**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Employability Skills Area: Team Work and Work Habits**

**Assignment Name: Initiative**

**Introduction**

Initiative is a very important characteristic for information age workers. Direct supervision is often not a feature of the modern workplace. Without initiative, procrastination and missed opportunities can become a real problem. Sometimes poor performance results and leads to loss of a job, without any second chances.

Consider the salesperson who works out of a home office or the small business owner who works out of the house. If these people do not exercise initiative, there will probably not be anyone to say anything about it. As performance declines, however, the results will reflect what has been happening with the job.

**Assignment 1:** Contemporary occupations are often divided into several categories for research purposes. These categories likely include the type of occupation you either have right now or are considering for the future. For each type of job, initiative plays an important role. Select the category which best represents your choice for a job and consider the situation described. Write responses to the questions provided in at least 3-4 complete sentences.

**Scenario I Medical Professionals (doctor, surgeon, dentist):**

"I'm sorry, I can't go on that Spring Break trip anymore. You know, my mom was in that car accident about three months ago and our whole life has turned upside down. She hasn't been able to go back to work; who am I kidding, she can't even get out of bed most days. Anyway, instead of Daytona Beach, I'll be watching my little brother and sister. Every time I think about it, I get so mad. We've been told that if my mom had seen an orthopedic specialist while she was in the emergency room instead of the regular doctor she would be okay by now. The emergency room guy just looked her over and ignored the bruising on her back and side. He didn't even ask for x-rays. The nurse sort of mentioned to my dad that my mom was pretty banged up but she didn't say anything to the doctor when he was dismissing my mom. Heck, my dad didn't know any different so he brought her home. She just seemed to get worse over the next few days until my dad finally took her back to the hospital. Finally, the same doctor got a bone specialist to examine her. She will be okay, but it'll be at least six more weeks. In the meantime, I'm the baby-sitter/cook/maid."

* What could have been done differently to prevent the mother's long-term injury?
* Whose responsibility was it to determine how serious the injury was?
* How many people were affected by this scenario?
* What all could have been done to prevent this scenario?

**Scenario II**

**Professional (teacher, lawyer, accountant):**

"Did you hear about the accident at the new mall? The architects invited a bunch of people to look at the inside now that the building is enclosed. Except, when they went to ride the escalator, the steps flattened out like a ramp and everybody slid down. No one was injured, but the architects are in big trouble. My dad is a building inspector and I heard him talking to my mom last night. He said that the two architects did not test any of the escalators or elevator equipment for safety because they were behind schedule and wanted to save money. Now they are responsible for the mayor, the city council, and the store owners sliding down two flights of stairs! Plus, because of all the safety checks that have to be done the stores won't be opening until August instead of June. So, the really bad news is that our plans for summer jobs went down the escalator, too!"

* What led to the series of events in this story?
* Who should take responsibility for the extra money that will be spent plus the time it will take to repair the damage?
* What actions could have been taken to prevent the accident?

**Scenario III**

###  Sales (insurance, sales in a department store):

Did you hear about the contest for the athletic department at school? They are selling boxes of oranges and grapefruit to finance new equipment for sports equipment. The fruit will be shipped in three weeks and it's supposed to be the best in Florida. The prices are better than at the grocery so it should be easy to sell. The best part is that there are cash prizes for the top three salespeople. Imagine winning up to $300.00 for selling the most fruit! This should be a piece of cake; everybody likes fresh oranges and grapefruit. I'm going to go home and make signs and put them up around the street corners. Just imagine all the people who will see them when they're driving by. My phone should start ringing off the hook with people wanting to place orders. In less than a month, I should be on my way to a great shopping spree!!"

* How successful do you think this aspiring salesperson will be?
* Can you think of other actions this person could have taken to sell the most fruit boxes?
* What characteristics do you like to see in a salesperson, for example, in your favorite clothing store or at the stereo equipment store?

**Scenario IV**

**Service (waitress, construction worker, cashier):**

You will never guess what happened today! My boss threatened to fire me if I don't 'shape up' as he put it. What does he expect? I come to work on time and I only take the breaks that are scheduled. I always make sure I clock out at exactly the right time - not one minute before or one minute after. Sure, I don't always come to those stupid employee meetings, but what more do I possibly need to know about hitting the right button on the cash register and giving change to the customer. And what about those silly incentive contests we have. Who cares if I win a CD player or gift certificates to the mall? I'll keep saving money to get what I want; I'm not going to act like Susan. Did you hear that she got promoted to head cashier? Like it's some big deal to get a $1.50 extra per hour and a college tuition award. She thinks she's better than everybody else. She's always doing stuff like restocking shelves or asking customers if they need help. Give me a break, if someone wants help, I'm standing right at the front of the store. The boss can go ahead and fire me if he wants. There are other stores in this town that hire people like me."

* Does this employee's boss have any real reasons to fire him/her?
* Have you ever been waited on by someone with this attitude?
* What are the chances that this employee would get a good reference from the current boss?
* What characteristics make Susan the type of employee who is most likely to be promoted?