



C1 - Relationships at work

Speaking and reading



EXERCISE 1 VOTE! EXPLAIN WHY YOU VOTED YES OR NO.

Do you think that having a relationship at work is a good idea?

EXERCISE 2 PUT THE MISSING PERCENTAGES IN THE GAPS BELOW.

40%, 43%, 60%

Workplace **romance** statistics show that over ___ of adults have had a workplace romance. Between little time outside of work to meet people and a **heightened** degree of **comfortability**, workplace romances aren't likely to go anywhere. Though our survey found that ___ led to marriage, workplace romances are not a dream for everyone. When ___ of workplace romances involve cheating on an existing partner, increasing workplace gossip, and the **perception** of promoting **favouritism**, it can quickly become a **nightmare** for HR.

EXERCISE 3 MATCH THE WORDS IN **BOLD** TO THE DEFINITIONS.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. _____ (adjective): increased or intensified in terms of intensity. | d. _____ (noun): the way in which something is understood or interpreted. |
| b. _____ (noun): a very unpleasant experience or prospect. | e. _____ (noun): the state or quality of being comfortable. |
| c. _____ (noun): a feeling of excitement and mystery associated with love. | f. _____ (noun): the practice of giving unfair preferential treatment to one person or group at the expense of others. |

EXERCISE 4 IN PAIRS, DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

1. How can favouritism toward a romantic partner in the office impact team morale and productivity?
2. Have you ever experienced or witnessed a situation in which an office romance turned into a nightmare scenario?
3. What are some common perceptions among coworkers regarding office romances?
4. Why are people engaging in an office romance?

EXERCISE 5 READ THE TEXT BELOW AND FIND THE REASONS *WHY* PEOPLE ARE FINDING LOVE AT WORK.



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Why are people finding love at work?

65% of respondents indicated that _____ was a driving force behind workplace romances. The second leading driving factor is a lack of time outside of work to meet people, with 61% of _____ citing this as a key reason for dating someone at work.

On top of that, while having a shared workplace experience was a leading driving force behind workplace romances (59%), the least popular reason was to make the workday more _____, at 38%. So while people desire the shared experience, and perhaps the benefits of fully understanding one's professional life, the goal isn't necessarily to enhance their _____ at work—but to be understood.

COMFORT

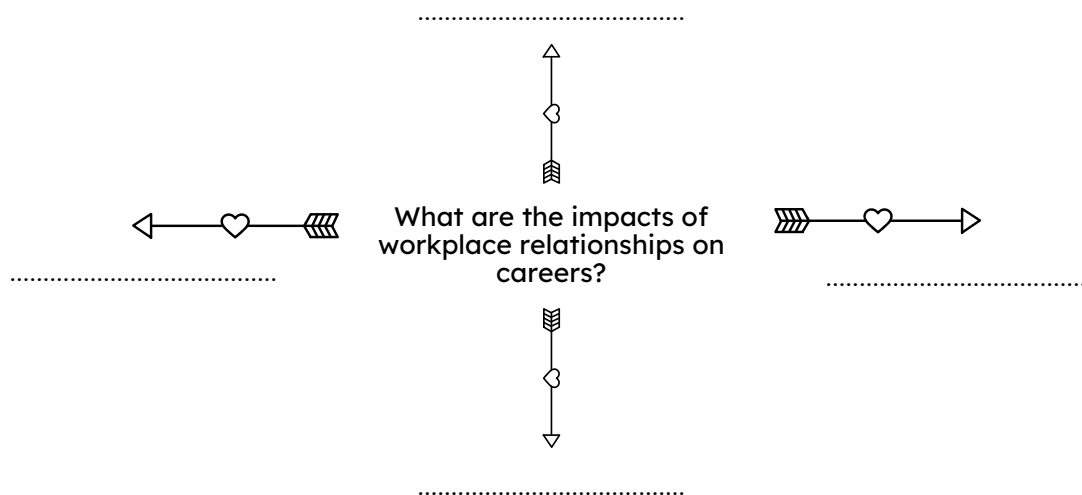
RESPOND

ENJOY

HAPPY

FILL IN THE GAPS WITH THE CORRECT FORM OF THE WORDS NEXT TO THE TEXT.

EXERCISE 6 IN SMALL GROUPS, THINK OF FOUR IMPACTS OF WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS ON CAREERS.



WHICH OF THE IMPACTS MENTIONED ABOVE IS THE MOST DETRIMENTAL?

EXERCISE 7 READ THE HEADINGS BELOW AND COMPARE THEM WITH YOUR ANSWERS MENTIONED IN EXERCISE 6.

- Dating colleagues affects work-life balance
- Workplace romances increase the fear of breaking up by 17%
- 52% of people reported that their co-workers treated them differently
- Over 50% say that a workplace romance impacted their sense of individuality



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EXERCISE 8 MATCH THE HEADINGS (1-4) TO THE PARAGRAPHS (A-D).

A.

While a breakup is a common fear, those dating someone from work experience an increased fear of breaking up by 17%. In-office romance can lead to a heightened sense of anxiety surrounding the outcome of their relationship—likely because of the repercussions that could impact their professional life.

C.

Though it may not be a thought someone has going into a workplace romance, blending personal and work life seems to impact employees' work-life balance. In fact, of the respondents who report having had a workplace romance, 54% said that their relationship affected their work-life balance. For example, 26% reported that workplace relationships affected their ability to schedule vacations.

B.

Over half of respondents reported that it impacted their sense of professionalism. Over 50% reported that having a workplace romance impacted their sense of individuality, meaning that the relationship dynamic is impacted by the fact that both parties are employed by the same company and thus have more similarities than those who work for different employers.

D.

In addition to a workplace relationship impacting work-life balance, it also impacts social dynamics in the workplace. Not only did over 50% of respondents say that their relationship impacted how their co-workers treated them, but 33% said it increased jealousy and nearly 50% said it increased workplace gossip.

DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH ANY OF THE IDEAS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT? WHICH ONES?

EXERCISE 9 GUESS THE PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO REPORT THEIR RELATIONSHIPS TO HR. ARE YOU SURPRISED BY THIS NUMBER? IN PAIRS, ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

___ % report their relationships to HR.

1. Should we report office relationships to HR?
2. Would you report your office relationship to HR? Why (not)?
3. Are there any advantages of dating a colleague?
4. May dating a colleague affect other co-workers? How?

Teacher's notes

Exercise 1. Lead-in

5 mins

To get students involved in a discussion, you can display a question on the board and ask them to show their agreement or disagreement through either a show of hands or an online poll. If the votes are split, you can pair up one student who is in favour of the question with one who is against it and let them debate the topic. However, if the students' opinions are similar, you can engage them in a group discussion where they can list the advantages and disadvantages of having an office relationship.

Exercise 2. Reading for gist 1

5 mins

Students read the introduction paragraph about office relationships individually and fill in the gaps with the missing percentages. After that, put them into pairs and ask them to compare their answers. Once the pairs have completed this task, provide the correct answers. Ask the students if they are surprised by these results.

Answers: 60%, 43%, 40% (respectively).

Exercise 3. Teach - vocabulary

4 mins

Match the definitions to the bolded words in the introductory paragraph. If needed, explain any new words.

Answers: a. heightened, b. nightmare, c. romance, d. perception, e. comfortability, f. favouritism

Exercise 4. Pair speaking 1

6 mins

Students work in pairs to answer questions using the vocabulary from the introductory paragraph. Monitor activity and provide speaking feedback as necessary.

Exercise 5. Reading for gist 2

7 mins

In the previous exercise, the final question was related to the reasons behind people finding love at work. Students read the second paragraph and create a list of reasons mentioned in the text. Compare the reasons mentioned in the text with the ones mentioned in the previous discussion.

Answers:

1. *Comfortability*
2. *Lack of time outside of work to meet people*
3. *Shared workplace experience*
4. *Making a workday more enjoyable*

Follow up this activity by going over the gaps and eliciting the types of missing words, for example, nouns, adjectives, etc. Then give students a few minutes to fill in the gaps with the right form of the words next to the gaps.

Answers:

1. *noun - comfortability*
2. *plural noun - respondents*
3. *adjective - enjoyable*
4. *noun - happiness*

Exercise 6. Pair speaking 2

6 mins

Divide the students into pairs. Instruct them to come up with four possible impacts of workplace relationships on careers. Once they have completed this task, collect their ideas and write them on the whiteboard. Next, identify the four most commonly repeated answers and ask students to discuss which one of these impacts is the most detrimental to careers. Monitor the activity and provide speaking feedback.

Teacher's notes

Exercise 7 + 8. Reading for gist 3

5 mins

Please take a moment to review the following instructions: First, examine the list of headings that describe the effects of romantic relationships in the workplace. Compare these headings with your own ideas. Next, allow students to read four separate paragraphs (A-D) which correspond to the headings. Ask students to match the headings with the appropriate paragraphs. After reading, discuss whether or not students agree or disagree with any of the points mentioned in the article. If necessary, explain any unfamiliar vocabulary words.

Answers: 1C, 2A, 3D, 4B

Exercise 9. Pair speaking 3

9 mins

As a group, you can try to predict the percentage of people who report their relationships to HR by asking students to write the percentage and giving them clues by saying higher or lower. After that, divide the students into pairs and ask them to discuss questions 1-4. Finally, students will report on their discussions at the end of the activity.

Answer: 62%

Error correction

3 mins

Provide speaking feedback.