

Meeting and Greeting

The **BIG** Idea

- What are the advantages of being a good conversationalist, and how can I improve my conversational skills?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Thumbs Up or Down? (5 minutes)
- II. Who, Me, Talk? Developing Conversational Skills (10 minutes)
- III. Handshake Etiquette (10 minutes)
- IV. Classroom Visitor (15 minutes)
- V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 38, Schmooze Clues
- Student Handbook page 39, How to Shake Hands

FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW
- Facilitator Resource 2, Thumbs Up or Down?
- Chart paper and markers for “Classroom Visitor Activity”
- Waterless hand sanitizer (optional)

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Practice introducing themselves.
- Pose “getting-to-know-you” and follow-up questions to a fictional classroom visitor.

OVERVIEW

This lesson helps students develop a networking skill with life-long value: the art of conversation. Students receive practical tips about how to introduce themselves and start and sustain a conversation. They participate in activities that give them practice in asking questions of people they first meet.

PREPARATION

- List the day's **Big Idea** and activities on the board.
- Write the day's vocabulary word and definition on the board.

VOCABULARY

Schmooze: Notice people, connect with them, keep in touch with them — and benefit from relationships with them.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

*(You may choose to present the Warm Up activity as a written Do Now. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards. You could also choose to give the students a handout by copying **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW.**)*

Questions:

1. Think back to the last great conversation you had. In your own opinion, what makes a conversation good?
2. What do you think the word ***schmooze*** means?

[Once students have completed their work, have students share their responses for the first question. Let them know that they will talk about the second question later in today's lesson. Then begin with the **Warm Up** as written.]

For **Activity II: Who, Me, Talk?** you may want to make a couple of copies of **Student Handbook page 38, Schmooze Clues** and cut it up into strips. Distribute a couple of clues to each student, and have students take turns reading them aloud. Have the class turn to the student handbook page and check off each clue as it's read to make sure that every clue is read once and only once.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Thumbs Up or Down? (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How many of you have had a conversation with someone today? It doesn't matter what you talked about—any conversation at all. [All hands go up.] What made the conversation good (or not)?

[Use their answers to make the following, or similar, points: a good conversation lets you share what you think or feel, exchange information, learn things you need to know. And—a little more subtle but very important—when someone makes the effort to have a conversation with you, it makes you feel valued.]

2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** So knowing how to start and carry a conversation is a really good skill. And it's especially important when you network. If you're comfortable talking to people, and you know how to steer a conversation toward a specific topic, you can often gain information to help you reach a goal. Plus, whenever you make someone feel valued, they're more likely to remember and want to help you.
3. Tell the class you're going to test their ability to recognize good conversational skills. Ask for a volunteer, and when you have one, tell him/her to pretend to be you. Inform the class that you will assume various roles of students looking for career advice, "none of whom are you, or anyone you know." Ask them to give you a "thumbs up" when you demonstrate good conversational skills, and a "thumbs down" when you don't.
4. Read **Facilitator Resource 2, Thumbs Up or Down?** The class votes on each character.

II. Who, Me, Talk? Developing Conversation Skills (10 minutes)

1. [Write the word "**schmooze**" on the board, and ask if anyone knows what it means. Then write the definition (see **Vocabulary**).]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Some people are born schmoozers—they're comfortable striking up a conversation with anyone, anywhere. Is anyone here a natural?

[If so, let them have their moment of pride. Ask them their secret, and maybe they'll add something helpful, such as "I like talking to people."]

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Most of us are not brilliant conversationalists at first. We learn to schmooze as we grow up and get more experience. And it always helps to know some ‘schmooze clues.’
4. [Have students predict some ‘schmooze clues.’ Record their responses on chart paper or the board. Direct students to **Student Handbook page 38, Schmooze Clues**. Have the class read the clues out loud and put a check by any clue the class had predicted. (See **IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS**.)]

III. Handshake Etiquette (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Because making an impression is important when we are networking, we are going to practice Schmooze Clue #2.

[Ask for two volunteers to stand up in front of the class. Direct students to **Student Handbook page 39, How to Shake Hands**. Instruct your volunteers to follow each direction carefully as you read the directions out loud. (**NOTE:** You may want to review expectations for behavior.) After the demonstration, have students move around the room, shaking hands and introducing themselves to at least three of their classmates.]
2. [When the students have finished shaking hands, lead a brief discussion. Who has the best handshake? What makes it good?]

IV. Classroom Visitor (15 minutes)

1. [Explain to students that it takes practice to become a good schmoozer. Although having conversations with strangers can be intimidating at first, once they get practice and sharpen their schmoozing skills, they will be experts in no time.]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** In this next activity, we are going to practice talking to someone we just met. We will have one volunteer create an identity and introduce himself to the class. You can pretend to be anyone you want. Each of you will have to ask the volunteer a “getting-to-know-you” question in order to learn more about them. Can someone give me an example of what a good “getting-to-know-you” question is? [Students should say things like, What is your name? Where are you from? Where do you work or go to school? These questions should be listed on the board for student reference.]

3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Great, those are all good “getting-to-know-you” questions. The trick to having a conversation with someone you have just met is to make it feel comfortable and natural, so you should ask questions that make sense in the flow of the conversation. Yes or no questions often stop the flow of conversation, so we want to avoid using them. After the first person in the class asks the class visitor a question, the next person in the class must ask a follow-up question in order to learn even more about the guest. You should listen carefully to the questions and answers before your turn in order to get an idea about what you should ask. Let’s do a practice round.

4. [Ask a student to pretend to be someone else. Let them know they can pretend to be anyone they want—the president, a pop star, an athlete. Introduce yourself, and then model asking a “getting-to-know-you” question and at least two follow-up questions. For example, a student reveals that they’re a pop star. Ask how old they were when they started singing, and where they sang. Then ask what led to their first big record deal. Ask how often they give concerts, and what their favorite and least favorite things are about being on the road.

Then you should ask for a new student volunteer to be the class visitor. Tell the other students that you will be pointing to them when it is their turn to ask a question to the class visitor. This means that they will have to be listening and paying attention to your signal.]

5. [Play for one round, seeing how long students can keep the conversation going before they run out of questions. If a student gets stuck, suggest a category he/she could ask about. You should also point out any yes or no questions asked. If you feel the students are into it, ask for another volunteer and play another round.]

6. [When you have finished, begin a post-schmoozing discussion. Discuss how the students felt about schmoozing. Was it comfortable? Fun? Was there anything that didn’t feel right, or anything they found annoying?]

V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

1. [Congratulate the group for becoming such great conversationalists, and suggest they practice their skills at home, with each other, with teachers. Tell them to notice how happy most people become when you seek them out for conversation.]

DO NOW

Communication and Networking 3: Meeting and Greeting

Directions: You will have three minutes to read the questions and write your response.

Questions:

1. Think back to the last great conversation you had. In your own opinion, what makes a conversation good?

2. What do you think the word schmooze means?

THUMBS UP OR DOWN?

Character #1:

(Be obnoxious, self-serving, rude. Jab a finger at your volunteer.)

“You! Come here. I need you right now. I want to make a lot of money when I grow up. Show me how.”

Character #2:

(Be self-conscious, obviously afraid. Step away from your volunteer; run away)

“Um...ah...well...never mind.”

Character #3:

(Be charming, friendly, relaxed. Reach out to shake hands, smile.)

“Hi. I’m Ron Friendly. Aren’t you the career instructor? I’m sorry I don’t know your name; please tell me. I’m glad to meet you! I’d love to hear about your course.”

SCHMOOZE CLUES

- Start with a friendly smile.
- Reach out and shake hands. Be firm, but you don't want to break their hand.
- Look at the person's face when you speak to them.
- Be positive. Remember, you're making them feel good just by talking to them!
- Be honestly interested in the other person.
- Listen carefully to what they say.
- Be polite.
- If you know in advance who you're meeting, do some research, so you know a little about the person's job or interests.
- Find common ground to discuss, like the news, sports, movies, pets.
- Ask questions that relate to their interests.
- Use the person's answers to devise new questions.
- Shake hands when saying goodbye, and add, "It's been really nice meeting you."

HOW TO SHAKE HANDS

Historically, handshakes were used to show the person you were meeting that you were not carrying weapons. The handshake today is used in everything from job interviews to first dates. A good handshake shows confidence, trust, and sophistication. In order to make a great first impression, you must have a good business handshake. If you follow these six easy steps, you will be sure to impress everyone you meet.

Steps:

1. Extend your right hand to meet the other person's right hand.
2. Point your thumb upward toward the other person's arm and extend your arm at a slight downward angle.
3. Wrap your hand around the other person's hand when your thumb joints come together.
4. Grasp the hand firmly and squeeze gently once. Remember that limp handshakes are a big turn-off. So are bone-crushing grasps.
5. Hold the handshake for two to three seconds.
6. Introduce yourself. Look the other person in the eye and say, "Hi, I'm _____."

* Tips:

This handshake works for business occasions. Save other handshakes for friends or businesses where you know a special handshake is part of the culture.

⚠ Warnings:

Handshakes are not appropriate in all cultures. Investigate local customs if you will be visiting a foreign country.

➕ Relax:

Don't get too uptight about something so simple. Smile, — relax, practice if you want, but when the time comes don't concentrate so hard that you look stiff and unnatural.