

# **Sustainable Community Lesson Plan**

**Created by the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice  
Antipoverty Action Group**

## **Interview a Business Owner**

This is a 3-part lesson plan plus an extension lesson.

Recommended for Grade 9 and up.

### **Objectives**

- students will develop a sense of how business works, how business contributes to community, an appreciation for entrepreneurialism and the hardships faced by business owners
- students develop key communication skills through interviews (planning, questioning, responding, interpreting)

### **Curriculum connections**

- communication
  - connect and engage with others (ask and respond to questions, active listening, encourage other speakers, recognize different points of view)
  - acquire, interpret and present information
- Creative Thinking
  - generating and developing ideas
- Critical Thinking
  - analyze and critique
  - question and investigate
  - develop and design
- Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
  - relationships and cultural contexts
- Social Responsibility
  - contributing to community
  - building relationships
- ADST 6 & 7
  - role of entrepreneurship in designing and making products and services
- ADST 8
  - characteristics of entrepreneurial activity
- ADST 9
  - risks and benefits of entrepreneurship

**Lesson Plan: Part 1 (Interview skills & strategies) (60 min.)**

**Introduction** (5 min.)

- ask students if any of them has a job. How did they get their job? (most likely through a job interview)

**Activity:** Quick spontaneous interview (10 min.)

- create a random list of topics; write down each on a small piece of paper (put in basket/bag)
- Assign students in pairs (preferable to letting them choose their own partners)
- Students select their topic by blindly picking a piece of paper from the basket/bag
- Give students 5 minutes to interview each other about the topic chosen

**Discussion** (20 min.)

- ask students how they felt in the interview (as interviewer and interviewee)
- ask students what they could have done to improve the interview
- discuss interview skills as a life skill (i.e. – job interviews). What is an interview? What is the purpose of an interview? What types of interviews are there?
- brainstorm **interview skills/strategies**:
  - research your subject (the person, place of business, product, etc.)
  - create a list of questions (as interviewer) or anticipated questions (as interviewee)
  - practice your questions (as interviewer) and anticipated answers (as interviewee)
  - take notes during interview (as interviewer)
  - timing (be on time/early, estimate length of interview, etc.)
  - non-verbal communication (body language, smile, eye contact, etc.)
  - dress accordingly
  - friendly but not familiar.

**Activity: Interview** (20 min.)

- students work in same pairings with same topics
  - research the topic briefly
  - generate at least five questions (with answers) on the topic
  - take turns interviewing each other, being mindful of the interview skills generated above.

**Debrief:** (5 min.)

- ask students to compare their experiences between the spontaneous interview and the interview they prepared for, and discuss the importance of being prepared (skills/strategies).

**Lesson Plan: Part 2 (Interview a business owner)** (40 min.)**Introduction:** (5 min.)

- ask students to write down the last 5 businesses they went to
- discuss different types of businesses (independent, franchise, chain)

- on their list, students write down whether each business is independent, a franchise, or chain.

### **Discussion** (15 min.)

- briefly compare/contrast the different types of businesses (independent, franchise, chain)
  - create a chart on chart paper
- discuss/brainstorm motivations for seeking work in each type of business.

### **Activity** (20 min.)

- tell students they will be interviewing a business owner (re: motivations, challenges & rewards, etc.)
  - let them know the chances of speaking with an owner are more likely with independent or franchise businesses)
- review the interview skills/strategies from the previous lesson (Part 1)
- brainstorm possible questions to ask the business owners
  - some possible questions may include:
    - when you were a child, what did you want to be when you grow up?
    - how did you decide to go into this field of work?
    - what work have you done before this job?
    - what are your goals (in relation to this job)?
    - what makes this place special/unique?
    - what are you most proud of (in relation to this job)?
    - what are your hours like?
  - students can also find sample questions here:
    - [condor.depaul.edu/pkemp/businterviewq.htm](http://condor.depaul.edu/pkemp/businterviewq.htm)
    - [bitwizards.com/Thought-Leadership/Blog/2011/December-2011/20-Questions-for-an-Entrepreneur](http://bitwizards.com/Thought-Leadership/Blog/2011/December-2011/20-Questions-for-an-Entrepreneur)

### **Assignment** (on their own time – likely give them a week to complete)

- students select a business, contact them and try to set up an interview with the owner
- students will then interview the owner, keeping in mind skills/strategies from lessons
  - remind students to take notes as they will share with the class at a later date

### **Lesson Plan: Part 3 (Reflection)** (30 min.)

#### **Introduction** (5 min.)

- briefly review the two previous lessons.

#### **Activity** (20 min.)

- from their interview notes, students summarize the owner's motivations, business challenges and rewards, etc., and determine their own thoughts on the business (one paragraph)

- students can share their findings with the class (optional).

### **Debrief (5 min.)**

- show compare/contrast chart paper from Part 2 of lesson and ask students if they feel any differently about any of their previous statements (re: motivations for seeking work in each type of business)

### **Extension/Alternate Lesson**

If there are any difficulties with having students interview business owners, you could:

- have students prepare questions (as in Part 2)
- show the DVD *Entrepreneurship: Be Your Own Boss* (Learning Zone Xpress) (20 min)
- students try to find the answers to their questions while viewing the DVD
- some questions specific to this DVD include:
  - why did you choose this field of work? (motivation)
  - what training did you have for this type of work?
  - what are some of the challenges and rewards of your work?
  - what supports do you need? And what support do you receive?
  - how do you promote/market your business?
  - how do you define success?

This video can be used as an alternative to interviewing or as an extension to the above lessons.

If this lesson is of interest to your students, you may want to explore YELL (Young Entrepreneur Leadership Launchpad) at: <http://weyell.org/>.