Three candidates, one job

Lesson notes:

This lesson is intended for intermediate young adults and provides vocabulary and activities around the theme of job hunting, particularly finding your first job.

This lesson was very well received by my students at a vocational college in China. They entered enthusiastically into a discussion of the merits and drawbacks of each of the three candidates.

The handout consists of a mock job advertisement, a vocabulary list, and profiles of three imaginary job applicants. The profiles have been written so that each candidate has both positive and negative qualities. There is no right answer as to who might be the best employee for the coffee shop.

Activity:

1. Students are given a mock job advertisement for an opening in a coffee shop. The class is then divided into two groups. Group one looks up the definitions of the first column of words and group two looks up the definitions for the second column of words. (10 minutes)

2. The teacher calls upon a student in group one, who is asked to choose one word from the group two's column and call upon a student in group two to provide the definition. Example, a student in group one who was working on the first column of words chooses the word "well-groomed" and asks a student on the other side of the classroom to provide the definition. The student called upon rises and gives his or her answer. Once all the words in one column have been discussed, the procedure is reversed and a student from group 2 calls upon a student in group 1 to give a definition of a word in column one. This continues until all the words have been defined and discussed. Interspersed with this exercise is a class discussion of the traits [well groomed, energetic, outgoing] that a person looking for a job should possess. [20 minutes]

3. The teacher then divides the students into three groups. Each group is assigned one of the three candidates for the job, Suzie, Bradley and Veronica. The teacher informs the three groups that they are Team Suzie, Team Bradley and Team Veronica. They are to read the description of their candidate and discuss as a group what is best about their candidate. [15 minutes]

4. The teacher then arranges the class into groups of three. Each group of three is composed of a person from Team Suzie, Team Bradley and Team Veronica. Each group is then asked to debate among themselves as to who is the best candidate. [15 minutes]

5. The teacher leads a class discussion about the outcome of the debate and then polls the class to discover which candidate gets the most votes. During this discussion, the teacher reviews the vocabulary studied in the first part of the lesson and asks how each candidate matches up to the job description. [15 minutes]

Additional activities:

1. The students divide into pairs. One student plays the coffee shop owner, the other student plays either Suzie, Bradley or Veronica, or else is simply himself or herself, applying for a job at the coffee shop. The students role-play a job interview.

2. Students are asked to imagine what the first day or first week on the job would be like for Suzie, Bradley and Veronica.

3. Students set up an imaginary coffee shop and role play being the owner, new employees, and customers.

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