

### Unit 1 Work & Career: building communities

**Objective:** to provide further practice of building communities, this time within the context of **Work & Career**.

The three-step strategy for developing this soft skill is:

**Step 1:** Consider the type of community you wish to create. (Ex. A, Ex. B)

**Step 2:** Decide on the community's goals and how they will be organised. (Ex. C)

**Step 3:** Advertise your community so interested people can join. (Ex. D)

You may decide to highlight this strategy at the beginning of the lesson, and to conduct a short discussion to check that the students understand the skill and why it is useful. However, if you prefer to teach this lesson without discussing the underlying soft skill, this is also possible. The lesson is designed to be engaging and successful either way.

For more information about teaching life skills and ideas for highlighting the soft skill, please refer to p. xi and pp. 8–9 of the Teacher's Book.

#### MATERIALS:

- board and markers
- large and small pieces of paper (several per group)
- poster tack

#### Lead-in

Books closed. Ask the students to recall the four different kinds of communities they saw in the Student's Book, p. 16 (*hobby clubs and university clubs; social, political or religious groups; online social networking sites; online forums*). Elicit specific examples of each type of community.

#### A

- Ask the students who currently have a job to stand up. Put students in groups with a mix of those who work and those who don't work.
- Point out to the students that in the workplace there are both formal and informal communities or groups. Explain that formal communities are usually the teams that work together as part of an organisation's structure, and that informal communities are also very common and usually take the form of groups set up by members of the organisation, e.g. a book club.

Ask the students to work in their groups to brainstorm more examples of informal groups within an organisation. Encourage the students who work to give real-life examples, if possible. Elicit ideas and write them on the left-hand side of board, e.g.:

- social group
- charity/volunteer group
- sports team
- lunch club (where workers take turns to bring in lunch or their favourite dishes to share with other workers)
- other hobbies (e.g. language learning, skills development)
- car sharing group

#### B

- Write the following reasons for joining an informal work community in a numbered list on the right-hand side of the board:

- 1 make new friends / get to know co-workers better
- 2 take a break / relax / reduce stress
- 3 improve working relationship with co-workers
- 4 contribute to a good cause
- 5 personal development (i.e. develop knowledge and/or skills)
- 6 save money

- Elicit any other reasons and add these to the list on the board. Then ask the students to work in the same groups to match the reasons with the work communities on the board. Discuss the answers as a class.

#### Possible answers

Social group: 1, 3

Charity/Volunteer group: 1, 4

Sports team: 1, 2, 3, 5 (develop skills and improve fitness)

Lunch club: 1, 2 (reduce stress by not having to make lunch every day), 6

Other hobbies: 1, 5

Car sharing group: 1, 2 (reduce stress by not driving every day), 4 (helping the environment), 6

## C

- Put the students in large groups. Ask them to imagine that the other students in the group are their co-workers and that they are going to create a work group. Explain that first, they need to find out what kinds of groups might be popular with their 'co-workers' and why. Ask them to work individually to copy the list of reasons for joining work groups from the board into their notebooks and rank the reasons in order of importance to them.
- When the students finish, ask them to circulate and interview their 'co-workers' to find out the most popular reasons for joining a work group, making notes of the other students' answers.
- Ask the groups to share the results of their surveys and use these to choose a type of community they believe would be popular in their 'workplace'. While they are doing this, write the following headings on the board:  
*Name of community:*  
*Aims/Goals:*  
*Activities:*  
*When/where community meets:*  
*Other information (e.g. cost, limits on size of group, etc):*
- Underneath write the following **How to say it** box:

**HOW TO SAY IT**

*We should set up a ... to ...*

*By joining this group, people can ...*

*We should meet ...*

*For practical reasons, we should ...*

- Ask each group to nominate a writer to copy the headings from the board, leaving space between each one. Ask them to discuss and plan their work group using the headings as a guide. Point out that not all the headings may be relevant to their specific group and that they are free to add any other relevant headings. Before they start read the phrases in the **How to say it** box aloud and encourage the students to use these in their discussion. Circulate and help as needed.

## D

- When the students finish planning their groups, give out large pieces of paper and ask them to make a number of posters to advertise their group in their 'workplace'. In order for all the students in the group to participate, ask each large group to divide into smaller groups of three or four and have each smaller group make a poster. Encourage the students to allocate tasks so they all get a chance to take part, e.g. one student can plan the text, another can decide on the design, another can write the actual poster, etc.
- When the groups finish their posters, ask them to display them on the classroom wall together with a smaller piece of paper where students can 'sign up' for the group.
- Invite the students to circulate and read about the different work groups. If they find one they would like to join, they can 'sign up' on the list provided.
- At the end, ask each larger group to collate their sign-up lists and find out how many students signed up for their group. Have a brief class feedback session to find out which groups were the most popular.

**Reflect**

- Write the following question on the board:  
*Why is it important to create informal communities in the workplace?*
- Read the question aloud and give the students time to reflect on it individually. Elicit ideas as a class, encouraging them to give reasons for their answers, e.g. *it makes the organisation more cohesive; it improves well-being; it can have a positive effect on how well people carry out their work.*

**EXTRA: HOMEWORK**

Ask the students to interview family and friends to find out what informal work communities are available to them. Ask them to make a list and report back at the next class. Do a survey to find out which communities are most common in the workplace.