



Production Problems

This activity was created to be used primarily with:

8. Respect for Diversity

Secondary skills include:

2. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

6. Conflict Resolution

10. Teamwork

11. Big-Picture Thinking

13. Continuous Learning and Adaptability

14. Efficiency and Productivity

- Teacher will present various strategies students could use to resolve and solve a local problem.

Example: Management at the local factory is having worker productivity and recruitment problems. The older workers are aging out, and the newest, youngest workers are not getting the support from senior workers they need. What is the real problem here, and how can management take steps to fix it?

Problem: Communication and potentially an age diversity issue, otherwise known as the age gap. Senior workers are reluctant to appropriately educate or help newer/younger workers. This is not only a long-term labor supply issue for the company, it is a short-term production problem. Conflict among workers hurts production. Also, is this a training issue?

Note: Have students really think out these problems and ensure they are not thinking about them unrealistically. The company has needs too, a requirement to stay competitive, and perhaps not an abundant of resources to dedicate to training.

Solutions:

1. Gather representative groups together to discuss issues and conflicts. Brainstorming.
2. Have these groups work together to form internal standards or changes to their job descriptions to include the creation of a training program that is led by senior workers. Younger workers will help provide the topics.
3. Force younger and older workers to work together. Offer teams production incentives, competition. Shuffle around unproductive teams.
4. Have teammates evaluate each other based on productivity goals, communication, and improvements.

- **Assignment:** Please create a management/worker type problem based on your specific area of expertise, even teaching. Also, the teacher could work with stories in the news or industry partners (or other CTE instructors) to present real-world problems to students. (Students work in



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teams to choose the problem, setup a plan to solve, work with industry people for the problem, find resources, and create a solution or a part of a solution to the problem.)

Note: There are many ways in which the pandemic has changed the nature of work, but one strange thing was noted: individual worker productivity increased. This cannot account for all industries and the workforce in many industries shrank.

Additional resources:

10 Common Manufacturing Challenges Businesses Need to Face:

<https://katanamrp.com/blog/manufacturing-challenges/>

6 Productivity Issues In the Workplace You Can Fix With Technology:

<https://www.iofficecorp.com/blog/productivity-problems-fix-these-6-workplace-issues>