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| <i>900 exercises for Vocational Communication</i> | Notes for teachers | E2 / 22 |
| <i>General aim</i> | E: Evaluate a message | |
| <i>Level of difficulty</i> | 2 | |
| <i>Intermediate aim</i> | 2: Give meaning to someone else's message | |
| <i>Operational aim</i> | 2: Explain the validity of an argumentation. | |
| <i>Pre-requirements</i> | None | |
| <i>Number of exercises</i> | 4 | |
| <i>Summing-up exercise</i> | E2/22-1.4 | |
| <i>Applications (examples)</i> | | |
| <i>Comments</i> | | |

You and a friend are doing your work placement in a factory where there are dangerous products. You are therefore required to respect a certain number of safety precautions. Here are some of them.

- 1. Always wear protective gloves.**
- 2. Protective glasses must be worn at all times.**
- 3. When entering the factory floor, boots must be worn.**
- 4. When in contact with chemicals, always use protective clothing.**

Your friend Zak does not like to bother with these measures. He thinks they are a waste of time.

“If you go in and out of the factory all day, you have to keep putting on and taking off gloves, boots, glasses and all sorts of clothing. It takes so much time I don’t have any time left to work,” he says. “It’s hot in those things. And anyway, if I’m careful, I won’t even need to wear them. It’s not difficult to take a bit more care. I’m not going to have an accident. I know what I’m doing. I may be a beginner, but I’m not a fool.”

Tell your friend how important it is to respect these precautions. Explain to him how important it is to follow the instructions at all times. Remember to tell him about the dangers involved. Remind him about how easy it is to stop concentrating even for a second. And in one second, anything can happen. The rules were invented for a reason, not just to get in people’s way.

Write your answer here. Try to write about five or six sentences.

LOOK AT THE ANSWERS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Here are some ideas. Remember that these are only suggested answers. You could say this, for example:

You know, Zak, these rules are here for a reason. These chemicals are dangerous. If anything splashes on you, you'll regret it. You can ruin your sight if you get any of that in them. And the gloves are absolutely necessary too. Imagine what might happen if your hand got caught in one of the machines. You could lose a finger. And then the company would have to pay out of their insurance. The boots have rubber soles, they prevent you from slipping. Sometimes there are spills on the floor. Imagine how dangerous that could be.

You are in a classroom with your friends. The teacher comes in, and it's immediately obvious that she's not in a very good mood. One of your friends arrives after her, with a baseball cap on, and drinking something fizzy from a can. He sits down without apologising and without taking his cap off. The teacher lays into him:

“Every week you arrive late for my lesson. I've had enough. You did not even have the good manners to say you are sorry. When you are late you should always apologise. I should not have to tell you that. And please take that dreadful cap off. You know it's not allowed in here. I refuse to give you a lesson while you are wearing that thing. Also, I would appreciate it if you could stop drinking that stuff in my lesson. Other teachers might tolerate it, but not me. I do not allow eating or drinking in my classroom. If you can't respect these simple rules, you might as well leave the room now.”

Your friend is of course very angry and upset. He doesn't see why the teacher is always on his back. Other teachers leave him alone. He wasn't very late, and he was going to throw his can away. After the lesson he complains to you about the teacher. “Next time I won't even go to her lesson,” he says.

Although you agree that the teacher was very hard on him, you have to admit that he did take it a bit too far. He should have apologised for being late. He should have removed his cap. Tell him that sometimes teachers have to make you respect the rules. Tell him that although this teacher is particularly demanding, she is just as demanding with herself. She is never late. She is strict but just.

Write your answer here. Try to write at least 8 sentences.

Show your work to the instructor.

Here are some ideas. They are of course only suggestions.

When your friend says “Why does she always pick on me?” you could tell him.

I can see you're angry, and she shouldn't have told you off like that in front of everyone. But the thing is, Joe, you did arrive late, and you didn't say you were sorry. You should remember to say that at least. You know she's strict. But she's just as strict with herself, so there's no injustice. Also, if you had arrived on time, you would have seen that she was in a bad mood. And you're the only one who comes to the lesson wearing a baseball cap. The rules say it's not allowed. It's also forbidden to eat or drink anything in the classroom. Surely you know that? Maybe you should just try for once to keep to the rules. You might even discover that this teacher isn't all that bad. You never know, one day, you might even get to like her, and she might get to like you. Why not give it a try?

You are a student in horticulture. You and a friend from the same class are doing your work placement in the same garden centre. Your friend Sarah has been asked to work out a display of pots, using clay pots and plants. She has been given a free hand, but when you see what she has done you know she's in for trouble. The display itself is very attractive. Unfortunately, it is obvious that she has not given much thought to the placing of it all. You can see immediately that the customers will not be able to walk around it. So they won't be able to get to other parts of the shop. That will cause complaints and also probably traffic jams at certain points. You know that her tutor is not going to be pleased with the result.

As predicted, the tutor is furious with her. He tells her exactly how angry he is. Unfortunately, he does it in front of a group of customers who are looking at the display and trying to get past the pots.

“Look at this! It's a disgrace! I can't possibly allow this in my garden centre. Where do you imagine the customers are going to go? How can they get past? It's perfectly obvious to me and to anyone who sees this that you have given no thought to this at all. I want you to take it all down and start again. Now! No, you can't go for lunch now. Not until you have finished redoing this display. I've told you time and again how to place a display like this. I've also told you that you have to watch what you put in these displays. Did you calculate how many plants to use? Did you check them off the stock levels? Where is your stock list? Why can't you listen properly and do as you are told?”

Sarah is obviously very upset. You know she worked hard on the project. But you can see the tutor's point. Tell her that you agree the tutor was hard. You agree he should not have said all that in front of the customers. But tell her also that you agree with some of what the tutor said.

Write your answer here. Use at least 10 sentences.

Look at the suggested answers on the next page.

Look Sarah. I realise the tutor was a bit hard on you. He should have saved his comments for when there were no customers around. And your display is really good. He could at least have complimented you on it. All he did was to tell you all the negative points, and I know that doesn't help. But you have to admit that he has a point when he says the customers can't circulate. Look at them. They have to go all the way around the other way. Maybe you should have drawn a plan and shown it to him first. And did you check the stock off as you used the plants? It causes terrible problems if the stock levels aren't right at the end of the day. Would you like me to help you? I'll take these pots down from here. And I'll wait to have my lunch with you. We'll be quicker if there are two of us working on it.

You and your flat-mate are in the supermarket doing your weekly shop. It's something you both dislike, and you try to do it as quickly as possible. But in a supermarket, it is very easy to pick up various things that you don't really want. From time to time one of you tells the other to put something back on the shelf. It's either too expensive or just not necessary. It annoys you to have to take something back to the other side of the store, but you do it anyway. Then you realise that your flat-mate just puts things back anywhere. He does not bother to find the right place. So he puts cold stuff with the fizzy drinks, for example, or even frozen foods back with the toiletries. You are about to say something when you realise that another customer has got there first. She is really laying into him, saying how lazy he is, and what a bad customer he is.

“Don't you realise how serious this could be? People could pick things up thinking they're okay, when really they've gone off. Those frozen foods are particularly serious. You know, it's very dangerous to refreeze food that has thawed. And why should people have to clear up after you? They have to pay people to clear the shelves and get rid of everything that doesn't belong there. What a waste of their time! And think of the food they have to throw away. Don't you know that it's because of people like you that the prices rise all the time? Then people like me have to pay more. I suppose the next thing, you will be eating things off the shelves. Why not help yourself to biscuits or chocolate or something easy to eat? Now do me and everyone else a favour and put those things back where they belong. If ever I catch you again, I'll report you!”

You are horrified at all this. You didn't know what he was doing was so bad. You find yourself agreeing with the old lady. It could be very dangerous if people picked up the products. And you didn't know that supermarkets put their prices up because of that. Think of the money you might save if everyone took more care. Tell you flat-mate how you feel about this.

Show your work to the teacher.

Here is what you might say:

Hey, Josh, calm down. I know she was hard on you, but do you realise what you've been doing? I was about to tell you myself, but then I saw her. You know, she's not far off the truth. What you were doing was stupid. If everybody did that, the whole supermarket would be a mess. Nobody would be able to find anything. And if it puts the prices up too, that's terrible. It's almost as serious as shoplifting. Just think how much money we might save if they didn't have to do that. Even I find it annoying when I see biscuits with the bath-cleaner and frozen peas with the beers. It doesn't take that much time to put the stuff back where you found it. Anyway, it's good exercise! Come on, I'll help you. Then we have to pay for it all and get the cold stuff in the fridge.