

Advisor Agenda – 9th Grade Agenda

Monday, May 4th

1. Read Daily Bulletin

2. Career Activity – Ethics on the Job

Attached please find a series of on the job ethics scenarios. Please print and cut out the scenarios. Have advisees organize into small groups and give each group a scenario. Allow them some time to read and discuss. Then have each group present their scenario and what their group decided about the situation being ethical v. unethical. Allow for class discussion

Email for Personal Use

An employee uses his/her computer at work to send e-mails to friends and relatives.

How common do you think this situation is?

Do you think this situation or activity is Ethical or Unethical? Explain.

Betting Pool

While reviewing e-mail messages a manager discovers someone using the company's e-mail system to operate a betting pool for the NCAA Final Four.

How common do you think this situation is?

Do you think this situation or activity is Ethical or Unethical? Explain.

Political Material

An employee sends political campaign material to individuals on her employer's/company's e-mail mailing list.

How common do you think this situation is?

Do you think this situation or activity is Ethical or Unethical? Explain.

Computer Monitoring

A company occasionally uses software to monitor the productivity of its staff. It only uses the software to monitor employees thought to be wasting time.

How common do you think this situation is?

Do you think this situation or activity is Ethical or Unethical? Explain.

Doing Homework

An employee uses his or her computer at work to complete a homework assignment for school.

How common do you think this situation is?

Do you think this situation or activity is Ethical or Unethical? Explain.

Advisor Agenda – 10th and 11th Grades

Monday, May 4th

1. Read Daily Bulletin
2. Informational Activity – Swine Flu Q & A

Last week, the administrative body that governs high school sports in Texas (the UIL) decided to suspend athletic and activity competitions through May 11th due to fears of the Swine Flu. Acting on a recommendation from the Oregon Health Department, Western Oregon University decided to close their campus through Monday after word they had a probable case of swine flu.

With so much in the news about the swine flu, attached please find a Q & A sheet for you to go through with your advisees in the hope of providing accurate information on the spread of the flu. I have also copied the short article from the Dallas Morning News below so you could use that to start the conversation with your advisees.

UIL competition suspended because of swine flu

04:13 PM CDT on Wednesday, April 29, 2009

By BRIAN DAVIS / The Dallas Morning News
brdavis@dallasnews.com

The University Interscholastic League has suspended all athletic activity throughout Texas until May 11 because of the swine flu outbreak.

"The health and safety of our student activity participants is of the utmost importance," UIL executive director Charles Breithaupt said in a statement.

The agency also suspended non-athletic events, including the Academic State Meet and the Texas State Wind Ensemble festival.

"Taking every possible precaution to prevent the further spreading of this disease is an important contribution to the welfare of our great state, and altering the schedule of our events is a way to keep our participants safe."

The decision was based on the recommendation of the Texas Department of Health Services and in consultation with the Texas Education Agency, the UIL said.

The suspension does throw a major curve into the upcoming athletic schedules, including regional track meets and the upcoming softball and baseball playoff schedules to name a few.

Advisor Agenda – 12th Grade

Monday, May 4th

1. Read Daily Bulletin
2. Career Activity – Customer Service
Attached please find the Customer Service Activity and Article. The directions for today's activity are detailed step by step on the Activity sheet.

Advisor Agenda

Customer Service Activity

List the following businesses on the board.

- Computer Software Company
- Bank
- College or university admissions office
- Gap, Old Navy or American Eagle, Foot Locker or other retail clothing store
- Rite Aid or other pharmacy
- Doctor's office or hospital
- Airline or other travel Web site
- Fine dining restaurant
- Fast food restaurant

Part I.

Ask students to join with a partner or a small group and choose one of the businesses listed. As each group to imagine that they are a customer or client in one of these places of business then answer the following questions.

- What qualities or characteristics might you expect the person helping you to exhibit?
- Create a profile of the ideal service representative.
- Have each group compose a list of qualities the ideal customer service representative should not have.
 - Prompt students to consider not only how the person might act, but what his or her voice might sound like and what he or she might look like.

Part II.

After enough time to work, have each group share their ideas.

Once everyone has shared, ask students to summarize what they heard. Here are some questions to prompt the discussion.

- How many of the same qualities did the various groups identify as positive and negative?
- How many of them chose similar visual representations?
- How important do they think the person's appearance is when balanced against his or her behavior?
- Are the same qualities equally important in different types of businesses? Why or why not?

Listed below are two different activities to finish up the agenda. Option A is a great choice for a group that is creative and needs to get active. Option B is a great choice for a group that does well with reading and discussion. Please choose and enjoy.

Option A.

Prompt each group to brainstorm two or three common scenarios a customer service representative in their assigned place of business might encounter, such as dealing with an average client, handling an angry or rushed client and/or trying to help someone who has trouble communicating.

Then work out one scenario showing both the do's and don'ts of an encounter.

Option B.

As a group, read and discuss the article "A Virtual Travel Agent with All the Answers" focusing on the following questions:

1. Who, or what, is Jenn?
2. What qualities does she embody?
3. How "human" is she?
4. How does natural-language communication work?
5. What might be both the advantages and disadvantages of using a virtual assistant like Jenn?
6. What problems are virtual assistants intended to solve?
7. What do you think might be the possibilities and/or limitations of a virtual assistant?
8. How do you think the development of virtual assistants might impact the role of human customer service representatives, if at all?

A Virtual Travel Agent with All the Answers

I HATE being addressed by machines. We have a microwave that says, "Enjoy your meal!" when the bell goes off, even if you have only warmed up a cup of coffee. I tell the microwave to shut up, though not exactly in those words.

So I was skeptical when I got a news release informing me that Alaska Airlines and its subsidiary, Horizon Air, had introduced on the Alaskaair.com Web site a "virtual assistant named Jenn." Jenn, it said, responds orally to typed questions, "asks follow-up questions when needed" and also provides a written response and displays the site's relevant page. Jenn also has a personality, it said, and "answers many personal questions."

Jenn is not annoying. She is depicted on the Web site as a young brunette with a nice smile. Her voice has proper inflections. Type in a question, and she replies intelligently. Ask Jenn a question on a wide range of topics, and you will get a fast, sensible response that saves you time.

Jenn was designed by a technology company in Spokane, Wash., the Next IT Corporation (www.NextIT.com), which has a goal of simplifying interaction between people and computers, using natural-language communications to retrieve information and even ask follow-up questions to clarify intent.

Jenn learns from experience and interaction. "This technology is trained, but it gets smarter over time," Mr. Brown said. Before Jenn went public, Alaska Air and Next IT asked focus groups to help define what information needed to be available and what type of voice and virtual personality would be engaging.

Next IT anticipated that people would test the technology. "We built out the personality, aware that people would want to test the bounds," said Jeff Brown (no relation to Fred A. Brown), the senior vice president for sales at Next IT. "So if they ask questions such as 'Are you married?' or 'Where did you go to school?' she's able to answer intelligently, and all of a sudden people's trust in the overall knowledge goes up significantly. We're in the business of making her very smart. Basically, besides knowledge, the virtual agent's image has a past, a current and a future."

With Jenn on the job, the Alaska Air Web site is definitely user-friendly. And Jenn does evolve, including learning when to stay quiet.

A couple of weeks ago, when I first tried out the system, I went through a list of serious and frivolous questions, all of which elicited good, or at least reasonable, responses. Then I threw a curveball, asking whether Alaska Air had ever had a plane crash. The response both amazed me with its honesty and chastened me for being glib. Jenn readily provided details of a tragic crash of an MD-80 in 2000 that killed 88 people. It was Alaska's first accident in decades.

Published in the New York Times Business section on March 4, 2008.