

# Lesson Plan: The Professionalism Power-Up

**Subject:** Life Skills

**Topic:** Mastering Real-World Working Mannerisms

**Suggested Time:** 90 minutes

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## Materials Needed

- Notebook and pen/pencil
  - Computer or phone with internet access (for email and optional research)
  - A partner for role-playing (this can be the parent/teacher or a sibling)
  - Timer (a phone timer works perfectly)
  - Optional: A few funny clips from TV shows like "The Office" or "Parks and Recreation" that showcase terrible workplace etiquette (search for "what not to do at work clips").
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## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Draft a clear and professional email for common work-related scenarios.
  2. Demonstrate positive collaboration skills by working with a partner on a mini-project.
  3. Practice giving and receiving constructive feedback in a supportive role-playing environment.
  4. Identify the key differences between casual communication and professional communication.
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## Lesson Activities

### Part 1: The Warm-Up - Spot the Blunder! (15 minutes)

The goal here is to get thinking about what makes communication "professional" by looking at some fun, exaggerated examples of what *not* to do.

1. **Watch & Discuss:** If you have the clips, watch one or two examples of bad workplace behavior. If not, read these two scenarios aloud:
    - **Scenario A:** Alex texts their boss at 11 PM: "yo, cant come in tmrw. not feelin it."
    - **Scenario B:** During a team meeting, when asked for ideas, Riley sighs, rolls their eyes, and says, "I don't know, aren't you the one with all the ideas?"
  2. **Discussion Questions:**
    - What went wrong in that scenario?
    - How could the person have handled it better?
    - Why do these "mannerisms" matter, even in a summer job or a volunteer position? (Talk about respect, teamwork, and making a good impression).
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## Part 2: The Workshop - Time to Build Your Skills! (50 minutes)

This is where we get hands-on. We will tackle three core skills through fun, fast-paced challenges.

### Challenge #1: The Email Gauntlet (20 minutes)

Writing a good email is a superpower. Your mission is to write three professional emails based on the following prompts. Focus on being polite, clear, and concise. Remember to include a subject line, a proper greeting, and a closing!

*Set a timer for 5 minutes per email.*

1. **The "I'm Running Late" Email:** You have a shift at a local cafe that starts at 9:00 AM. Your bus is running 15 minutes behind schedule. Write an email to your manager, Sarah, to let her know.
2. **The "I Need Help" Email:** Your supervisor, Mr. Chen, assigned you a task to organize a digital folder of photos, but the instructions are confusing. Write an email asking for clarification. Be specific about what you need help with.
3. **The "Thank You" Email:** You just had a brief meeting with a potential mentor, Ms. Davis, who gave you some great advice about your interest in graphic design. Write a short email thanking her for her time.

**Review:** After writing, review the emails together. What was strong? What could be improved? Look for tone, clarity, and professionalism.

### Challenge #2: The Collaboration Quest (15 minutes)

Working well with others is crucial. For this task, you and your partner will plan a hypothetical event. Your goal isn't to create a perfect plan, but to practice teamwork.

1. **Choose a Quest:** Pick one of these events to plan in 10 minutes:
  - A surprise birthday party for a friend/family member.
  - A neighborhood bake sale for a local animal shelter.
  - A weekend camping trip.
2. **Plan Together:** Using a single sheet of paper, brainstorm and create a simple action plan. You'll need to decide on:
  - The goal of the event.
  - Three main tasks that need to be done.
  - Who is responsible for each task (divide the work!).
3. **Debrief (5 minutes):** After the timer goes off, talk about the process. Was it easy to share ideas? Did you listen to each other? How did you decide who did what? This is the most important part of the activity!

### Challenge #3: The Feedback Loop (15 minutes)

Giving and getting feedback can be tough. Let's practice making it positive and helpful. You and your partner will role-play a simple scenario.

1. **The Scenario:** The "Employee" has just designed a poster for the event you planned in the last challenge. The "Manager" needs to give them feedback. The poster is okay, but the main title is hard to read and it's missing the event time.
2. **Round 1 (5 minutes):** One person is the Manager, the other is the Employee. The Manager gives feedback. Try using the "Sandwich Method":
  - **Top Bread (Positive):** Start with something you genuinely like. (*"Great job on the color*

*scheme, it's really eye-catching.")*

- **The Filling (Constructive):** Give the suggestion for improvement. (*"I'm finding the title a bit hard to read. Could we try a bolder font? Also, let's make sure we add the event time."*)
- **Bottom Bread (Positive):** End with encouragement. (*"Overall, this is a fantastic start and we're almost there!"*)

The Employee's job is to listen, ask clarifying questions, and say "thank you," even if the feedback is hard to hear.

3. **Switch Roles & Round 2 (5 minutes):** Now switch! The new Manager gives feedback on the same poster. See if you can phrase it differently but still be constructive.
4. **Talk About It (5 minutes):** How did it feel to give feedback? How did it feel to receive it? Was the "sandwich method" helpful?

### Part 3: The Wrap-Up & Final Mission (25 minutes)

#### Reflection (5 minutes)

Let's quickly recap what we practiced. Discuss:

- Which of the three skills (emailing, collaborating, feedback) felt the most challenging? Why?
- How can you use these skills right now in your life (e.g., with family, friends, online communities, or volunteer work)?

#### Final Mission: The Intern Challenge (20 minutes)

This is your final task to put everything together. Read the scenario and complete the two tasks.

**Scenario:** You are a new volunteer at the City Parks Department. Your supervisor, David, wants to start a "Community Garden Clean-Up Day." He has asked you to help get the project started.

1. **Task 1 - The Proposal Email:** Write an email to David. In the email, you must:
  - Confirm you are excited to help with the project.
  - Propose two possible dates for the event.
  - Ask him if there is a budget for supplies like gloves and snacks for volunteers.
2. **Task 2 - The Collaboration Plan:** In your notebook, create a list of 3 simple tasks another volunteer could help you with. For each task, write one clear sentence explaining how to do it. (Example: *"Task: Create a social media post. Please design a simple graphic with the event date, time, and location to post on the department's Facebook page."*) This shows you can think collaboratively and delegate clearly.

### Assessment & Feedback

We will review the "Final Mission" tasks together using this simple checklist. The goal is completion and application of the skills, not perfection!

- **Email Assessment:**
  - [ ] Clear and professional subject line.
  - [ ] Polite and respectful tone.
  - [ ] All parts of the prompt are addressed (confirming help, proposing dates, asking about budget).
  - [ ] Proper greeting and closing.
- **Collaboration Plan Assessment:**

- [ ] Three distinct and relevant tasks are listed.
- [ ] Instructions for each task are clear and easy to understand.

### **Extension Activities (Optional, For Fun!)**

- **The "Pro" Profile:** Research a career you are interested in. What are some key mannerisms or "soft skills" that would be important for that job? (e.g., A video game designer needs great teamwork; a veterinarian needs compassionate communication).
- **Create a "How-To" Guide:** Design a one-page infographic or short video explaining one of the skills we learned today (e.g., "How to Write the Perfect Professional Email").