speed of your speech can impact the way the person with whom you are communicating receives your words.

Would you raise your voice and say, “Susie bring me a two-inch steam table pan right now!z?”

How do you think Susie would feel if she brought you the pan you requested, and you didn't smile, turned your back to her, and said, “Just put it down!”?

ACTIVITY: Communication Case Study

Materials: Communication Case Study worksheet, pen or pencil for each participant

Time: 15 minutes

Instructions: Work with your table to complete the questions.

Communication Case Study

Instructions: Work with your team to complete the questions.

Thanksgiving Day is one of the craziest serving days of the school year. Sue is working the serving line dishing mashed potatoes. When Sue pulls her second to last pan, she yells to the vegetable cook, Rob, that she is about to run out of potatoes. Thirty minutes later, when Sue runs out of potatoes, she walks back to the kitchen and asks Rob, "Where is the pan of potatoes?" Rob informs Sue that he did not hear her say to him that she was about to run out of potatoes.

1. How did Sue tell Rob that she was out of mashed potatoes?

2. How can Sue communicate better next time?

Billy and Jamie have to make five hundred ham and cheese sandwiches for a school-wide field trip on Friday. On Monday, they asked their manager can they come in early Thursday to begin making sandwiches along with the regular lunch menu. The manager agrees, and they decide to come in at 6:00 a.m. to begin making sandwiches. On Thursday, Billy comes to work at his normal scheduled time, 9:00 a.m. Jamie is upset because she had to make part of the sandwiches by herself after they had discussed a plan. Billy apologizes to Jamie; he forgot that he agreed to come in early.

1. What steps could Billy and Jamie have taken to remember that they would be coming in early?

2. How can Billy and Jamie communicate better next time?

Objective: Describe active listening and why it is important.

Besides our verbal and nonverbal communication, another way you communicate is by listening. Communication is a two-way process. Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding. It is essential for effective communication. Active listening intentionally focuses your attention on the speaker. Both the sender and the receiver need to listen to the exchange of information.

Why do we listen?

Active listening is an essential part of communication. What is active listening? When you actively listen, you focus on the person speaking, whether they are in a group or alone. As the listener, you should be able to repeat in your own words what the speaker said to show you understand. It does not mean that you agree with what was said, only that you understand.

Why is Active Listening Important?

Active listening is a structured form of communication and one of the most important skills you can have. It has a major impact on your job effectiveness and your relationship with others.

What are the benefits of active listening?

What is effective communication?

Learning the skills you need to communicate effectively will allow you to express your ideas clearly, so the person you are speaking with will understand the information. The following seven words will help you develop effective communication skills:

- Clear
- Concise
- Credible
- Correct
- Confident
- Courteous
- Complete

The Seven C's of Effective Communication

Clear: When speaking or writing to someone, make your message clear by minimizing the number of ideas in each sentence. Your message should be simple enough for the recipient to understand. The goal is to make your message clear with exact words that are short and to the point. The message should be logical, with all the main points relevant to the topic.

Concise: The message you want to convey should be accurate and to the point. Do not ramble on with topics that do not apply to what you want to say. Being concise is important for effective communication because it saves time, it highlights the main point, and it focuses on the message.

Credible: Always be truthful with the person to whom you are speaking. The truth will help build trust. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so. Tell them that you will find someone who knows the answer and get back with them. However, do not wait too long to get back with that person.

Correct: Being correct in communication indicates there are no grammatical errors. If the message is correct, it has a greater impact on the recipient(s), it will build up the confidence level of the sender, and it will give the school nutrition staff a greater sense of reliability to their customers.

Confident: School nutrition staff must be confident of the information in the message. You must know that the message is factual. Make sure the facts are presented in a clear tone of voice. Confidence that your message is clear, factual, and truthful will help develop a good reputation with your customers.

Courteous: Effective communication should be open, friendly, and honest. You may not realize that your words can imply a sense of disrespect or seem scornful. A disrespectful tone of voice is probably not what you intended; however, that may be what the receiver perceives from your message. Your message should not be biased. It should be positive, show respect to the receiver, and consider both sides of the conversation – yours and theirs.

Complete: A complete message is one that is clear, without too many details. The receiver should be able to picture what is being said. The message should include all relevant information and leave all questions answered. If a question is asked, answer it promptly.

When you have developed effective communication skills, you will be able to convey your ideas and thoughts clearly. You are responsible for making the message accurate, so the receiver understands what you mean.

Effective communication skills help reduce barriers that may occur because of cultural and language differences. With training, the school nutrition staff can avoid cultural confusion and miscommunication.

Effective communication helps the school nutrition staff form an efficient team. The staff can trust each other and work together. A team working together is highly productive, creative, and takes pride and ownership in their work. A team that has open communication develops a positive relationship that benefits the school nutrition program.

Verbal and nonverbal communication skills are valuable in the kitchen. Understanding the benefits of effective communication will help the school nutrition staff focus on their job tasks in the kitchen.

The following are the benefits of effective communication:

- Helps bridge diversity
- Builds a stronger team
- Increases employee morale
- Strengthens active listening skills

Benefits of Effective Communication

Helps bridge diversity. Effective communication skills help reduce barriers due to cultural and language differences. A non-threatening environment is created so people can share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings. Providing staff with communication training will help increase productivity, decrease accidents, reduce errors, and the kitchen will run smoothly.

Builds a stronger team. Effective communication allows school nutrition staff to form a team. The staff, including management, develops a trusting relationship and work together. When a team works well together, the staff knows their roles. The manager/supervisor is able to correct the staff's mistakes or give constructive criticism without causing conflict. A manager/supervisor who communicates openly will develop positive relationships with the staff. We will talk more about teamwork in Lesson 3.

Increases employee morale. Effective communication has many positive effects on the school nutrition program. One is employee morale. Effective communication opens the lines of communication between management and staff. The outcome is a healthy work environment, job satisfaction among the staff, less frustration and confusion, increased staff self-esteem, and job performance with a positive attitude.

Strengthens active listening skills. Active listening involves both the speaker and the listener. Active listeners let the speaker know they are listening through eye contact, nodding or shaking their head, or expressing a brief comment. These gestures indicate to the speaker that the listener is listening and understands what is being said. If the listener seems confused, the speaker might restate the message another way or ask if they understand what was said.

Learning to communicate effectively is a lifelong process. Keep these tips in mind as you continue to improve your communication skills.

Smile

Maintain eye contact

Invide response by giving the receiver time to think

Look your best; look professional

Encourage the other person

When you learn to communicate effectively, it will have a powerful effect on the school nutrition program. Equally important, it will help develop strong relationships at work and home.

Lesson 3: Work as a Team

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic(s)	Activity	Materials
Objective: Explain what it means to be part of a team.			
20 minutes	Work as a Team		Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe the benefits of teamwork.			
20 minutes	Benefits of Teamwork	Why Teamwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's Workbook • Chart Paper
Objective: List ways to resolve issues and avoid conflict in the workplace.			
20 minutes	Conflict Resolution	How I Plan To Reduce Conflict	Participant's Workbook
Total Time: 1 hour			

Lesson 3: Work as a Team

No matter what type of team you consider, a successful team understands that it takes every member working together and giving it their best to reach their goal. The same holds true for the school nutrition team—if we are to reach our goal of serving healthy, appealing meals every day, we all have to work together to make it happen.

I want you to think about this situation. Mary, the baker, comes into work early to prepare tasty, whole grain rolls from scratch for the day's meal service. Jimmy's job is to keep the line stocked during meal service. However, he fails to get the rolls to the line on time. Jimmy not doing his part would result in students wasting part of their lunchtime standing in line waiting for rolls; it could also make Mary feel like her extra effort was in vain and cause conflict between the two.

Objective: Explain what it means to be part of a team.

When you hear the word team, what comes to mind?

What is it about the groups you named that makes them a team?

I am sure you have all heard the saying, “There is no *I* in team.” That is true. It takes all of us. Each of you are an important part of the school nutrition team. Working as part of a team benefits you and your school nutrition program—together, we can achieve more.

Think about a school nutrition program that has 90 percent participation versus one that has 40 percent participation.

What do you think makes a difference?

Objective: Describe the benefits of teamwork.

A team is a group of motivated people organized to work together to achieve a specific purpose. Members of a team typically:

- Know what to do and how and when to do it

- See the big picture and not just the part that one team member is responsible for
- Understand that each specific job is necessary for success
- Share the common goal of success
- Want coworkers to succeed

Teamwork is:

- The ability of a group to work together toward a common goal
- The fuel that allows a group to attain results
- Less me and more we

Think back to the scenario with Mary and Jimmy. Jimmy failed to do what he was supposed to, so he let his team down. Keep in mind that earlier, during lesson one, we discussed one of your responsibilities is to know your job and how to do it. That is an important aspect of teamwork and vital to keeping customers happy and coming back to the cafeteria. If Jimmy was unsure about what he needed to do or how to do it, it was his responsibility to ask. Remember, it is okay to admit you do not know something and never be afraid to ask—that is one way you can ensure you are doing what you need to do to help support your team.

During our lesson on communication, we also discussed the importance of being clear about what we need, as well as trying to understand others. So, maybe there was simply miscommunication, and Jimmy did not know what he was supposed to do. Instead of Mary getting upset and conflict occurring among the team, a more desirable reaction would be for her to try to understand what happened and help ensure Jimmy knows what he needs to do the next time around.

Remember—together, everyone achieves more. We should want each member of our team to succeed because that means our team succeeds.

ACTIVITY: Why Teamwork?

Time: 10 Minutes

Instructions: Work together to identify the benefits of teamwork. Record your answers on chart paper.

Now that we have discussed the benefits of teamwork, what do you think happens when there are staff members who do not work well with other members of the team?

Objective: List ways to resolve issues and avoid conflict in the workplace.

Conflict is a struggle resulting from opposing needs, interests, or persons that gives rise to discord. Conflict is a very broad topic, but today we will briefly discuss some causes of conflict and how it can be healthy or unhealthy. We will explore some ways to handle conflict.

Having a group of diverse people working together can lead to conflict, but teamwork can also help take some of the sting out of conflict. School nutrition staff who work as a team are more likely to resolve issues in a manner that results in win-win situations. Here are four points to remember.

- Conflict is normal. It happens in all work settings.
- Conflict typically occurs when someone is unable to get what they need or want and instead seek their own goals.
- Conflict can be helpful or harmful to both the program and working relations within the team, depending on how it is handled. We should all learn how to reduce or avoid conflict and understand there are positive ways to handle conflict.

As mentioned, conflict can be helpful or harmful. Conflict can be helpful if it:

- Gets issues on the table for discussion
- Builds togetherness
- Helps people understand procedures and rules
- Encourages the team to explore solutions to challenges

When is a time you faced a conflict that ended up being helpful?

There are also times when conflict can be harmful to the team. Conflict is harmful if it:

- Diverts energy from the work schedule
- Weakens or destroys morale
- Causes division among the staff

When's a time you faced a conflict that ended up being harmful?

We have discussed some potential causes of conflict, as well as instances when it can be helpful or harmful. It is also important to consider how we can do our part to reduce or avoid

conflict among our teams. We are going to do a short activity that will help you with deciding what you can do once you leave this training to reduce or avoid conflict when you return to your workplace.

ACTIVITY: How I Plan to Reduce Conflict

Materials: **How I Plan to Reduce Conflict** worksheet, sheet of chart paper for each team, pen or pencil for each participant, marker for each team

Time: 15 minutes

Instructions: Discuss what you think school nutrition staff can do to avoid or reduce conflict in the workplace.

Conflict Management

Conflict may be approached in several different ways, all of which are appropriate under certain conditions, and none of which is either appropriate or feasible all the time. Knowing the conflict approaches and their varying strengths and limitations allows one to choose the most efficient and effective approach for each conflict situation. Roy Fisher and William Ury define the five approaches and their attributes.

Competition. This approach places individuals or groups in direct competition with each other. Individuals who use this method are in a power-oriented mode and can be assertive and uncooperative, often pursuing their concerns at the expense of others.

They may draw others into the conflict as they attempt to use whatever connections and resources they have to enhance their individual positions. If competition is handled in a positive manner, it has the potential to draw out the strengths of both parties.

It can be used to protect yourself against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior. Either way, the outcome is that one side wins and the other side loses. This method may be used when quick, decisive action is vital. Or when unpopular courses on important issues need to be implemented, such as cost-cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, or disciplining a staff member. It is also used on issues vital to the organizational welfare if you are convinced that you are right.

Compromise. This approach brings together the individuals or groups in conflict together and asks each side to give up a part of what it desires to create a common ground that both sides can tolerate. In essence, both sides give up something. The object is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. This approach falls on a middle ground between competition and accommodation.

Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating. This approach is more desirable in many situations than those approaches that are either win/lose or lose/win because both sides are equally dissatisfied.

Compromise requires time and opportunity for the two sides to meet and come to an agreement; thus, it may not always be cost-effective or feasible. Generally, if the issue is significant to those involved, the time is worth investing to avoid a win/lose or lose/win situation

with its accompanying latent conflict. Examples in the workplace where this method would be effective include: labor-management bargaining, achieving temporary settlements to complex issues, and arriving at expedient solutions under time pressure.

This method may also be considered as a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails to be successful. The areas where this approach is not usually a viable option are those that involve strongly held beliefs or values, or those where goals must not be compromised.

Accommodation. This approach reflects a nonassertive stance of one side to a conflict situation that allows the other side “to win.” The accommodating side gives in for a variety of reasons, including when the issue is more important to the other side than to itself, and when preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are important.

It may also be useful if you are outmatched or losing an issue. It does not usually resolve the underlying conflict and is the opposite of competing.

This approach can be effective in situations where the relationships involved are valued more highly than the conflict issue, or when the particular issue is not as important as other conflict issues.

Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view. An example of this method in the workplace would be the managerial development of subordinates by allowing them to experiment and learn from their mistakes.

Avoiding. This approach is not a cooperative, nonassertive one that has those involved in a potential conflict situation choosing not to address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of postponing an issue until a better time or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

This may be effective in situations where there is a strong imbalance of power when the issue is not seen as significant enough to attempt resolution, or when one perceives there is no viable solution. It can even be used if others can resolve the conflict more effectively. It is not a viable option when a resolution is necessary for individuals or systems to move forward.

Collaboration. This approach is both assertive and cooperative and is the desired approach in many situations. Collaboration is the opposite of avoiding. It consists of both sides of a conflict

situation coming together, working to understand and validate each other's issues and problem-solving together to develop a solution that fully satisfies both sides.

Collaborating finds an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised. A critical concept here is that no blame is assigned to anyone, and the issue is kept in focus. This is time-consuming and may be costly if many individuals are involved. It may also require significant management time to assist in the collaborative process. Frequently, these are the situations that breed new and progressive practices, and the cost may be worth more than one might think at face value.

Each conflict situation exists at a point within a larger time span and framework. The approach one chooses to take has an impact beyond the immediate situation and should be chosen with future relationship needs and concerns in mind. While each person is capable of using all five conflict-handling modes and no one should be characterized as having a single, rigid style of dealing with conflict, any given individual may use some modes better than others and, therefore, may rely upon those modes more heavily than others, either because of temperament or practice. Available time, management's ability to facilitate resolution, and the degree of severity of the conflict are all additional considerations in the approach chosen.

Lesson 4: What is Your Job Worth?

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic(s)	Activity	Materials
Objective: Explain your responsibilities in the school nutrition program.			
20 minutes	Responsibilities in the School Nutrition Program	Managing Your Responsibilities	Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe the importance of your job and your school nutrition program.			
20 minutes	The Importance of Your Job to Your Program	Why Is My Job Important To Me And My Program	Participant's Workbook
Objective: Share why your job plays an important role in the school nutrition program.			
20 minutes	Your Role in Your Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections • Post-Assessment 	Participant's Workbook
Total Time: 1 hour			

Lesson 4: What is Your Job Worth?

Objective: Explain your responsibilities in the school nutrition program.

As school nutrition professionals, each one of you adds value to the school nutrition program. In this case, value does not mean a dollar amount but the talents, skills, and knowledge that you bring to your program. You all bring something unique and special to the team.

What is your job worth?

Your job is worth your time, energy, and knowledge that you bring. Your job is worth more than money or beautiful things; your job is priceless. You are priceless.

As a school nutrition professional, there are many tasks to be completed as part of your responsibilities. The line has to be set up, vegetables cooked, and the list will continue to grow. Each task that you complete helps the overall school nutrition team. Your responsibilities are vital to the success of the school nutrition program. Whether you wash dishes or prepare the main dish, your responsibilities are essential. In our next activity, think about the tasks that you complete for your job.

ACTIVITY: Managing Your Responsibilities

TIME: 15 minutes

Instructions: Write your title on the **Managing Your Responsibilities** worksheet. Then, think about the work you do in your district and record your answers.

Managing Your Responsibilities

Instructions: Write your title on the worksheet. Then, think about the responsibilities you do in your district and record your answers.

Job Title:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

As school nutrition professionals, each task that you complete is important to the overall success of the team. Without someone to cook the vegetables, the students would not have fresh, healthy vegetables to eat. Even though each task seems small, the reward is greater. Each person completing their assigned task helps to fulfill the mission of the school nutrition program, which is to feed our nation's children.

Objective: Describe the importance of your job and your school nutrition program.

When someone asks you, “What do you do?” what is the answer you give them?

Sometimes the answer to this question is, “oh, I am just a,” and the person says their title. You are more than “just a baker,” “cashier,” “line cook,” etc. Even though you have a specific title, your job does not define you. You bring so much to your job. As professionals, our daily responsibilities can put us into the mindset that we are just working to work. You bring so much more to your program than your work.

ACTIVITY: Why Is My Job Important to My Program And Me?

TIME: 15 Minutes

Instructions: Take about fifteen minutes and write down some reasons why your job is important to you and your program.

Why Is My Job Important to My Program and Me?

Instructions: Take about 15 minutes and write down some reasons why your job is important to you and your program.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Objective: Share why your job plays an important role in the school nutrition team.

Think of a puzzle piece and how it is a small piece to a giant puzzle. The same is true for school nutrition professionals. Each person on the school nutrition team has responsibilities that help to achieve the overall mission of the program. The cashier in your program could not do their job without the line servers serving delicious meals. Every person's role brings higher value to the team as a whole. I want you to take about 10 minutes and think about why your job and you are important to your team. Reflect on what you have learned throughout this course about what you bring to your team and maybe some changes that you can make to strengthen your team.

Today we have discussed the importance of the school nutrition team. Thank you to each one of you for your outstanding work in school nutrition. Because of you, our nation's children are provided delicious healthy meals. You are the smiling face, the gentle voice, and the person that makes the school nutrition program so successful.

ACTIVITY: Post-Assessment

Time: 10–15 minutes

Instructions: In the top right corner of the post-assessment, use the same four-digit identifier you used on the pre-assessment. Complete the post-assessment and training evaluation.

Reference

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2017). *School nutrition staff: You are a team* online course.
University, MS: Author.



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