INSTITUTE OF child nutrition
RESOURCES • TRAINING • RESEARCH

INSTITUTE
LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY
OF CHILD NUTRITION

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Danielle Barrett, EdD, RDN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aleshia Hall-Campbell, PhD, MPH

Key Area(s): 3 (Administration) & 4 (Communications & Marketing)

USDA Professional Standard Code(s): 3200 (Program Management)

3400 (Human Resources and Staff Training), 4100 (Communications and Marketing)

2023

Institute of Child Nutrition

The University of Mississippi

The Institute of Child Nutrition was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at the University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

PURPOSE

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

Institute of Child Nutrition

The University of Mississippi

08/03/2023

TABLE
OF CONTENTS

Background Information

Course Description

The Institute of Child Nutrition's Leadership Academy (LA) is a hybrid course designed to help participants learn and practice leadership concepts that are applicable in the school nutrition setting. Hybrid learning combines online educational materials with traditional training methods. The course includes six lessons with pre-meeting resources to review and online discussion boards followed by a one-and-a-half-hour group discussion with activities. (For more details, see Training Format.)

Leadership Academy uses the flipped classroom model. The Flipped Classroom is a blended learning model. In this model, instructors have learners interact with new material as pre-work before the virtual group meeting. Then, use the virtual group meeting time to discuss the new information and put those ideas into practice.

Training Format

Each lesson consists of an online forum on iLearn and a virtual group meeting via Zoom. The online forum will be open for the training participants to complete the discussion board questions the day before each lesson's virtual group meeting.

Online Forum on iLearn

The training participants will be expected to participate in the pre-work and discussion questions in the online forum on iLearn prior to virtual group meetings.

Virtual Group Meetings

The training participants will be expected to participate in the group discussions actively and complete the application activities.

Intended Audience

This course is intended for child nutrition professionals who have been in management positions for a minimum of five years.

USDA Professional Standards

Program Management – 3200

Employee will be able to effectively manage staff and resources; prepare for yearly Administrative Reviews, emergency programs; and utilize Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Human Resources and Staff Training – 3400

Employee will be able to implement human resources management practices through maintenance and familiarity with current personnel policies and procedures and support employees through training and retention strategies.

Communications and Marketing – 4100

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

Key Areas

3 – Administration

- Human Relations
- Interpersonal Skills

4 – Communications and Marketing

- Communication

ICN's Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for District-Level School Nutrition Professionals

Functional Area 5: Human Resource Management

Functional Area 6: Marketing and Communication

Functional Area 9: Program Management and Accountability

Course Objectives

- Define leadership.

- Identify the characteristics of an effective leader.

- Recall the importance of strategic planning for school nutrition professionals.

- Create a strategic plan applicable to the school nutrition program operation.

- Identify key roles and functions within a school nutrition team.

- Adapt current organizational structures to optimize operational productivity.

- Analyze current professional development needs to enhance team member skills.

- Establish a professional development plan to build and enhance the skills of school nutrition team members.

- Identify the stakeholders and partnerships that are key to the school nutrition program.

- Identify three best practices for networking with stakeholders and partners to market the school nutrition program.

- Identify the key skills needed by school nutrition leaders for responding to conflict situations in school nutrition programs.

Training-at-a-Glance

Platform	Time Allowed	Lesson
Week 1:___/___/____ to ___/___/____		
iLearn	90 minutes	Introduction, Course Overview, Effective Leadership Skills and Practices
Zoom	90 minutes	Effective Leadership Skills and Practices VILT
Week 2:___/___/____ to ___/___/____		
iLearn	60 minutes	Strategic Planning
Zoom	90 minutes	Strategic Planning VILT
Week 3:___/___/____ to ___/___/____		
iLearn	60 minutes	Building a School Nutrition Team
Zoom	90 minutes	Building a School Nutrition Team VILT
Week 4:___/___/____ to ___/___/____		
iLearn	60 minutes	Enhancing Team Member Skills
Zoom	90 minutes	Enhancing Team Member Skills VILT
Week 5:___/___/____ to ___/___/____		
iLearn	60 minutes	Building Your Network & Working Within the School District Community
Zoom	90 minutes	Building Your Network & Working Within the School District Community VILT
Week 6:___/___/____ to ___/___/____		
iLearn	60 minutes	Conflict Management Skills
Zoom	90 minutes	Conflict Management Skills VILT
Total Time	**15.5 hours**	

Lesson 1: Effective Leadership Skills and Practices

Objectives

- Define leadership.
- Identify the characteristics of an effective leader.

Pre-Work Articles (on iLearn)

- The Journey of a Leader Concept Comments by Beverly Girard
- The Journey of a Leader Concept Comments by Richard Miles
- The Journey of a Leader Concept Comments by Angela Olige
- Listen to the podcast – Next Up Live: The Journey of a Leader with The Institute of Child Nutrition & J.T.M.
  - https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/next-up-live-the-journey-of-a-leader/id1598968019?i=1000544136796

  - https://open.spotify.com/episode/0SlY5ZU8HqNiPkSTLLJblH?si=Yhl9eRbeT4m8DFFnT1AjAw&nd=1

- Kevin Kruse – What Is Leadership?
  - https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/?sh=35d85f6f5b90

Key Messages

Leadership Versus Management – Understanding the Difference

Leadership is the position or function of a leader, a person who guides or directs a group. In this case, the important words are guide or direct. When you guide or direct, you provide support and assistance to individuals, allowing them to move forward with their own ideas or solutions, but provide redirection or support when necessary. A big part of guiding and directing involves relationships and encouragement.

On the other hand, management is the act or manner of managing, handling, direction, or control. Unlike leadership, which allows individuals ownership and flexibility of solutions, management implies the manager handles, provides firm direction, and maintains firm control over all aspects of the situation.

What Is Leadership? by Kevin Kruse – Article Discussion

Kevin Kruse wrote an article in Forbes magazine in 2013 titled "What Is Leadership?"

Talk about what leadership isn't:

- "Leadership has nothing to do with seniority or one's position in the hierarchy of a company."
- "Leadership has nothing to do with titles."
- "Leadership has nothing to do with personal attributes."

• "Leadership isn't management."

According to Mr. Kruse, there are two important things to remember when trying to define leadership:

First, Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others towards the achievement of a goal.

Second, Good management is needed. Managers need to plan, measure, monitor, coordinate, solve, hire, fire, and so many other things. Typically, managers manage things. Leaders lead people.

Effective Leadership in Foodservice

It is essential to recognize that although many of these characteristics are common across people or situations, they can also be very specific to individual persons or situations.

Seven characteristics and their impact on effective foodservice leadership:

1. Interpersonal skills
2. Character
3. Communication (including listening)
4. Relationship building (up, lateral, and down)
5. Who are the people you are working with?
6. Being a Forward Thinker
7. Thinking outside of "The Box"

Effective leaders:

• Sense needs based on their interpersonal skills

• Know what the right thing is to do based upon their character

• Listen to the requests and demands of their program through effective communication

• Based upon their relationships with others

• Know where to go to find solutions to problems

• Understand what the needs are in their program due to their knowing the people they are working with

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills allow you to communicate the organization's mission, vision, and goals. This characteristic lets people know how they fit into those areas and the performance expectations based on their job description. The way a leader discusses expectations, the words they use, the tone and body language conveyed during the talk, and how they allow others to express themselves dramatically impact their ability to be effective leaders.

Character

Character is related to one's moral or ethical quality. Consider the following questions. Is the leader a person who stays true to their word? Does the leader model appropriate behavior when they are around their coworkers? Does the leader do the right thing, even when no one is looking? Does the leader go out of their way to support others needing redirection to maintain good character? These are all important because it will be easier to expect others to demonstrate those in their behavior.

Communication (Including Listening)

Communication is important. The verbal and nonverbal signals that you send to your colleagues dramatically impact your leadership abilities. Does the leader provide clear and consistent directions to their staff? Does the leader allow them opportunities to respond, ask questions, or provide feedback and input? Does the leader take the time to listen to concerns, even when they are under pressure to meet deadlines? Leaders take the time to look at the communication exchanges they have with their colleagues. Communication is the most important characteristic for effective leadership because, without effective communication, the leader will have no followers.

Relationship Building (Up, Lateral, & Down)

Relationship building requires each of the previous three characteristics to be in place. The leader needs to develop effective relationships with people in all stages and places within their organization. School Nutrition professionals work with frontline workers and organizational leaders, as well as outside consultants or Public Health Officials, all on a moment's notice. An effective leader takes the time to create solid working relationships with these individuals through their interpersonal skills, exhibiting solid character, and communicating effectively.

Who Are the People You Are Working with?

The leader needs to understand who the people are they are working with. What are their needs? Why are they coming to the leader to meet those needs? How does the leader find support and resources to meet their needs, both spoken and unspoken? This is one of the characteristics that might be the most challenging to acquire because understanding the individuals and their needs is a constantly shifting target. The needs at the beginning of the year are probably different at the end. Holidays and vacations bring changes and challenges. New students or programs that become the leaders' responsibility during the middle of the year require them to rethink the services they might need to offer.

Being a Forward Thinker

Being a School Nutrition professional requires the leader to use discernment and be proactive in attention to detail. The leader needs to be a forward thinker. The leader needs to attend to their program's immediate needs. Conversely, the leader must also take the time and energy to intentionally address future needs and concerns, many of which may not be immediately apparent.

Thinking Outside of "The Box"
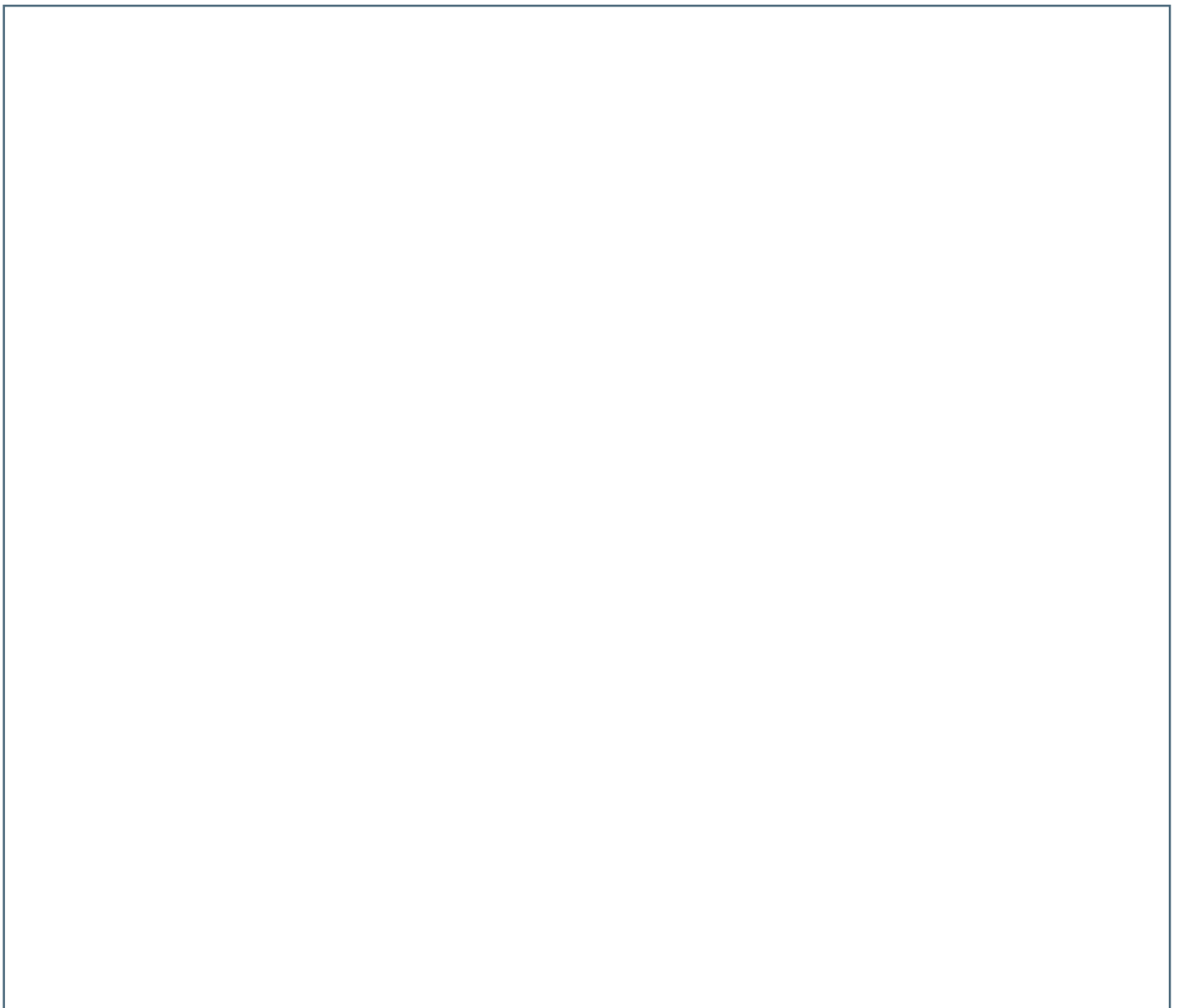
Effective leaders must think outside of the box. This means the leader attempts to find nontraditional solutions to problems that cannot be solved utilizing traditional materials or methods.

Create Your Own Drawing

Instructions: Sketch a drawing that represents each of the seven characteristics of effective leadership in your program setting.

Seven characteristics and their impact on effective foodservice leadership:

1. Interpersonal Skills
2. Character
3. Communication (Including Listening)
4. Relationship Building (Up, Lateral, & Down)
5. Who are the people you are working with?
6. Being a Forward Thinker
7. Thinking Outside of "The Box"

Lesson 2: Strategic Planning

Objectives
- Recall the importance of strategic planning for school nutrition professionals.
- Create a strategic plan applicable to the school nutrition program operation.

Pre-Work Articles (on iLearn)
- Laura Fails – My Leadership Journey
  - https://lscpagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=701363&article_id=3986348&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5

- Maria Eunice – My Leadership Journey
  - https://lsc-pagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=687741&article_id=3841864&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5

- ICN's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan
  - https://theicn.org/wpfd_file/icn-strategic-plan-2023-2026/

- School Nutrition Association's (SNA) 2021–2024 Strategic Plan
  - https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/About_SNA/Overview/2021-24-Strategic-Plan.pdf

Other Relevant ICN Resources
- KPI Series
- Effective Goal Setting Using SMART Goals V2

Key Messages

Strategic Planning and Its Importance

Strategic planning is an organizational process of defining its priorities and direction and making decisions on allocating resources to pursue this strategy. Strategic planning strengthens the operation and ensures that employees and stakeholders are working toward common goals.

There are a variety of frameworks and approaches used in strategic planning. It is important to note that a direct and simplified approach can be very effective. There is no right or wrong way to design the process of strategic planning, but be clear to all parties involved in advance about the plan to proceed.

This is an example of a 5-step approach:
1. Determine the current state of the operation (i.e., conduct an analysis).
2. Identify where the leader wants the operation to be and any district-wide initiatives (i.e., goals and objectives).
3. Specify how the operation will get there (i.e., strategies).
4. Determine who and what are needed to get there (i.e., resources).
5. Implement and evaluate at scheduled intervals; adjust as needed.

Defining Mission, Vision, and Core Values

- A mission is a concise explanation of the organization's purpose and its overall intention. The mission statement supports the vision and serves to communicate purpose and direction to employees, customers, vendors, and other stakeholders. Questions to consider when drafting mission statements could include:

  - What is our organization's purpose?

  - Why does our organization exist?

- A vision is the creation of a mental image of the ideal state that the organization wishes to achieve. It is inspirational and aspirational and should challenge employees. Questions to consider when drafting vision statements might include:

  - What problem are we seeking to solve?

  - Where are we headed?

  - What will we look like 10 years from now?

- A core value is principles that guide and direct the organization and its culture. These principles guide decision-making and establishes a standard against which actions can be assessed. Questions to consider when drafting core value statements might include:

  - What values are unique to our organization?

  - What values should guide the operations of our company?

  - What conduct should our employees uphold?

Defining Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Resources

- A goal is a broad primary outcome.

- An objective is a measurable action to achieve a goal.

- A strategy is an approach to complete an objective.

- A resource is a tool needed to complete a strategy.

Goal Identification and SWOT Analysis

Identify the goals for the operation. Each goal should have a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis performed to create objectives, plan strategies, and find resources to meet the goal.

A SWOT analysis identifies the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving a business goal:

- Strengths (internal) – attributes of the operation that can help achieve the objective

- Weaknesses (internal) – attributes of the operation that could be obstructive to achieving the objective

- Opportunities (external) – factors that could help achieve the objective

- Threats (external) – factors that could be obstructive to achieving the objective

Possible internal factors to consider: employees, customers, markets, vendors, partners, stakeholders

Possible external factors to consider: industry, competitors, demographics, economic indicators, technological, legal or political, environmental, social indicators

Note: The analysis of the operation should not be limited to just "foodservice." Examine all aspects of the School Nutrition operation and determine the goals for all areas essential in implementing a successful School Nutrition program. Common areas of focus for school nutrition programs are fiscal viability, customer service, meal quality, marketing, environmental impact, etc.

Objectives

The objectives will turn a broad goal into manageable actions to achieve the desired result. Objectives break down a goal into smaller tasks and are measurable. Use SMART goals as the framework for creating the objectives.

• **S**pecific – Objectives should be simplistically written and clearly define what task will be done.

• **M**easurable – Objectives can be quantified to a determined amount of a specified unit, an indicator of progress.

• **A**chievable – Objectives state what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources, but may stretch the team.

• **R**elevant – Objectives must be based on current or forecasted needs.

• **T**ime-Bound – Objectives should be linked to a timeframe that creates a practical sense of urgency.

Strategies and Resources

The strategies are the actionable tasks that need to happen to meet the objective. The resources are the tools needed to complete the strategies.

Instructions: Using the template, create a strategic plan. Examine all aspects of the School Nutrition operation and determine the goals for all areas essential in implementing a successful School Nutrition program. Common areas of focus for school nutrition programs are fiscal viability, customer service, meal quality, marketing, environmental impact, etc. See example for further clarification.

EXAMPLE: CPS STUDENT DINING SERVICES

"Fueling Lifelong Learners"

STUDENT DINING SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Cincinnati Public Schools Student Dining Services Department is to serve all Cincinnati Public School students nutritious, high-quality food choices that enhance their ability to learn and develop lifelong, healthy eating habits.

STUDENT DINING SERVICES VISION STATEMENT

Cincinnati Public Schools Student Dining Services will be the premier provider of student meals that model the principles of optimum nutrition and taste while in compliance with all Federal regulations and budget requirements.

STUDENT DINING SERVICES CORE PURPOSE

Every day we nourish our students with food that enables them to live healthy lives and thrive in and out of the classroom, prepared to succeed

1. Provide *cost-effective, nutritious, and appetizing school meals*.
2. Be *compliant* with the guidelines of the USDA and Ohio Department of Education.
3. Encourage and *increase lunchroom participation* within our student population.
4. Be *fiscally solvent* and self-sustaining.

STUDENT DINING SERVICES CORE VALUES

1. We **DELIVER RESULTS**.
   - Customer Service: We deliver outstanding customer service to internal and external stake holders.
   - Fiscal Responsibility: We proactively manage funding and spending; stay within approved budgets.
   - Compliance: We make all decisions within the context of Board policies and applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.
2. We continually **IMPROVE PROCESSES**. We collaborate proactively across functional boundaries to drive change that enhances effectiveness, efficiency, and results.
3. We grow through **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**. We pursue personal growth and learning, and encourage and enable others to learn and grow.
4. We **EMPOWER OTHERS**. We provide others with the resources, authority, and coaching to achieve results at minimum total cost.
5. We value **TEAMWORK**. We build and nurture a positive culture of open and honest communications, transparency, cooperation, sharing, and working.
6. We are **RISK TAKERS**. We are adventurous, creative, and passionate without being foolish.
7. We **DO WHAT'S RIGHT**. When faced with tough decisions, we do the right thing.
8. We **HAVE FUN**! We work smart and hard, and bring a spirit of happiness to Cincinnati Public Schools.

STUDENT DINING SERVICES OBJECTIVES

1. Provide nutritional meal choices that customers want at the best possible value.
   - **Improve** quality and number of food choices through purchasing programs, marketing programs, employee training, and equipment enhancements.
   - **Utilize** computer-based nutritional analysis to ensure all menus meet nutritional guidelines.
   - **Offer** program and meal choices based on customer preference.
   - **Ensure** compliance with all program regulations.
   - **Maintain** the highest food quality and service standards.

2. Work in partnership with the district staff and students to establish the Student Dining Services and products desired, and then make them available to all customers.

- **Encourage** employee empowerment for decision-making and encourage the feeling of ownership in all those responsible for providing Student Dining Services.

- **Maintain** a co-operative management style with employees, staff, and customers.

- **Communicate** performance standards and celebrate those occasions when standards are exceeded.

- **Provide** a format for employee communication and feedback on program concerns and improvements.

- **Provide** position-specific training programs.

- **Ensure** equity in operational areas like staffing, serving, and production through evaluation and measurement against standard expectations.

- **Develop** employee skills and succession opportunities through the personnel administrative process.

- **Become** an advocate for the Student Dining Services employees and represent their concerns and ideas to the District Administration.

3. Develop customer satisfaction and interest to a level necessary for maintaining revenue equal to or greater than expense charged to the program.

- **Define** customer preference through focus groups and surveys.

- **Increase** participation through marketing, a variety of food choices, menu communication, branded concepts, product presentation, nutritional analysis, and information.

- **Improve** fiscal accountability through effective systems at the building and central office level.

- **Establish** financial independence to allow further enhancements to the program, like equipment improvements/upgrades and indirect cost contribution.

- **Ensure** a consistent Student Dining Services program at each level and building.

4. Support the district educational programs as appropriate to enhance the school experience for students.

- **Provide** work/study opportunities for students in the school nutrition.

- **Provide** service, sanitation, and technically specific employee training programs based on needs.

- **Initiate** and participate in recycling efforts for Student Dining Services packaging and containers.

- **Utilize** marketing and nutrition information vehicles for communication.

STUDENT DINING SERVICES OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS

1. NUTRITION

- The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs are available every day

- Healthy choices are available

- The online menu communicates nutrition information

- Information centers highlight nutrition information

- Products smell and taste good

- Temperatures of products are as expected

- Student Dining Services staff will have an enhanced nutritional knowledge

2. PERCEIVED VALUE

- Daily communication and marketing to the public, staff, and specific customer groups

- Increased participation in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

- Increased adult/staff participation

- Positive comments from customers

- Products are displayed attractively and marketed effectively

3. CUSTOMER-DRIVEN PRODUCTS

- Student focus group responses are evaluated and put into practice

- Survey responses are evaluated and put into practice

- Products are purchased by customers in significant quantities

- Presentation of products is attractive

4. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

- Communication and/or action takes place in response to customer feedback

- Each serving location has a communication process in place

- Service personnel are pleasant and helpful

- The Student Dining Services facility is clean, sanitary, and safe

5. SUPPORTING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

- Recycling programs are utilized where there is interest

- The menu communicates nutrition information

- Information centers highlight nutrition information

- Service personnel are pleasant and helpful

6. FINANCIAL

- Revenue exceeds expense

- Critical revenue and expense areas are measured and evaluated

- Productivity ranges are applied through Meals Per Labor Hour

- The school board and administration are informed

- An ongoing, capital equipment plan will identify equipment for program enhancement

7. EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

- Employees have an opportunity to participate in planning and operational decisions

- Regular communication is shared through Student Dining Services management

- The tools and support are available to do the job efficiently

- Training is provided at times and levels appropriate for staff

- Working for Cincinnati Public Schools is a pleasant experience

_____

Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

VISION STATEMENT

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

CORE VALUES

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

OBJECTIVES

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS

1. NUTRITION

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. PERCEIVED VALUE

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. CUSTOMER-DRIVEN PRODUCTS

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. SUPPORTING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. FINANCIAL

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Lesson 3: Building a School Nutrition Team

Objectives

- Identify key roles and functions within a school nutrition team.

- Adapt the current organizational structure to optimize operational productivity.

Pre-Work Article/Video (on iLearn)

- School Nutrition Professionals: Roles & Responsibilities

    - https://schoolnutrition.org/aboutschoolmeals/snprolesresponsibilities/

- Teams Start with Human Connections

    - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVi-0a90XNA

Key Messages

School Nutrition Teams

It is important to look at the school nutrition team and identify the key roles and functions. These roles and functions can be based upon job description, title, historical duties, self-directed activities, or necessity. The school nutrition leader's job is to ensure that the key roles and functions required to occur are meticulously planned for and completed. Otherwise, duties and responsibilities will not be met. Proactively identifying, measuring, and planning for the key roles and functions are necessary to ensure the tasks and services are adequately provided. Having to do these assessments when things are not going well is reactive. It creates a great deal of trouble and turmoil, often leading to services not being delivered properly. It is critical for successful and effective foodservice leadership to identify if all roles, responsibilities, and duties have been assigned.

Teams Start with Human Connections TED Talk Discussion

- Matt Eng stated the following points about teams:

- Relationships improve through increased connection, and communication between participants enhances teamwork.

- Leaders can take steps to improve connections and communication among team members.

- Having workers take responsibility for finding colleagues with the right level of skills, commitment, and connection helps build more cohesive teams.

- Create structures and routines within the organization that teaches and practices the seven characteristics of effective leadership.

- Leaders can change how their team affects the world around them if they teach them how to build effective teams.

Ideal Team and Organizational Structure

Organizational Structure

Instructions: Evaluate your current organizational structure to see if it is designed and appropriately implemented to meet your programmatic needs.

Identify the areas that are being met appropriately, the areas that you can fix by changing tasks, and areas that need to be addressed through organizational restructuring.

Then, based upon your assessment, how would you:

• Lead changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Manage changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Utilize your interpersonal skills to create changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Utilize your character to create changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Effectively communicate with others to create changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Build new and build upon existing relationships to create changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Be forward-thinking when identifying changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

• Think outside of the box when identifying changes within your organizational structure to ensure operational effectiveness?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Lesson 4: Enhancing Team Member Skills

Objectives

- Analyze current professional development needs to enhance team member skills.
- Establish a professional development plan for school nutrition team members to enhance skills.

Pre-Work Articles (on iLearn)

- USDA's Professional Standards: Resources
    - https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/professional-standards-resources
- Needs Analysis: How to Determine Training Needs
    - https://hr-guide.com/Training/Determining_Training_Needs.htm

Other Relevant ICN Resources

- Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for District-Level School Nutrition Professionals
- Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for School Nutrition Managers
- Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills of Effective School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians

Key Messages

USDA Professional Standards for All School Nutrition Program Staff

USDA has established minimum professional standards requirements for school nutrition profession-als who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

The standards, another key provision of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), aim to institute minimum education standards for new State and local school nutrition directors as well as annual training standards for all school nutrition professionals. These standards will ensure school nu-trition professionals have the knowledge, training, and tools they need to plan, prepare, and purchase healthy products to create nutritious, safe, and enjoyable school meals.

These standards will:

- Create minimum hiring standards for new school food authority (SFA) directors based on a school district's size
- Establish minimum hiring standards for new State directors of school nutrition programs and State directors of distributing agencies
- Require minimum annual training for all new and current school nutrition professionals

A comprehensive professional standards website provides school nutrition program staff with infor-mation on how to comply with professional standards requirements. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals resources are available at the website (https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards).

Professional Development Plan

Professional development is the act of learning new skills or reinforcing prior knowledge and skills. The purpose of a professional development plan is to create a greater degree of competency and professionalism. Professional development plans should be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the year. There should be at least one review discussion between the staff member and supervisor for the yearly performance review period. The quality of the school nutrition program is dependent upon the ongoing professional development of all team members.

General steps for creating a professional development plan:

- Step One: Request a self-assessment from the staff member
- Step Two: Develop your assessment of the individual's skill level
- Step Three: Assess the department and organization's needs
- Step Four: Explore development opportunities with the staff member
- Step Five: Record and analyze the staff member's progress

Professional Development Plan

Instructions: Using the template, create a professional development plan for yourself. Repeat chat as needed for multiple goals. You can also share this with your staff and have them develop and track their professional development.

Professional Goals

Short-Term Goals (1–3 years)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Midrange Goals (5–6 years)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Long-Term Goals (10 years)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

| Professional Development Goal

Write a SMART goal.

Note: What do you want to change? What will result from this change? What would success look like? When will you see this change?	

| Tasks/Activities

What specific tasks/activities will you do to help reach your goal? | Target Dates

When will you start/ stop and complete each action? | Support Needed/Barriers To Overcome

What help will you need and from whom? What barriers will you likely face? |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |

Quarterly Update	Progress Toward Goal	Your Initials & Date
Update 1		
Update 2		
Update 3		
Update 4		

Lesson 5: Building Your Network &
Working Within the School District Community

Objectives

- Identify the stakeholders and partnerships that are key to the school nutrition program.
- Identify three best practices for networking with stakeholders and partners to market the school nutrition program.

Pre-Work Article/Video (on iLearn)

- Partnering with Key Stakeholder Groups for Smarter Lunchrooms Projects

    - https://healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/partnering-with-key-stakeholder-groups-for-smarter-lunchrooms-projects/

- David Burkus – How to Hack Networking

    - https://www.ted.com/talks/david_burkus_how_to_hack_networking?language=en

Key Messages

Defining Customer, Stakeholder, and Constituent

- A customer is a person who purchases goods or services from another; they are a buyer, or they are a patron. A customer can be internal or external.
- A stakeholder is a person or group with an investment, share, or interest in something, such as a business or industry.
- A constituent is a person who authorizes another to act on their behalf.

It is important from a leadership perspective to look at your expectations for your behavior and the behaviors of your coworkers and consider the expectations that we have for the people we serve.

Consider how these terms can apply to a School Nutrition operation. Discuss relevant examples of each. Employees are examples of clients. The children and staff purchasing food/meals are customers. The school district and administration are examples of stakeholders. Local taxpayers are an example of constituents.

Networking

Networking is all about building mutually beneficial relationships with others to share information and recognize, create, or act on opportunities. It is important to form strong networks to have a school nutrition operation.

General tips for networking effectively:

- Connect with the right people.
- Be proactive.
- Stay up-to-date with the network.
- Seek out networking events.

School nutrition-specific networking tips:

- Practice open communication with stakeholders and partners.

- Participate in school and/or district-wide activities and meetings.

- Host regular open houses.

- Be active on social media.

- Regularly have taste tests of new products and recipes.

Building Up Your Network

Step 1: Determine Your networking goals.

- What business development-related results do I want to achieve and by when?

- How will my network help me achieve these goals?

- How will I know when I am successful?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 2: Audit your network and networking activities.

- What relationships do I need to strengthen or ditch?

- Which relationships do I need to maintain?

- What current networking activities do I need to change or stop?

- What current networking activities do I need to maintain?

- Where do I have gaps in my network?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 3: Find the right people for your network.

- What are the names/roles of the people I would like to meet?

- What am I going to do to meet these people?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 4: Strengthen the important relationships.

- Could I improve my communication with these clients? Do I always communicate in a timely, efficient, and consistent manner?

- Could I make myself more available to these clients?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 5: Maintain strong and important relations.

- Repeat these steps every few months to ensure you are maintaining your relationships with your network connections.

Lesson 6: Conflict Management Skills

Objective

• Identify the key skills for responding to conflict situations in school nutrition programs.

Pre-Work Article/Video (on iLearn)

• Dorothy Walker – 3 Ways to Resolve a Conflict

       • https://www.ted.com/talks/dorothy_walker_3_ways_to_resolve_a_conflict

• Nicole Nicoloff – My Leadership Journey

       • https://lsc-pagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?m=21033&i=662068&view=articleBrowser&article_id=3687511&ver=html5

Other Relevant ICN Resources

• Managing Personalities and Conflict

Key Messages

Emergency/Security Situations

The focus of this lesson is on conflict management, not crisis management. For more information on crisis management, refer participants to the related ICN resources.

Please follow your school district policy's regarding emergency/security situations. Becoming familiar with School District policies and procedures, School Board rules, and bargaining unit (union) contracts is very important information to know.

Conflict Management

According to dictionary.com, conflict is defined as to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash. Conflict is inevitably a part of every workplace. It is important to note that conflict itself is not bad; however, conflict should be dealt with properly to avoid further issues. If conflict is effectively resolved, it can lead to personal and professional growth.

General steps for conflict management:

1. Define and clarify the source of the conflict.
2. Provide a safe environment to discuss openly the conflict.
3. Actively listen to all sides of the conflict.
4. Assess the situation.
5. Determine how to find an amicable solution.
6. Evaluate the process and determine how to prevent similar conflicts in the future.

Conflict Management Scenarios

Instructions: Use the general steps for conflict management to work through the scenarios provided by participants.

General steps for conflict management:

1. Define and clarify the source of the conflict.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Provide a safe environment to discuss the conflict openly.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Actively listen to all sides of the conflict.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Assess the situation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Determine how to find an amicable solution.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Evaluate the process and determine how to prevent similar conflicts in the future.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Resources and Discussion Questions (on iLearn)

Lesson 1: Effective Leadership Skills and Practices

Resources

- The Journey of a Leader Concept Comments by Beverly Girard

- The Journey of a Leader Concept Comments by Richard Miles

- The Journey of a Leader Concept Comments by Angela Olige

- Listen to the podcast – Next Up Live: The Journey of a Leader with The Institute of Child Nutrition & J.T.M.

    - https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/next-up-live-the-journey-of-a-leader/id1598968019?i=1000544136796

    - https://open.spotify.com/episode/0SlY5ZU8HqNiPkSTLLJblH?si=Yhl9eRbeT4m8DFFnT1AjAw&nd=1

- Kevin Kruse – *What Is Leadership?*

    - https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/?sh=35d85f6f5b90

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between leadership and management?

2. On a scale from 0–10, how would you rate yourself as a leader?

3. What are you doing to grow as a leader and develop new skills?

4. How would you define effective leadership in the context of school nutrition programs? What key qualities or characteristics do you believe are essential for a successful leader in this field?

5. Reflecting on your own experiences, can you share a specific example of a leader in the school nutrition domain who has inspired you? What specific actions or behaviors did they demonstrate that made them an effective leader?

Lesson 2: Strategic Planning

Resources

- Laura Fails – My Leadership Journey

    - https://lscpagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=701363&article_id=3986348&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5

- Maria Eunice – My Leadership Journey

    - https://lsc-pagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=687741&article_id=3841864&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5

- ICN's 2018–2021 Strategic Plan

    - https://theicn.org/strategic-plan/

- SNA's 2021–2024 Strategic Plan

    - https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/About_SNA/Overview/2021-24-Strategic-Plan.pdf

Discussion Questions

1. Why is strategic planning essential for school nutrition professionals? How does it contribute to the overall success and effectiveness of a school nutrition program?

2. In Maria Eunice's My Leadership Journey, what do you think of Maria's idea of a leader being a "silent supporter?" What do you think a leader is?

3. In Maria Eunice's My Leadership Journey, Maria talks about empowering her team as well as listening to them and implementing their ideas. What are some specific ways you make your team feel valued?

4. In Laura Fails' My Leadership Journey, Laura discusses balancing the many different roles that leaders must perform. How do you personally balance these roles? Does this change your answer to Question 1?

5. In Laura Fails' My Leadership Journey, what do you think about Laura's statement of "taking care of myself first, so I can take care of everyone else?"

Lesson 3: Building a School Nutrition Team

Resources

• Teams Start with Human Connections
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVi-0a90XNA
• School Nutrition Professionals: Roles & Responsibilities
  • https://schoolnutrition.org/about-school-meals/school-nutrition-professionals/

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it crucial to hire the right person for a school nutrition position? How does selecting the right candidate impact the overall effectiveness and success of a school nutrition program? Share a specific example where hiring the right person for a school nutrition position made a significant difference. How did the individual's skills, qualifications, and fit within the team positively influence the program's operations and success?

2. In your opinion, what is the role of leadership in driving innovation and positive change within school nutrition programs? How can effective leadership inspire and motivate team members to embrace new ideas and approaches?

3. Looking at the different roles in School Nutrition Professionals: Roles & Responsibilities, does your team have all staff for each of these positions?

4. Is there any overlap between these roles that potentially disrupts productivity?

5. Write out your current organizational structure and think about your current productivity. Where do some weaknesses lie? Where do some strengths reside?

Lesson 4: Enhancing Team Member Skills

Resources

- USDA's Professional Standards: Resources

    - https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/professional-standards-resources

- Needs Analysis: How to Determine Training Needs

    - https://hr-guide.com/Training/Determining_Training_Needs.htm

Discussion Questions

1. Why is ongoing professional development crucial for school nutrition professionals? How does investing in skill building and continuous learning contribute to their effectiveness in promoting healthy eating habits and providing nutritious meals to students?

2. In your opinion, what are the key benefits that school nutrition professionals can gain from engaging in professional development activities? How does it enhance their knowledge, expertise, and ability to adapt to evolving nutritional guidelines and best practices?

3. Discuss a specific example where a school nutrition professional's participation in professional development positively impacted their work and the overall program. How did the acquired skills or knowledge contribute to improved meal quality, increased efficiency, or enhanced collaboration within the team?

4. How can school nutrition professionals leverage professional development opportunities to stay informed about emerging trends, technologies, and innovative approaches in the field? How does this enable them to provide high-quality and nutritious food options to students?

5. Reflecting on your own experiences, what strategies or resources have you found effective in supporting the professional growth of school nutrition professionals? How can organizations and leaders create a culture that prioritizes and encourages continuous learning and skill development?

Lesson 5: Building Your Network & Working Within the School District Community

Resources

- Partnering with Key Stakeholder Groups for Smarter Lunchrooms Projects

    - https://healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/partnering-with-key-stakeholder-groups-for-smarter-lunchrooms-projects/

- David Burkus – How to Hack Networking

    - https://www.ted.com/talks/david_burkus_how_to_hack_networking?language=en

Discussion Questions

1. How can effective leadership and networking within your school district and community positively influence the success of school nutrition programs? Discuss specific ways in which collaboration and building relationships can enhance the overall impact of nutritional initiatives on students' health and well-being.

2. In what ways can school nutrition professionals demonstrate leadership within their district and community? How can they leverage their expertise and influence to advocate for improved nutritional policies, engage stakeholders, and foster partnerships that support the well-being of students?

3. Share an example where networking with key community stakeholders played a significant role in advancing the goals of a school nutrition program. How did the collaboration and shared vision contribute to increased access to nutritious meals or improved student nutrition outcomes?

4. How can school nutrition professionals effectively communicate and collaborate with other departments and personnel within the school district to create a holistic and integrated approach to student health and nutrition? Discuss the importance of cross-departmental collaboration and its impact on student success.

5. Reflecting on your own experiences, what strategies have you found effective in building a strong network within your school district and community? How can networking and leadership activities support continuous improvement, shared learning, and the exchange of best practices among school nutrition professionals?

Lesson 6: Conflict Management Skills

Resources

• Dorothy Walker – 3 Ways to Resolve a Conflict by

   • https://www.ted.com/talks/dorothy_walker_3_ways_to_resolve_a_conflict

• Nicole Nicoloff – My Leadership Journey

   • https://lsc-pagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?m=21033&i=662068&view=articleBrowser&article_id=3687511&ver=html5

Discussion Questions

1. What are the key differences between conflict management and crisis management in the context of school nutrition programs? How do these two aspects of leadership require distinct approaches and strategies to effectively navigate challenging situations?

2. How can effective leadership contribute to resolving conflicts and fostering positive working relationships within a school nutrition program? Discuss specific strategies and approaches that leaders can employ to address conflicts and promote a collaborative and supportive team environment.

3. Discuss the importance of effective communication and emotional intelligence in leadership when managing conflicts within a school nutrition setting. How can leaders leverage these skills to navigate sensitive situations, understand diverse perspectives, and promote a harmonious work environment for the benefit of the students and the team?

4. After reading Nicole Nicoloff's My Leadership Journey, what characteristics of conflict management did Nicole display?

5. In your school nutrition operation, what are some scenarios that are impossible to predict or control their direction? (These will be used in the virtual group meeting activity.)

References

Duke University. (n.d.). *Professional development plan*. Duke University Human Resources.
https://hr.duke.edu/managers/performance-management/professional-development-plan

Eng, M. (2018, February 7). *Teams start with human connections* [Video]. TED.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVi-0a90XNA

Eunice, M. (2021, January). *My leadership journey*. School Nutrition Magazine.
https://lscpagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=701363&article_id=3986348&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5

Extension Foundation. (2019, June 12). *Partnering with key stakeholder groups for smarter lunchrooms projects.* https:/healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/partnering-with-key-stakeholder-groups-for-smarter-lunchrooms-projects/

Fails, L. (2021, April). *My leadership journey*. School Nutrition Magazine.
https://lscpagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?i=701363&article_id=3986348&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5

HR-Guide. (2018). *Needs analysis: How to determine training needs*.
https://hr-guide.com/Training/Determining_Training_Needs.htm

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2023). *Strategic plan 2023–2026*. https://theicn.org/wpfd_file/icn-strategic-plan-2023-2026/

Kruse, K. (2013, April 9). *What is leadership?* Forbes.
https://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/?sh=35d85f6f5b90

Nicoloff, N. (2020, June). *My leadership journey*. School Nutrition Magazine.
https://lsc-pagepro.mydigitalpublication.com/publication/?m=21033&i=662068&view=articleBrowser&article_id=3687511&ver=html5

School Nutrition Association. (2018, July). *2018–2021 strategic plan*. https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/About_SNA/Overview/2018-2021-Strategic-Plan.pdf

School Nutrition Association. (2021). *2021–24 strategic plan*. https://schoolnutrition.org/uploadedFiles/About_SNA/Overview/2021-24-Strategic-Plan.pdf

School Nutrition Association. (n.d.). *School nutrition professionals.* https://schoolnutrition.org/about-school-meals/school-nutrition-professionals/

Townsend, H. (2019, August 5). *How to build a solid networking plan to save time when networking*. How to Make Partner. https://www.howtomakepartner.com/5-step-business-networking-plan-template/

United States Department of Agriculture. (2023). *Professional standards: Resources.* https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/professional-standards-resources

Virginia Department of Education. (2018). *Strategic planning lesson plan*. Child Nutrition Sharing Site. https://theicn.org/cnss/view/approved-public-resources/entry/2073/#gallery-3-6-2073

Walker, D. (2020, February). *3 ways to resolve a conflict.* [Video]. TED. https://www.ted.com/talks/dorothy_walker_3_ways_to_resolve_a_conflict

Watson, M. (2017, July). *Implementing a successful strategic plan for your school nutrition program* [Conference presentation]. School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference, Atlanta, GA.

The University of Mississippi

School of Applied Sciences

800-321-3054

www.theicn.org