# Discussion Topics

# Introduction

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## Introducing Yourself

So now that you’ve done your homework on how to build your course and it’s time for the first session, here are some discussion topics to start off on the right foot.

### Discussion: Introducing the Facilitator—You!

A simple introduction of yourself is an excellent beginning. Using relevant events from your own experiences will make it more interesting. Include the following in your introduction:

* Your name
* Relevant facts about your professional or personal life
* A brief description of your first paying job
* Your educational background
* A brief description of your work history
* Your current position

Sharing this information will make you seem more human and establishes communication. Because much of the coursework depends on group participation, it is important that you set the example for this communication.

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### Discussion: Introducing the Course

A brief description of your purpose and procedures for the course will give students an idea of what to expect. Explain the rules you will enforce and be specific. If the class begins at 8 a.m., say so. If a break is scheduled, tell the class when and for how long. (If a session is more than one hour, a break helps keep students’ interest.)

Be very clear in letting students know exactly what is expected of them and how they will be made accountable for these responsibilities. (Presenting such rules humorously can create a less-threatening atmosphere.)

Briefly go over the class agenda. If you expect any special projects to be completed by a particular date, emphasize that. In such a case, establishing dates for various phases of completion is a good approach. Thus, the student is encouraged to work on the project throughout the course.

Using word association, ask the class what comes to mind when they hear the word *savvy.* Write their ideas on a whiteboard. As a group, summarize the definition of *savvy.* Now add the term *job savvy.* Ask the group to list specific skills that contribute to being job savvy in today’s workplace. Conclude by pointing out that this course will help each student gain these skills.

### Discussion: Introducing the Group

Divide your students into groups of four to five people. Ask each individual to introduce themselves to their group, giving the following information:

* Name
* Relevant personal information
* Brief description of their first paying job
* Brief description of their *dream job*
* Brief description of their most recent job
* What they expect to gain from this course

Allow two to three minutes per person. Encourage the groups to ask questions. Bring the class back together. Have each student introduce another student in their group and tell one thing that was most interesting about the other person. Exercises such as this allow groups to get to know each other in a way that will encourage more class participation. The time spent getting to know one another will help students feel more comfortable sharing ideas later. **Note:** If you list the information each person should share in the group on a whiteboard, the group can refer to it during this activity.

### Discussion: Mosquitoes

In the *Job Savvy* preface, read together the parable on page vi. Encourage the class to make a list of the possible “mosquitoes” that might cause an employee to lose their job. Record these ideas on a whiteboard. Encourage the group to make the list as detailed and long as possible. Ridiculous answers count!

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### Discussion: Keeping a Journal

There are several journal activities presented in the margins of the workbook. Additional guidance for completing this activity is provided as a downloadable PDF called “Activities.” These assignments allow students to express themselves and could be developed into an ongoing course activity.

Ask each individual to keep a “job savvy” journal. The requirement is to write a paragraph or two each day, never more than a page. Define and review the expectations for journaling going forward (for example, you may want to have the students write all journal entries in the same notebook and you may want them to date and title each entry).

Discuss the value in keeping a log or journal in the work world. Many jobs require that you keep track of your daily tasks, major decisions made on the job, the details of conversations had with co-workers and/or supervisors, and so on.

For the first journal activity, students may write about their first paying jobs. The following questions may prompt their answers:

* What type of work did you do? (You may want students to discuss this first entry in the classroom.)
* How did you get the job?
* Who hired you?
* Did you have a supervisor or boss? What do you remember about this person?
* How much pay did you receive?
* How long did you keep the job?
* What factors contributed to your getting (or losing) the job?

## Ready, Set, Go!

Conclude the session by explaining any scheduled outside class assignments. Remember to make these assignments meaningful. If your students are using the ebook, you may want to show them where to find Student Files in the ebook table of contents, and explain to them how you would like them to complete activities (download and print, fill in electronically and then print/email to you, etc.).