

Working in the Human Resources Department

Jahrgangsstufen	12 (Internationale Wirtschaft), 12/13 (andere Ausbildungsrichtungen)
Fach/Fächer	International Business Studies
Übergreifende Bildungs- und Erziehungsziele	Berufliche Orientierung, soziales Lernen, interkulturelle Bildung, Medienbildung/digitale Bildung
Zeitrahmen	20 x 45 Minuten
Benötigtes Material	Arbeitsblätter mit zugehörigen Unterlagen, Computer mit Internetzugang

Kompetenzerwartungen

Die Schülerinnen und Schüler ...

- orientieren sich an den speziellen Bedürfnissen eines international operierenden Unternehmens, um im Team konkrete Maßnahmen zur Aus-, Weiter- und Fortbildung von Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern zu entwickeln. (IBS, LB2)
- entwerfen unter Berücksichtigung der kulturellen Prägung der Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter ein adäquates Konzept, um die Mitarbeitermotivation zu verbessern. (IBS, LB2)
- diskutieren unterschiedliche Ansätze der Mitarbeiterführung und treffen eine begründete, situationsangemessene Entscheidung für einen bestimmten Führungsstil. Dabei berücksichtigen sie sowohl die spezifische Unternehmenskultur und den kulturellen Hintergrund der Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter als auch die Auswirkungen des Führungsverhaltens auf das Arbeitsklima und die Produktivität im Unternehmen. (IBS, LB2)
- bewältigen konkrete Konfliktsituationen (z. B. Einhalten von Terminen), die sich in der täglichen Zusammenarbeit und durch kulturelle Vielfalt ergeben. Dabei begegnen sie Gesprächspartnern im interkulturellen Kontext vorurteilsfrei und reflektieren unterschiedliche Wertvorstellungen. (IBS, LB2)



Situation:

At the *International Job and Internship Fair* in Munich, you got in contact with *Brain & Comp Inc.* It is an American company with an office in London, where you would like to get a chance for international work experience. *Brain & Comp Inc.* is a consultancy that supports multinational businesses with strategic advice on specific topics. Most of the current customers are producers of food and drinks that operate in different European countries.

After your graduation, you have successfully applied for a student internship at *Brain & Comp Inc.* You start your internship in the Human Resources department together with other international students. Apart from recruiting new staff and processing payroll, the HR department is mainly responsible for managing employee relations as well as for training and developing staff.

As there have been more and more customer complaints seemingly related to the weak performance of the company's employees, Frank Wood, the head of department, asks you and your fellow interns to figure out possible reasons for the staff's poor quality of work. He says that in order to remain competitive it is necessary to tackle these problems soon – otherwise, the company will start losing customers. He concludes that it should be “our ultimate objective to satisfy our customers by creating the best possible and most effective employee potential.”

Mr Wood wishes you to summarize your findings in an interesting PowerPoint presentation also including suggestions of how to improve the current situation by maximizing the company's employee potential. You are supposed to regularly exchange your results with your fellow interns and report them to your direct superior, Clarissa Underwood. Mr Wood adds: “During your everyday work in the HR department you will receive your tasks from Mrs Underwood. In case you come across relevant information which might explain our current problems or even help to solve them, I would like you to add it to your overall presentation!”

Outcome:

PPT presentation analyzing possible reasons for the staff's poor quality of work and suggesting improvements of the current situation by maximizing the company's employee potential



TASK I

- a) To get an insight into the current situation, you are given one of many customer complaints as an example. Together with another intern, you are supposed to **figure out possible reasons for the latest problems** by analyzing the customer complaint in detail.

Foodesco Intl. Ltd.

Orchard Road, 46 Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Ireland

Customer Service Manager
Brain & Comp Inc.
11 Greencastle Drive
London SW2 1RJ
England

8 January 2018

Complaint

Dear Mr Brown

I am sorry to have to inform you about the poor service we have lately received from your company. As the matter of fact, my colleagues and I are actually very upset with your staff's poor performance. We have been with you for many years and have never encountered such treatment before.

Between September and December 2017, we had several appointments with representatives of your company where they arrived up to two hours late without apologizing. On 13 October 2017, your field manager, Mr Peter, did not even show up at all, allegedly because of a plane cancellation. Unfortunately, I had asked my boss before to come by who wasted his morning waiting for Mr Peter to appear.

One time in November, one of your representatives named Ms Gallus entered our company with dirty shoes and left a trail of dirt in the hallway. Then she started to present all kinds of services that I had expressly told her before we were not interested in. I repeatedly asked her about the products that were of interest to us, but she did not pay attention. After 30 minutes, our meeting was over without having accomplished anything.

Last week, I tried to reach you personally in your office by phone to discuss this matter, but the line was continuously busy. Then, I tried to call your help desk several times and always got the answering machine during regular office hours. Therefore, I decided to write you an email and to my astonishment received an out-of-office message.

As if that was not enough, Mr Peter just called me to make me aware of your ten percent price increase on all your consultancy services. When I asked him what for, he became very impatient and unfriendly. Then he told me that he had enough for today and he would leave work early. What is wrong with you people?

We expect quality services from you and request you to address this issue with immediate attention. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss matters further in order to learn how you propose to prevent a similar situation from reoccurring.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Smith

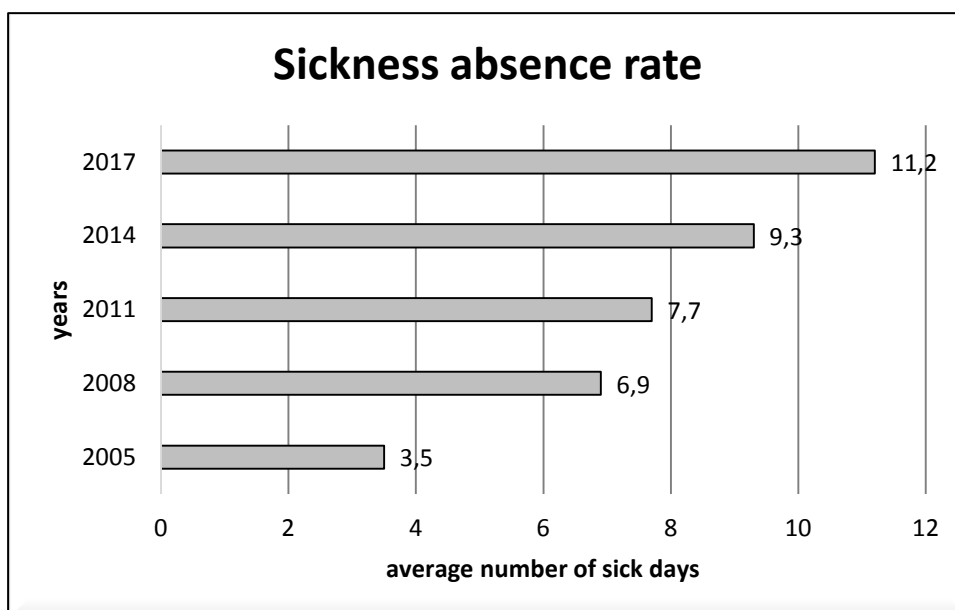
Malcolm Smith, Managing Director

- b) According to your findings, many of *Brain & Comp's* customer service problems seem to be related to dissatisfied employees. Your direct superior, Clarissa Underwood, asks you to **look deeper into the matter**. Therefore, together with a colleague you...
- assess the company's employee satisfaction with the help of the available data,
 - try to come up with possible measures helping to improve the current situation
 - and think about benefits of having a well-motivated workforce regarding the realization of the employees' full potential. You may search the web for further information.
- c) As a part of your presentation about reasons for the staff's poor quality of work, **summarize your findings** on some first PowerPoint slides. Present your results to Clarissa, your boss.

Available data:



Source: Brain & Comp Inc., Human Resources department (own illustration).



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Employee attitude survey		Evaluation in grades from A to E				
		A	B	C	D	E
1	Satisfaction concerning working conditions				X	
2	Assessment of career opportunities within the company					X
3	Quality of collaboration in teams			X		
4	Trust among company's employees				X	
5	Company management's ability to cope with problems				X	
6	Employees' involvement in decision making					X
7	Support by superiors regarding individual training needs			X		
8	Appreciation of employees' work progress by bosses				X	
9	Quality of feedback by company's management				X	
10	Confidence of superiors in their subordinates					X
11	Understanding for difficult private situations of staff			X		
12	Employees' satisfaction with payment		X			

Source: Brain & Comp Inc., Human Resources department (own illustration).

Situation update:

Your analysis of the current situation has shown that *Brain & Comp's* employees are especially dissatisfied with the quality of leadership by the company's management. Furthermore, numerous customer complaints have highlighted the personnel's weaknesses in dealing with clients. As a first step to re-establish employee satisfaction and to eventually improve customer service, the HR department is supposed to **prepare an inspiring workshop** supporting the company's managers to become effective leaders. Additionally, at the express wish of Mr Brown, the Customer Service Manager, there should be a special focus on the employees' customer service skills. To get the ball rolling, your boss, Clarissa, has asked you to **create a PowerPoint presentation introducing a detailed concept for the upcoming event**. Your presentation should focus on the following aspects:

- leadership styles including a recommendation of the best choice for *Brain & Comp Inc.*
- training methods for the workshop to improve management and customer service skills

TASK II

- a) In a first step, you and your fellow interns ought to get an overview of different leadership styles. To work more effectively you share the workload by focusing on one leadership style each. Become an expert by searching the web for relevant information on...
- autocratic leadership
 - democratic leadership
 - laissez-faire leadership
- b) Share your information with your team members and develop a questionnaire enabling the company's managers to find out which kind of leadership they currently prefer.
- c) Discuss which leadership style fits best for *Brain & Comp Inc.* taking into consideration the pros and cons of each leadership style.
- d) Summarize your results in a PowerPoint presentation for the upcoming workshop. Give a reasoned recommendation to the management how to improve the situation!

TASK III

In a next step, you do some research on different types of training methods, which might help the managers to develop a leadership style meeting the company's needs. **Faster interns** also consider special training methods to improve the employees' customer service abilities.

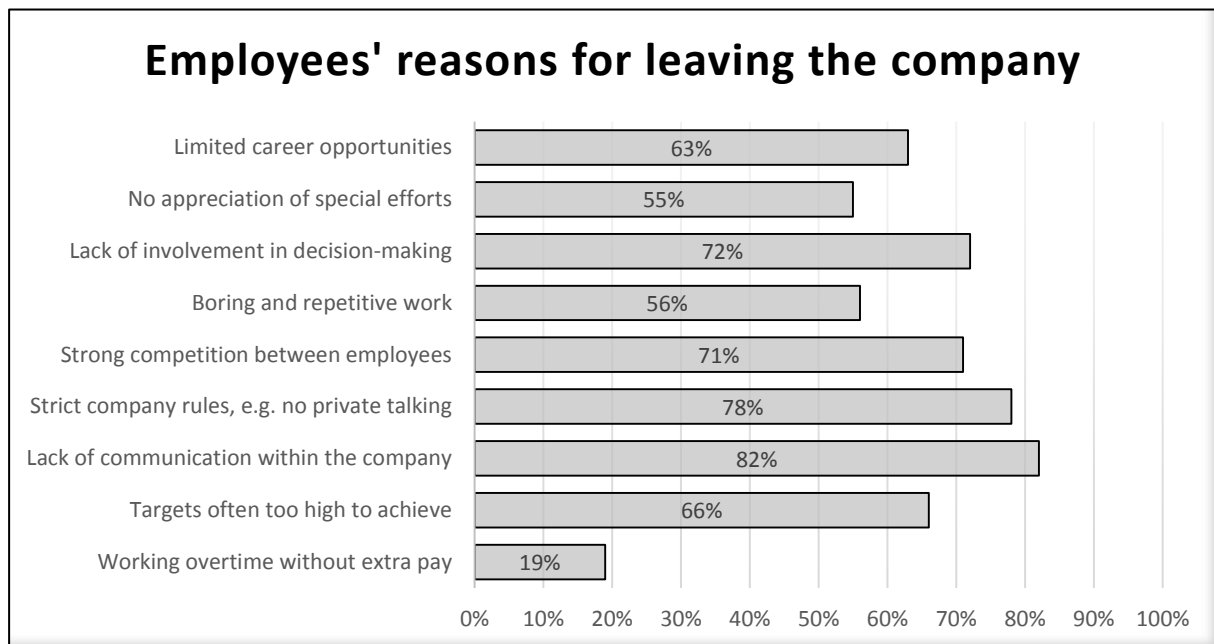
- a) First of all, gather some information about the advantages and disadvantages of the following training methods:
- Off-the-job
 - Near-the-job
 - On-the-job

Keep a record of your findings by taking key notes on a fact sheet.

- b) Now, decide which training method fits best to improve the leadership skills of the company's managers. **Faster interns** additionally choose a suitable training method for effectively improving the staff's customer service abilities.
- c) Finally, come up with an action plan on personnel development. Include your ideas to your presentation for the upcoming workshop by creating some additional PowerPoint slides. Present your ideas to your fellow interns and to Clarissa (results of tasks 2 and 3).
- d) Together with Clarissa and your fellow interns, discuss about the outcomes of your different presentations. Then, decide which information might be of special interest to the HR manager, Mr Wood, and include the respective slides to your overall presentation.

TASK IV

In the course of your research on how to improve the company's employee potential, you have discovered that a one-dimensional approach, only focusing on personnel development or leadership culture respectively, is insufficient. Thus, you have decided to **analyze factors leading to the employees' dissatisfaction**. According to the employee attitude survey (see available data at the beginning), the only thing the employees are currently satisfied with is their payment. However, this does not seem enough to prevent staff from being generally dissatisfied and eventually leaving *Brain & Comp Inc.*, which the company's statistics show. Apart from the attitude survey, employees who left the company gave the following reasons:



Source: Brain & Comp Inc., Human Resources department (own illustration).

- a) In order to reestablish motivation of the company's employees, get an insight into the problems regarding employee motivation at *Brain & Comp Inc.* (see information above and available data at the beginning). Discuss your findings with another intern.
- b) Search the web for information on Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's theory of human needs. Then, analyze the current employee situation in more detail with the help of one of these theories and **list the resulting motivational problems**.
- c) Develop profound ideas based on one of the above-mentioned motivational theories of how to **tackle the motivational problems on your list**. Take into consideration appropriate financial as well as non-financial methods of motivation. Search the web for further information.
- d) Summarize your results in a **catchy graphic**. The graphic is supposed to **illustrate motivational problems** at *Brain & Comp Inc.* according to Maslow or Herzberg and **ways to solve them** with the help of the right methods (see c)). Add your graphic to your overall PowerPoint presentation. Conclude, in what way a motivated workforce helps to maximize the company's employee potential.

Situation update:

According to your latest findings, another major problem seems to be a lack of communication within the company. That is why you decided to mention it, when the HR manager asked you about your work progress in the last department meeting. Mr Wood, who showed a lot of interest to your results, figured that a more effective communication between the employees should definitely be a part of the company's improvement measures. Therefore, he ordered you to **create a manual** to inform every employee **how business communication** within *Brain & Comp Inc.* **can be improved**. He wants you to attach it to your overall presentation.

TASK V

- a) In a first step, discuss with your fellow interns why effective business communication is so important for *Brain & Comp Inc.*'s success. List your best arguments on a PowerPoint slide, which is supposed to motivate your colleagues to study the communication manual.
- b) Then, summarize relevant key points dealing with effective business communication by making a mind map. Search the web for further information.

Consider the following aspects:

- How does effective communication between people take place (e.g. according to Schulz von Thun or Paul Watzlawick)?
 - Which barriers to effective communication are possible?
 - How might communication barriers influence the company's success?
 - What can be done to avoid such communication barriers?
- c) With the help of your mind map, create an illustrative manual informing the company's employees about how to improve communication within *Brain & Comp Inc.* and attach it to your overall presentation.

FOR FASTER INTERNS

Apart from the theory, Mrs Underwood asks **faster interns** to develop a **pragmatic counselling approach**, which can be introduced and used in different parts of the company to facilitate communication. She wants you to consider the following situations:

1. Ms White is the head of the Sales department. She is responsible for 35 employees – 15 work in the UK and 20 in other European countries. Ms White has a hard time communicating with her staff because she is always very busy. Apart from that, her personnel is widespread all over the country and Europe. That is why there is hardly a chance for holding a regular meeting. Instead, every day Ms White gives instructions to her managers via email and expects them to pass the information on to the workers they are responsible for. Moreover, the employees are supposed to read

the company noticeboard in the intranet every morning to grasp important messages. Sometimes workers do not understand everything and just ignore the information. There are hardly any face-to-face conversations, which can be very demotivating. In recent weeks, the sales targets have not been met. Ms White is outraged and writes a newsletter with ideas of how to improve the situation, but does not get any replies.

2. Some international interns are currently preparing a company presentation for the next Munich Job and Internship Fair, where they are supposed to give their potential followers a first insight into the different areas of Brain & Comp Inc. In their first meeting, they brainstorm ideas and agree on who prepares which part of the presentation. Christina from Germany, who works in the Sales department, contributes some basic information about her department including current figures. Mai Lin, a Chinese girl working in the HR department, brings along some of the department's latest statistics. Hassan, an intern from Pakistan, provides key facts about the Purchasing department in which he works. Today, they all meet for the second time. Christina and Mai Lin are already sitting in the conference room, waiting for Hassan. When he finally arrives, Christina is slightly upset about his delay and criticizes him for being late. Without saying a word, Hassan takes a seat and they start working on the presentation. After Christina presented her part, she asks Mai Lin to continue. "What?", the Chinese intern reacts in a surprised way, "I didn't know that I had to prepare the information, as we didn't fix anything in written form." As time runs out, they agree on doing the missing parts all together. After a while, Christina notices that Hassan does not participate... In order not to cause any more delay, she accepts his behavior.

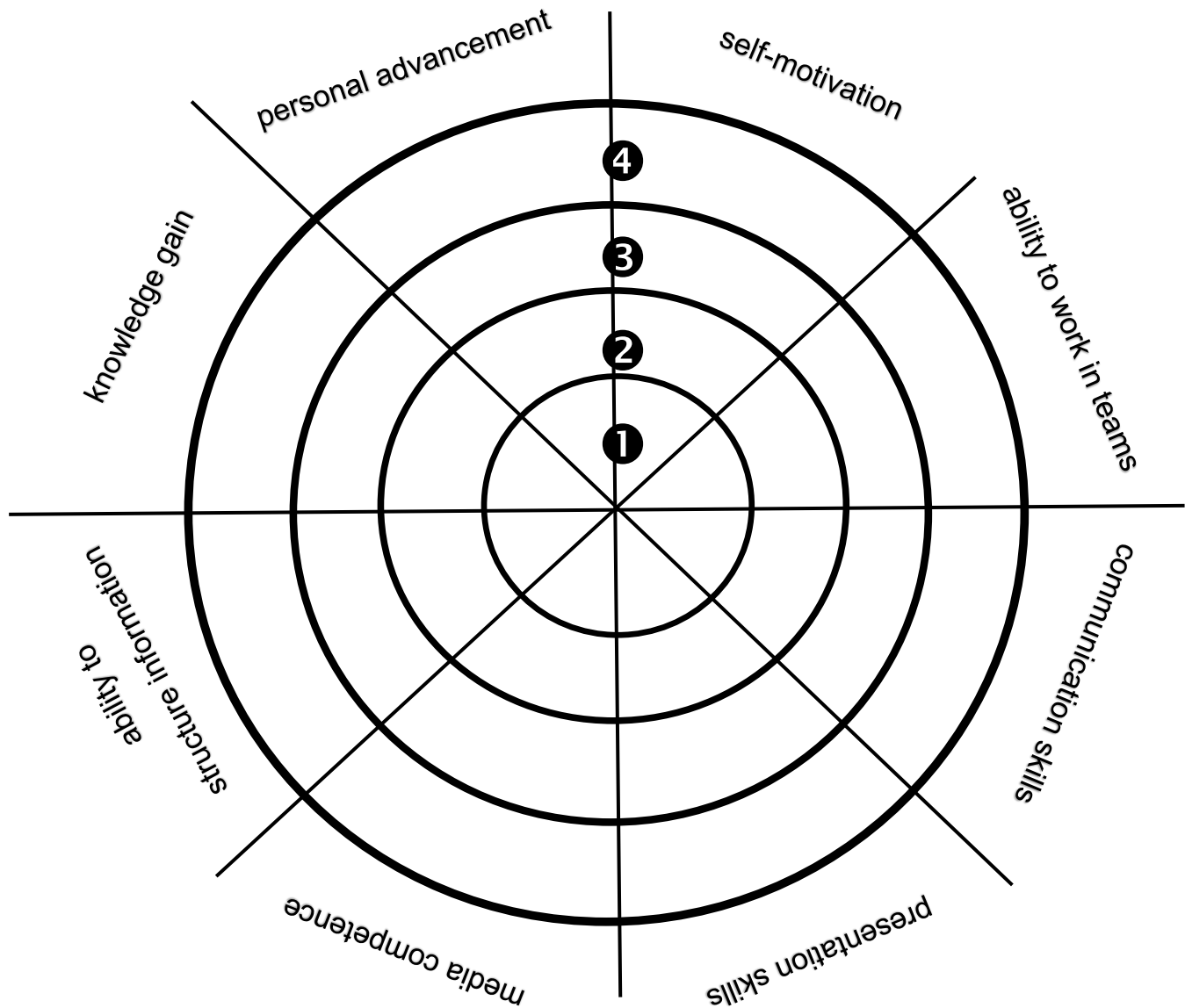
- d) Finally, **present your completed PowerPoint presentation** to the HR manager, Mr Wood. Convince him that a combination of staff motivation, personnel development, the right kind of leadership and effective business communication are the keys to success! Together with your colleagues, **discuss the different results**. Decide which of the measures are best to improve the employees' performance by maximizing their potential.

TASK VI

Nach Ihrem Praktikum bei *Brain & Comp Inc.* beabsichtigen Sie zurück in die deutsche Heimat zu kehren, um sich dort an einer bestimmten Universität mit dem Schwerpunkt Internationale Betriebswirtschaftslehre zu bewerben. Eines der Aufnahmekriterien ist das erfolgreiche Absolvieren eines mehrmonatigen Praktikums im englischsprachigen Ausland. Als Nachweis sind Sie verpflichtet, ein Arbeitstagebuch über Ihre wichtigsten beruflichen Tätigkeiten und Erfahrungen auf Deutsch zu verfassen. Dieses soll mindestens eine DIN-A4-Seite umfassen. Erstellen Sie nun ein solches Tagebuch über Ihr Praktikum bei *Brain & Comp Inc.!*

Evaluation

Evaluate your learning progress during your work in the Human Resources department by giving grades from one to four. There are eight different categories to assess:



1 – excellent
2 – good
3 – average
4 – in need of improvement

Quellen- und Literaturangaben

Eigene Darstellungen

Hinweise zum Unterricht

Inhalt/ Handlungen/ mögliche Handlungsprodukte	Sozialform/ Methode	Material	Bemerkung
Situation wird kurz thematisiert und erläutert. 5 Minuten	UG	Arbeitsblatt mit Handlungssituation	SuS erkennen, dass am Ende der kompletten U-Sequenz ein komplexes Handlungsprodukt steht (PPT Präsentation über Ursachen von Mitarbeiterdefiziten und Verbesserungsvorschläge zur Optimierung).
SuS lesen und analysieren den Beschwerdebrief. 15 Minuten	EA/PA	Task I a) Beschwerdebrief	Anhand des Beschwerdebriefes werden Schwächen der Mitarbeiter untersucht.
SuS werten das Datenmaterial aus, erstellen einige PPT Folien und präsentieren ihre Ergebnisse. 70 Minuten	EA/PA GA SV	Task I b), c) Datenmaterial PPT Präsentationen	Aus den einzelnen Folien generiert sich schlussendlich die gesamte PPT Präsentation (Outcome).
Situation/Arbeitsauftrag wird kurz thematisiert. 5 Minuten	UG	Handlungssituation (Ergänzung)	SuS sollen die Inhalte eines Workshops vorbereiten: Führungsstile und Personalentwicklungsmaßnahmen.
SuS verschaffen sich in arbeitsteiligen Expertengruppen mittels Internetrecherche einen Überblick über die verschiedenen Führungsstile. 40 Minuten	GA (Stamm- und Expertengruppen)	Task II a) Internetrecherche	Es werden Stammgruppen mit je 3 Schülern gebildet. Jeder wird dann z. B. mittels Durchzählen einer Expertengruppe zugeteilt.
SuS erklären sich gegenseitig in ihren Stammgruppen die jeweiligen Führungsstile. Anschließend erstellen sie einen Fragebogen zur Selbstevaluierung des persönlichen	GA (STEX)	Task II b) Schülerergebnisse (Übersichten, Fragebögen)	Fragebögen können alternativ auch in der Muttersprache der SuS erstellt werden.

Führungsstils von Managern. 45 Minuten			
SuS diskutieren, welcher Führungsstil am besten zum Unternehmen passt und begründen ihre Entscheidung. 15 Minuten	GA/UG	Task II c)	
SuS erstellen eine PPT Präsentation mit ihren Ergebnissen und geben eine begründete Empfehlung an das Management ab. 75 Minuten	GA	Task II d) PPT Präsentation	
Situation/Arbeitsauftrag wird kurz thematisiert. 5 Minuten	UG	Task III	
SuS informieren sich über Vor- und Nachteile der verschiedenen Personalentwicklungsmethoden (off-the-job, near-the-job, on-the-job) und fassen die Ergebnisse auf einem Merkblatt zusammen. 40 Minuten	GA	Task III a) Internet-recherche Merkblatt	Die Erarbeitung kann wahlweise auch arbeitsteilig erfolgen.
SuS entwickeln auf der Grundlage ihrer Ergebnisse einen Plan für mögliche Maßnahmen der Personalentwicklung von Brain & Comp Inc. und fassen diese auf PPT-Folien zusammen. Die Ergebnisse werden im Plenum präsentiert und diskutiert. 90 Minuten	GA SV	Task III b) bis d) Maßnahmenplan PE PPT Präsentation	Leistungsstarke Schüler erhalten eine zusätzliche Aufgabe. Präsentation der Ergebnisse der Aufgaben II und III Auswahl einzelner Folien für das finale Handlungsprodukt
SuS verschaffen sich einen kurzen Überblick über die Ursachen für die mangelnde Mitarbeitermotivation im Modellunternehmen. 20 Minuten	EA/PA	Task IV a) Datenmaterial	Die Erarbeitung erfolgt zunächst in EA. Danach findet ein kurzer Gedankenaustausch mit dem Banknachbarn (PA) statt.
SuS erarbeiten arbeitsteilig die Motivationstheorien von Herzberg	GA	Task IV b)	

<p>und Maslow (oder auf Wunsch ähnliche) und erstellen hiermit eine Liste mit Motivationsproblemen.</p> <p>50 Minuten</p>		<p>Internet-recherche</p> <p>Liste</p>	
<p>SuS entwickeln darauf aufbauend ein Konzept zur Verbesserung der Mitarbeitermotivation im Unternehmen und berücksichtigen dabei monetäre und nicht-monetäre Methoden.</p> <p>50 Minuten</p>	GA	<p>Task IV c)</p> <p>Internet-recherche</p> <p>Liste</p>	<p>Bei Bedarf kann das Internet zur weiteren Recherche genutzt werden.</p>
<p>SuS fassen die Ergebnisse in einer einprägsamen Grafik zusammen, die auf einer PPT Folie ergänzt wird. SuS präsentieren diese und erklären die Bedeutung zufriedener Mitarbeiter für das UN.</p> <p>60 Minuten</p>	GA SV	<p>Task IV d)</p> <p>Grafik</p> <p>PPT Präsentation</p>	
<p>Situation/Arbeitsauftrag wird kurz thematisiert.</p> <p>5 Minuten</p>	UG	<p>Handlungssituation (Ergänzung)</p>	<p>SuS sollen eine Anleitung zur Verbesserung der Kommunikation im Unternehmen erstellen.</p>
<p>SuS sammeln zunächst Gründe, die für eine effektive Kommunikation im Unternehmen sprechen und erstellen eine PPT-Folie. Danach wird eine Mind-Map über wichtige Aspekte zum Thema Kommunikation erstellt.</p> <p>65 Minuten</p>	PA/GA	<p>Task V a), b)</p> <p>Internet-recherche</p> <p>PPT Präsentation</p> <p>Mind-Map</p>	<p>Als Alternative zum Internet wird Infomaterial bereitgestellt.</p>
<p>SuS erstellen mithilfe der Mind-Map eine Anleitung mit Regeln zur Verbesserung der Kommunikation im Unternehmen.</p> <p>110 Minuten</p>	GA SV	<p>Task V c)</p> <p>MM/Anleitung</p> <p>Internet-recherche</p> <p>PPT Präsentation</p> <p>Situationen in den Abteilungen</p>	<p>Die Anleitung wird der PPT-Präsentation beigelegt.</p> <p>Bei Bedarf kann das Internet zur weiteren Recherche genutzt werden.</p> <p>Leistungsstarke Schüler erhalten eine zusätzliche Aufgabe.</p>



Illustrierende Aufgaben zum LehrplanPLUS

Fachoberschule/Berufsoberschule, IBS, 12. Jahrgangsstufe

SuS präsentieren abschließend ihre Ergebnisse, diskutieren und bewerten diese, um sich für die besten Maßnahmen zu entscheiden. 75 Minuten	SV UG	Task V d) PPT Präsentationen	
SuS erstellen ein Arbeitstagebuch über ihre beruflichen Tätigkeiten und Erfahrungen in der Personalabteilung in deutscher Sprache. 45 Minuten	EA	Task VI Arbeitstagebuch	Mediationsaufgabe
Evaluation Rückmeldung zur inhaltlichen und methodischen Gestaltung der Unterrichtssequenz mit anschließendem Gedankenaustausch 15 Minuten	EA UG	Zielscheibe	SuS geben Rückmeldung zur Unterrichtssequenz, indem sie acht verschiedene Kategorien mithilfe einer Zielscheibe bewerten.