Teamwork Activity

Setup:
- Arrange the students’ desks into groups of FOUR. Place one desk/table in front of the room.
- On the front desk/table, place the glued Lego object under the table tent so the students cannot see the Lego model. Keep the Lego pieces in the bin until it is time for the first round.
- Hang the Soft Skills and Technical Skills poster at the front of the room. Magnets provided.

Goal: Students will be able to identify soft skills that support high-growth, high-demand needs in the workplace and analyze their own skills to see how they fit in the workplace.

Introduce yourself and briefly share your career/education background.

Opening Remarks: (3-5 minutes)
- Say, “Did you know that the average person changes jobs ten to fifteen times (with an average of 12 job changes) during his or her career? Many workers spend five years or less in every job.”
- Today, we are going to look at some skills that people need for high growth, high-demand careers. These skills are transferable from job to job, career to career.

Soft Skills versus Technical Skills BRIEF Overview: (5 minutes)

There are two types of skills needed for every job.

- **Soft Skills:** show definition card. Ask for examples of soft skills. (Communication, manners, body language, flexibility).
  - Natural abilities that help us interact well with others. They are useful across all industries and job types, and are often referred to as interpersonal skills.

- **Technical Skills:** show definition card. Ask for examples of technical skills (using a computer, mathematics, evaluating data).
  - These are skills that are learned on the job or through education and training.
  - Ask, what skills are learning in school that could be a technical skill? (math, coding, computer software that is used, music, art)

In today’s job market, the deciding factor for employers often comes down to a battle between the technical or hard skills vs. soft skills of different candidates. A survey presented by SMB World found that nearly 72% of CEOs believe that soft skills are more important to the success of their business than hard skills.
Career experts list five soft skills that are necessary in all jobs.

Review the Soft skills poster. All types of jobs and careers use all five of the soft skills listed on the poster.

- **Communication** is important to all jobs. Communication is written or spoken exchanges between people to share information. Explain that the ability to read, write, and speak well are valuable skills.
- **Problem solving** is the process of finding solutions to difficult or complex issues.
- **Creativity** is thinking of other ways to do things. Looking at a problem from a different perspective.
- **Flexibility** is the willingness to change or compromise. People are now required to adapt quickly to new demands and new situations.
- **Teamwork** is the willingness of a group of people to work together to achieve a common goal.

Review the Technical Skills poster. Show the differences between the two. Soft skills refer greatly to a person’s “people” skills, whereas the technical are more “skill” or technical related.

Each group will use all five of these skills and most importantly **teamwork** to work through the first activity.

**Activity 1 – Teamwork is Not an Illusion: (5 minutes)**

In this activity, students will determine what soft skills are in high demand and can be transferable from career to career.

Show the old woman/young woman optical illusion (black & white card). Ask: what do you see? If the students are having difficulties seeing both the old woman and young woman, show them the colored pictures (old woman/young woman) and outline the figures with your finger to help them see both. Hang them in the front of the room with the provided magnets.

**Steps:**
- Tell the students they will be working in teams to solve optical illusion puzzles through the use of soft skills.
- Pass out the “Teamwork is Not an Illusion” picture sheets to each group, putting them on the desk **FACE DOWN**.
- Tell the students that once you say “GO”, they are to turn over the sheet, read the instructions and complete the activity. The first team to raise all hands with the correct answer, is the winner.
- Review the answers to the three optical illusions by asking “What did you see?”
  - 1. Saxophone player/Female’s head
  - 2. Man with beard/Dog with bone
  - 3. Native American’s head/Rear view of an Eskimo

**Talking Point:**
- Which of the five soft skills did you use when working as a team to solve the puzzles? (All of them.)

**Collect the “Teamwork is Not an Illusion” picture sheets.**
Activity 2 – Communication is Key: (10 minutes)
In this activity, students will demonstrate the need for clear and concise communication.

Ask: Which one of the soft skills is the most critical in all jobs? Communication. We will be practicing communicating in our next activity.

Steps:

- Ask one member from each team to come forward. Ask the student to get the correct number and color of Legos used for the first round. (Take one Lego from each container for a total of 6 Legos). This will correspond to the model you have hidden behind the table tent.
- Tip the table tent away from you, so the model is still hidden from the other students. Give the group of students in front of you 20 SECONDS to look at the model. Do not let any other students see it.
- Send this person back to his/her team with the necessary number/color of Legos. Tell them they have TWO MINUTES to instruct the rest of the team on how to build the model. The team member who is instructing the others may only use verbal language and may not touch the Lego materials.
- After TWO MINUTES, ask each team to send up another team member to view the model for 10 SECONDS.
- Return and continue the rotation until a team feels they have perfectly replicated the model or after 5 MINUTES, whichever comes first.
- The team will hold up the Lego model when they feel they have completed the task. Stop all other teams from working. Ask one member of the team to bring the Lego model up front and the volunteer checks to see if it is correct. If so, they have won. If not, they go back and all teams continue.

Talking points:

- What was important to your team’s success? Alternatively, why weren’t you successful in replicating the model?
  - Communication
    - Speaking clearly
    - Listening, not just hearing. What is the difference?
      - Hearing is simply the act of perceiving sound by the ear. If you are not hearing-impaired, hearing simply happens. Listening, however, is something you consciously choose to do. Listening requires concentration so that your brain processes meaning from words and sentences.

- What other skills were needed?
  - Persistence
  - Understanding
  - Teamwork
  - Composure
  - Keen observation
• If time allows, ask the teams to try the activity again using the second set of Legos. You will need to ask a JA staff person for the second Lego Model set as it is kept in the 6th Grade Spare Materials bin.

• Ask each team to put their Lego pieces back into the correct containers for use with the next group.

Summary and Review: (5 minutes)
• Review the concept and key terms introduced during the activities.
• Remind students that while technical skills are needed, soft skills are very important in all jobs and are transferable from career to career.

End of Day Clean-Up Checklist – Place the following back in the bin:

  o Place the Legos pieces in their containers and place them in the bin.
  o Place the Lego model back in the bin (inside the pencil box)
  o Old Woman/Young Woman Illusion Card Picture sheets
  o Teamwork is Not an Illusion Picture Sheets (7)
  o Definition Cards (2)
  o STEM Soft Skills Poster (1)
  o Technical/Hard Skills Poster (1)
  o Table tents (3)
  o Tape and/or magnetic clamps (5)
  o Green volunteer folder and Activity Plan (1)
  o Meet up with JA staff at designated location to return the bin.

Smile. You made a difference today!