

LEARNING EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

JA Essential Skills for Work™

► Work and Career Readiness



JA Essential Skills for Work is an engaging and comprehensive learning experience that introduces teens to the workplace. As interns, they participate in realistic work experiences in multiple departments of a fictional company, Orbit Boom. The learning experience enables participants to learn and apply career skills through scenarios and a project. Upon completion, participants are eligible to earn JA's Essential Work Skills Credential, which can be shared with employers or colleges.

The learning experience is designed for Grades 10–12. It is comprised of ten 45-minute sessions and can be led by either volunteers or educators.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Enables participants to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities related to essential work competencies including Creativity and Innovation, Critical and Analytical Thinking, Cultural Agility, Effective Collaboration, Engaging Communication, and Self-Direction
- Students solve problems within a varied set of business environments ranging from Information Services and Logistics to Sales and Marketing
- Includes a digital employee handbook with valuable information about corporate policies and practices
- Provides opportunities to work on solutions to an array of business problems, brainstorm new product ideas, and work in collaboration with others
- Effective Communication Strategies project allows for the deepening of communication skills
- Supplemental resources and activities available to support career development and Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy



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CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Session	Overview Participants:	Objectives Participants will be able to:	Activities
SESSION ONE: Welcome to the Workplace	- Are onboarded by the Human Resources department on their first day at Orbit Boom, explore the employee handbook and organizational hierarchy. - Set SMART goals for their internship.	- Examine a company's organizational hierarchy and cultural norms to adapt to the specific business environment. - Establish SMART performance goals that align with the company's key success factors.	- Warm-Up - Orbit Boom Employee Handbook exploration - SMART goals - Wrap-Up
SESSION TWO: Workplace Decision Making	Are asked by the head of Information Services to evaluate communication platform options using a seven-step decision-making process and share their decision in a persuasive summary.	- Demonstrate self-direction by identifying credible sources, conducting research, and summarizing recommendations. - Communicate recommendations using evidence for persuasion.	- Warm-Up - Communication Platform Evaluation - Persuasive Summary - Wrap-Up
SESSION THREE: Work Smart: Planning and Remote Collaboration	Work in groups to plan a company-wide remote meeting with a detailed timeline for the Executive team.	- Organize work priorities based on importance and urgency. - Plan realistic pacing for tasks to self-manage time and productivity. - Identify best practices for collaborating when working remotely.	- Warm-Up - Collaborative Planning of a Remote Meeting - Remote Best Practices - Wrap-Up
SESSION FOUR: Conflict Resolution in the Workplace	Role-play conflicts in the Logistics department and apply conflict management techniques through improvisation to resolve conflicts in the warehouse.	- Apply logic and reason to determine a win-win outcome for the team's success. - Express empathy and use active listening in a conflict resolution situation.	- Warm-Up - Critical Thinking and Empathy - Conflict Resolution in Action - Wrap-Up
SESSION FIVE: Workplace Creativity	Collaborate to generate, narrow down, and elaborate on creative ideas for new products and services with the R&D department.	- Invent creative and reasonable solutions using collaborative brainstorming techniques. - Present the creative idea clearly and briefly, highlighting the solution's features and benefits. - Adjust the chosen solution based on business requirements and real-world limitations.	- Warm-Up - Brainstorming and Collaboration - Refine and Adapt Ideas - Wrap-Up

(continued)

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SESSION SIX: Solving Work Problems	- Analyze declining sales of a key software product. - Identify the root cause and present findings to the Sales & Marketing department head.	- Apply analytical thinking to research and identify the root cause of an issue. - Present a clear solution that conveys sound reasoning and directly addresses the root cause.	- Warm-Up - The Root Cause - Communicate Findings and Propose a Solution - Wrap-Up
SESSION SEVEN: Crisis Management	- Evaluate an existing contingency plan in the Production department and generate recommendations for improvement in an executive summary. - Reassess their Session One goals, and Orbit Boom hires them.	- Identify potential crises and plan appropriate risk responses for each situation (avoid, reduce, transfer, or accept). - Develop recommendations to revise an existing contingency plan to prepare for future problems. - Communicate the revised contingency plan accurately and briefly. - Reassess the original SMART goal based on the transferable skills practiced in the simulated internship.	- Warm-Up - Managing Risk - Contingency Plan - Reassess SMART Goals - Wrap-Up
SESSIONS EIGHT TO TEN: Project - Effective Communication Strategies	- Work independently on a cumulative project introduced in Session 8 that challenges them to apply the transferable skills they learned and practiced in previous sessions. - Have three sessions to complete their artifacts, with facilitator support available as needed.	- Determine the most effective communication method to convey important information in a given situation. - Analyze a business situation and conduct online research to meet the identified needs. - Write an executive summary reflecting identified needs and propose a solution to a business problem. - Create and deliver an oral presentation.	- Online Activity: Effective Communication Strategies - Participant Activity: Effective Communication Strategies - Rubric: Effective Communication Strategies