

TEAM PRODUCT
Team Lesson Plan
Developing Storytelling and Team Skills
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Goals of this project

First some background. While participating in some industry visits over the summer, two specific job skills were mentioned with uncanny frequency.

The first skill is the ability to write—but not just write, as in a proposal or expense account. The skill that comes up over and over is the ability to tell a story through writing. What this means is that nearly every aspect of your job can be helped by cultivating good storytelling skills. For example, when you are pitching an idea to your boss, how you describe the idea involves storytelling. Similarly, when you are developing an idea for a client, storytelling not only helps you make the idea compelling, it also helps you explain the idea and interact effectively with the client.

The second skill is the ability to work well in a team situation. While the nuts and bolts of animation are often crafted alone (late at night in dark rooms...) the product you produce needs to work with products that are being simultaneously being generated by others. So being able to work together and reach agreement with other people is absolutely essential to not only keeping your job but advancing in your field of work. No one will hire you again if you aren't able to work well with others. To be blunt, no one wants to work with a jerk when someone else is congenial and a team player.

Students

You will be assigned to a team of 3–5 students.

Each individual in the team will keep a journal documenting the progress of this assignment. See attached sheet for suggestions on how to keep notes for this project. These notes will be assessed by the instructor following the completion of the project and will be part of your final grade.

The Assignment

Here's the overview of what you'll be doing. The specifics are below.

- Students assigned to groups
- Industry assignment given to groups
- Group researches industry
- Group develops list of animation and/or peripheral positions within assigned industry
- Group determines position they want to pursue for speaker
- Group develops list of local businesses that employ industry professionals in assigned position
- Group targets business they want to approach
- Group leader (determined by group) contacts target business and sets up time for informational interview with industry pro
- Group leader attempts to set up industry pro as guest speaker for class/department presentation
- Leader follows up and assigns members of group relevant tasks prior to presentation date
- Leader meets and introduces speaker

- Leader/group follow up with thank you's and feedback.
- Individuals complete self-evaluation and turn in journals for grade.

Each group will be assigned an industry in which animation is used (television, web design, event planning, advertising are just a few examples). Within that industry, there are a number of potential positions that use animation. As an example, the gaming industry uses animators. But within that field there are programmers, texture artists, level designers, and directors, all of which interact at some level with animators. Your task, as a group, is to research the field you are assigned and develop a list of all the possible uses for animators within that industry. Once you have developed a comprehensive list, decide (as a group) one position you would like know more about. Research local businesses that employ people in the position you are interested in. Then contact an individual at one of the businesses you researched, conduct an informational interview either on the phone or in person, and ask the person if they would be willing to schedule a time to come and speak to our class about their work. You will be given a list of available times for your speaker prior to contacting them. If they need a specific day and time, we will make every effort to accommodate them—they are doing us a tremendous favor by agreeing to tell us about their work.

Now this may seem rather daunting at first. I suggest you contact the counseling office and/or the career center to assist you in finding businesses that fit the parameters you need. They can also offer you suggestions on how you go about contacting businesses, and how you might go about conducting your informational interview.

Once you have scheduled your industry professional, you need to make sure we are prepared for them. Ask them if they have any specific needs for their presentation. Make sure they have a map and know where both the college is and where our classroom is. It's also a great idea to set up a video camera and tape their presentation, but make sure they agree to this before hand. It's also a good idea to have some questions prepared for them so that you can engage them (as well as other students) and show them you are familiar with what they do.

A few days after the presentation, be sure and send them a thank you note. You may be asking them for a job some day!

Relevant CTE standards applied in this project

2.0 Communications

Students understand the principles of effective oral, written, and multimedia communication in a variety of formats and contexts.

2.2 Writing:

(2.5) Write documents related to career development: Present information purposefully and succinctly and meet the needs of the intended audience.

(1.6) Develop presentations by using clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies.

(1.7) Use systematic strategies to organize and record information.

2.3 Written and Oral English Language Conventions:

(1.1) Demonstrate control of grammar, diction, and paragraph and sentence structure and an understanding of English usage.

(1.2) Produce legible work that shows accurate spelling and correct punctuation and capitalization.

2.4 Listening and Speaking:

(2.3) Apply appropriate interviewing techniques:

- a. Prepare and ask relevant questions.
- c. Use language that conveys maturity, sensitivity, and respect.
- d. Respond correctly and effectively to questions.
- e. Demonstrate knowledge of the subject or organization.
- f. Compile and report responses.

3.0 Career Planning and Management

Students understand how to make effective decisions, use career information, and manage personal career plans:

3.1 Know the personal qualifications, interests, aptitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to succeed in careers.

3.2 Understand the scope of career opportunities and know the requirements for education, training, and licensure.

3.3 Develop a career plan that is designed to reflect career interests, pathways, and postsecondary options.

3.4 Understand the role and function of professional organizations, industry associations, and organized labor in a productive society.

3.5 Understand the past, present, and future trends that affect careers, such as technological developments and societal trends, and the resulting need for lifelong learning.

3.6 Know key strategies for self-promotion in the hiring process, such as job applications, résumé writing, interviewing skills, and portfolio preparation.

4.0 Technology

Students know how to use contemporary and emerging technological resources in diverse and changing personal, community, and workplace environments:

4.1 Understand past, present, and future technological advances as they relate to a chosen pathway.

4.2 Understand the use of technological resources to access, manipulate, and produce information, products, and services.

4.3 Understand the influence of current and emerging technology on selected segments of the economy.

4.4 Understand digital applications appropriate to specific media and projects.

4.5 Know the key technological skills appropriate for occupations in the arts industry.

4.6 Know how technology and the arts are interrelated in the development of presentations and productions.

4.7 Understand how technology can reinforce, enhance, or alter products and performances.

5.0 Problem Solving and Critical Thinking

5.1 Apply appropriate problem-solving strategies and critical thinking skills to work-related issues and tasks.

5.2 Understand the systematic problem-solving models that incorporate input, process, outcome, and feedback components.

5.3 Use critical thinking skills to make informed decisions and solve problems.

7.0 Responsibility and Flexibility

7.1 Understand the qualities and behaviors that constitute a positive and professional work demeanor.

7.2 Understand the importance of accountability and responsibility in fulfilling personal, community, and workplace roles.

7.3 Understand the need to adapt to varied roles and responsibilities.

7.4 Understand that individual actions can affect the larger community.

7.6 Understand the value of flexibility in all aspects of the creative process (e.g., nonconforming ideas and concepts) and how flexibility influences business relationships (e.g., employer-client).

7.7 Develop a personal commitment to and apply high-quality craftsmanship to a product or presentation and continually refine and perfect it.

9.0 Leadership and Teamwork

9.1 Understand the characteristics and benefits of teamwork, leadership, and citizenship in the school, community, and workplace settings.

9.2 Understand the ways in which preprofessional associations and competitive career development activities enhance academic skills, promote career choices, and contribute to employability.

9.3 Understand how to organize and structure work individually and in teams for effective performance and attainment of goals.

9.5 Understand how to interact with others in ways that demonstrate respect for individual and cultural differences and for the attitudes and feelings of others.

9.7 Cultivate consensus, continuous improvement, respect for the opinions of others, cooperation, adaptability, and conflict resolution.

Grading rubric

Students will be given a group grade for this project as well as an individual grade based on the content of their submitted journal and self-evaluation of process.

Group grading assessment:

Documentation of animation related positions within assigned industry:	15 points
Documentation of local businesses in assigned industry:	15 points
Assessment of documented informational interview:	50 points
Presentation set-up and follow-through (guest speaker):	20 points
Total points possible:	100 points

Individual grading assessment:

Content and depth of journal:	75 points
Self-evaluation report:	25 points
Total points possible:	100 points

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