

Customer care

Activity 7: Create a job advertisement

Introduction

In this activity, learners design a detailed advertisement for a job that involves a significant element of customer care alongside the occupational skills. You will help learners to decide what job will be featured in the advertisement, using their knowledge of their own subject or vocational area. The learners work co-operatively to produce the advertisement and then show their efforts to other teams, who act as peer reviewers and provide feedback.

This co-operative approach relies on everyone having a distinct role and contribution to make, so that everyone contributes to the team effort. Team accountability is emphasised through presentation of the team's work, which is then subject to peer review.

Learning objectives/outcomes

Learners should be able to:

- identify the skills and attitudes required for a job in their own subject or vocational area that has a significant element of customer care
- communicate this information to others using appropriate language
- review the work of their peers and provide feedback.

Resources required

- **Paper, pens and glue and/or appropriate electronic media.**
- A data projector or interactive whiteboard will be needed if learners wish to show their final products electronically.
- Role cards (see Stage 1 below) may also be useful.

Starting points

Learners will need some familiarity with the language and principles of customer care.

Activity 2: Exploring customer care skills, knowledge and attitudes provides an ideal opener before tackling this activity.

Planning learning in multiple environments

The activity can be integrated into individual learning plans in a variety of ways.

- Learners can carry out independent research into job advertisements outside formal learning sessions.
- Learners can collaborate with others in a virtual team by sharing ideas electronically.

- The activity can form part of a classroom-based series of customer care sessions or be incorporated into sessions preparing learners for work or work placements.

Suggested approach

Co-operative learning is a powerful tool that can be used in the classroom or the workplace. Simply putting learners into groups does not amount to co-operative learning. They may tackle the task individually or may leave others to do most of the work.

In order for effective co-operative learning to take place the following conditions need to be met.

- Each member of the group must recognise the benefits of working together.
- Each member of the group must accept responsibility for their part in achieving the group's goals.
- The activity must be designed in a way that requires learners to engage in ongoing conversation, dialogue, exchange of views and mutual support (face to face or electronically) in order to reach a successful outcome.
- Learning and use of interpersonal and small group skills is made explicit.
- The group reviews the way it is working and decides what behaviours need to change.

All five aspects are closely interrelated. Co-operative learning is particularly valuable for breaking down barriers between learners and creating an ethos of mutual respect. It can also motivate and energise reluctant learners. Employers place a high value on the skills that learners gain during co-operative learning. Being able to work effectively with others to get a job done is the bedrock on which commercial success is built.

You will find more information about co-operative learning approaches in Part 3 of **Cross-curricular themes: continuing professional development guide**.

Stage 1

Explain that the activity will take place in co-operative learning teams and that teams will review each other's work at the end.

Set the challenge:

"Your mission is to create a detailed job advertisement that would be suitable for publication on the web or in a trade magazine (name a magazine that is relevant to the learners' subject or vocational area). The advertisement must clearly identify the customer care skills, knowledge and attitudes that are required as part of the job."

Organise the learners into teams that are as diverse as possible, consisting of three learners. Explain that everyone will have a specific team role.

- Team facilitator: calls the team together for discussions, which she or he facilitates.
- Graphic designer: advises on use of fonts, colours and images.
- Text editor: checks spelling, grammar and clarity of information.

You may wish to put this information onto role cards to give to learners.

Research has shown that in mixed-ability groups the less confident learners gain from seeing how more confident learners study and approach problems, and more confident learners gain a deeper understanding of the subject by teaching it to others.

Stage 2

As a whole class or in their teams, ask learners to come up with one or more ideas about the job that will feature in the advertisement.

The advertisement could be part of a campaign to encourage young people to consider a career in a particular occupation, or it could be aimed at recruiting someone for a specific job with a company.

Next ask learners to create a simple set of criteria to guide the planning. For example, the advertisement should:

- be eye-catching and attractive
- highlight at least four customer care aspects to the job or career
- be easy to read
- contain clear and accurate information.

Alternatively, you can provide the criteria. Whichever strategy you choose, ensure that the customer care aspects of the job are given the greatest importance.

Encourage learners to be independent by ensuring that they understand the success criteria as they start each learning activity. They are then able to assess their own performance and to make best use of feedback on their work. In the most effective practice, learners create and take ownership of the success criteria themselves, as suggested above. In other cases, they will need to understand success criteria imposed by others. In each case, the criteria must be expressed in 'learner language'.

Stage 3

Learners work in their teams to design their advertisement. This will include agreeing the text, layout and possible images, logos and so on.

If working on computers, each team member can then produce their own version of the advertisement. The team reconvenes to select which one they think is best, or they might select the best features of each and then combine them.

Alternatively, if learners are using pens and paper, each learner can work on a specific part of the advertisement.

Stage 4: Consolidating, checking and reflecting on learning

This stage brings learning points together and allows learners to demonstrate their understanding of the skills and attitudes needed to provide good customer care. This will enable you to evaluate learners' understanding of the concepts so that misconceptions can be cleared up and the topic revisited where necessary.

Each team takes turns to present its advertisement to the other teams. The 'audience' should use the planning criteria to judge the quality of the final product, and teams provide each other with feedback.

Their feedback should explain:

- what has been done well, and why
- what has been done less well, and why
- what action could be taken to improve.

The main reason to involve learners in self-assessment and peer review is to help learners form judgements about themselves and their work. This is an important 'expert learner' skill.

Assessment for learning should be built into all teaching and learning activities. The process does not always have to be teacher-led; learning activities can include self-assessment or peer review, as suggested here. There are sound reasons for helping learners become skilled at reviewing their learning as the whole process is in itself an important learning opportunity. Self-assessment and peer review encourages reflection and helps learners understand how they learn.

Conclude the activity by asking learners to consider how they felt about learning co-operatively.

Ask each group to evaluate how well they:

- communicated as individuals and as a team
- co-operated – did everyone pull their weight
- developed and improved their teamworking skills.

Also ask them why they think it is important to be able to work in a team.

Help them to reflect further on the learning process. Here are some questions you could ask:

- What did they like about the approach?
- What did they find difficult?
- How did the approach model what might happen in a good, supportive workplace?
- When could the co-operative learning approach be used again?

Ask each learner to display on a mini-whiteboard one thing that they personally would do differently in future activities involving co-operative learning.

To assess learning related to customer care, ask each learner to display on a mini-whiteboard one thing they have learned about the job for which they designed an advertisement.

Alternative approaches

Learners could work in 'virtual teams' to design and produce the advertisement. They could collaborate using email or a virtual learning environment. This might be particularly useful for dispersed learners such as work-based learners.

If several learners are on placement within a particular company, they might devise a job advertisement to meet a brief set by their employer.

The activity can bring in other cross-curricular themes, especially Health, safety and well-being, if you specify that the advertisement should include these skills and attitudes too.

If learners have sufficient understanding of equality and diversity issues they might include an anti-discrimination message in their advertisement, either through the text, the use of images or both.

Creative and media teachers could set up the activity so that it follows the production cycle and involves working to a fully-developed design brief and specification.

Differentiation to meet individual needs

The level of challenge in the activity can be readily adjusted to meet individual needs. At one end of the spectrum, the teacher can supply a writing framework for the advertisement and a list of possible words and phrases. At the other extreme, the learners can devise the whole advertisement themselves.

The level of insight required can also be varied by ensuring that more experienced groups work with a more complex job.

Co-operative learning teams are normally set up so that there is a diverse mix of learners to facilitate each other's learning. This allows individual needs to be recognised and met and for less experienced learners to learn from their more experienced colleagues.

Challenges – what learners might do next

Learners can undertake another customer care activity, such as **Activity 6: Could I do that job?** which might be directly relevant.

They might also research professional advertisements and compile examples of the customer care aspects that appear in these advertisements.

Embedding literacy, language and numeracy (LLN)

Every learning activity includes many different opportunities to develop LLN skills. Always try to find a naturally-occurring opportunity where learners can immediately appreciate the relevance and importance of the skills they are learning to use.

Your LLN specialist will be able to help you to identify specific levels and curriculum references relevant to this activity and to create engaging learning activities to develop the skills.

The priority LLN skills that learners will need to complete this activity are speaking and listening skills. These will be particularly important during the presentation and review of their advertisements.

The activity can be used to help learners develop the skills below.

At Level 1, provide feedback and confirmation when listening to others.

- Understand that speakers need feedback from listeners to gauge the effect of what they are saying and make adjustments if necessary.
(Adult literacy core curriculum reference SLlr/L1.4)

At Level 2, respond to criticism and criticise constructively.

- Know and apply strategies for listening and speaking with care when exchanging opinions and judgements.
(Adult literacy core curriculum reference SLlr/L2.4)

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners may find the production of original text very challenging. These learners might explore the vocabulary of customer care with an ESOL specialist prior to the session. The resources for **Activity 2: Exploring customer care skills, knowledge and attitudes** will provide a useful starting point.

Useful activities might include:

- learners working in pairs, evaluating each other's work against agreed criteria and giving feedback.
- helping learners to prepare for a job interview involving working with customers by using the concept of a 'peer panel' to refine the information that might be useful in an interview. One group of learners forms the panel and discusses the questions they will ask. Other learners work in small groups to identify those aspects of their experience that suggest they have the skills to work with customers. Individual learners take turns to present their descriptions of themselves and to answer probing questions. Ground rules about respect and politeness should enable the flaws in the information to be surfaced without anyone feeling humiliated.

Session plan

Aim: To help learners develop an awareness of the skills and attitudes required for jobs that involve a significant element of customer care.

Learning objectives/outcomes

Learners should be able to:

- identify the skills and attitudes required for a job in their own subject or vocational area that has a significant element of customer care
- communicate this information to others using appropriate language
- review the work of their peers and provide feedback.

Time	Teacher plan	Learner activity	Resources
0-15 min	Stage 1 Explain the activity. Set the challenge. Organise learners into teams and explain roles.	Form teams and organise roles.	Role cards (optional).
15-25 min	Stage 2 Ask learners to come up with ideas about the job. Ask learners to create criteria to guide their planning.	In teams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share ideas about the job • create a set of criteria. 	Paper and pens.
25-55 min	Stage 3 Allow learners to work as they choose.	Design the advertisement.	Paper and pens. Computer (optional).
55-85 min	Stage 4 Facilitate presentations.	Present advertisements. As an 'audience', use the planning criteria to judge the final products and provide feedback.	Data projector or interactive whiteboard (optional).

85-100 min	Stage 5 Debrief. Ask the learners to evaluate the process. Draw attention to principles of co-operative learning.	Consider and evaluate the co-operative learning process.
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Assessment of learning objectives/outcomes

- Self-assessment and peer review of presentations.
- Group reflection and evaluation of the co-operative learning process.
- Each individual displays on a mini-whiteboard one thing they would do differently in future.

Differentiation to meet individual needs

- For less confident learners, provide a writing framework for the advertisement and a list of possible word and phrases.
- Composition of co-operative learning teams to include a diverse mix of learners to facilitate each other's learning.

Teacher evaluation

Consider which parts of the session were effective and why.

Learner feedback

Consider whether the activities were suitable for all learners and whether the session helped to develop the expert learners.

Personal, learning and thinking skills developed

- Creative thinkers:
 - Generate ideas.
 - Ask questions to extend their thinking.
 - Connect their own ideas and others' ideas in inventive ways.
- Reflective learners:
 - Assess themselves and others.
 - Set goals with success criteria for their development and work.
 - Invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and outcomes.
 - Communicate their feedback learning in relevant ways.

Literacy, language and numeracy skills developed

Language

At Level 1 and 2, use speaking and listening skills to present and review presentations.