Role Plays

Participant Guide
Role Play Scenarios - Student Version

These role plays give you an opportunity to practice what you learned in class and enhance your presentation skills so that you are more prepared to meet with the employer. Before conducting the role play, make sure you are familiar with the following material, which was covered in the last module of the class:

- Discuss the business goals that EAH may address (for example: retain existing employees, attract new employees, enhance employees’ work-life balance, increase staff morale and productivity, build staff loyalty, generate positive publicity for the employer, create goodwill in the community, contribute to neighborhood revitalization, and provide a positive return on investment)
- Identify the three key EAH benefits (homebuying workshops, one-on-one counseling, and financial incentives) and the related resources to implement them.

You may also wish to review and use the following documents to assist you in the role play exercises:

- Script for Employer Meeting
- Talking Points for Employer Meeting

Using one of the scenarios below, work in pairs. One of you will take the role of the real estate professional, and the other will take the role of the employer (owner/CEO, senior executive, or senior human resource executive).

**Student #1: Real Estate Professional**

Your role is to explain EAH to the employer, solicit information to help you understand the employer’s needs, and then help the employer link his or her business needs with an EAH benefit(s). Be prepared to respond to the employer’s concerns as noted in the Talking Points.

**Student #2: Employer**

Your role as the employer is to be receptive to new recruiting ideas, but you also need to be concerned about the impact of any new idea on staff resources and associated costs. The CEO is receptive to new ideas but needs to be convinced that the new benefit would be good or neutral vis-à-vis the employer’s bottom line and would be valued by the employees and the community. Ask some of the employer questions as noted in the Talking Points.
Role Play Scenario #1: Professional Company

Professional Software Solutions (PSS) is a 200-person software company located in a growing suburban area. PSS provides accounting and records management software to medical professionals. There is a huge demand for software professionals from companies throughout the region, so it is critical for PSS to retain the experienced workers it currently has on staff. Each lost worker costs PSS $15,000, and the company would like to reduce this cost.

PSS prides itself on being one of the top employers in the state, with the local business journal naming it a Top 50 company several times. PSS was one of the first employers to offer innovative benefits such as wellness programs and health club memberships to employees.

Much of the PSS staff lives outside of the community. In fact, many workers commute one hour or more each day to the PSS campus. Lately, PSS has begun to experience increased turnover as employees leave to work closer to home. In addition, employees often leave work early to “beat the traffic” for community events and when their children have after-school activities. This lost productivity concerns PSS managers.

Role Play Scenario #2: Urban Manufacturer

North Coast Manufacturing employs 500 workers at its home office and two factory sites in Springdale. Springdale, an old manufacturing community, has a large immigrant and first-generation American population and an old but well-kept housing stock, including some two- and three-family properties. Housing in Springdale tends to be affordable even for those earning less than the area median income.

Most of North Coast’s employees are hourly workers and earn slightly less than the area median income. Many currently rent rather than own homes. Like many manufacturing companies, North Coast competes not only with U.S. companies but also with lower-cost foreign manufacturers for market share. The company is profitable but must watch its expenses carefully to remain so. The president of North Coast is committed to remaining in Springdale.
Role Play Scenario #3: Expanding Hospital

Centerville General Hospital is a medium-sized hospital located in a growing suburban area. The financially stable hospital has plans to expand its size and services to accommodate growth in the local area. The hospital has an ongoing challenge to fill nursing and pharmacist positions because of the overall employee shortages in the healthcare field. Once Centerville hires someone, it wants to keep the employee to avoid a costly recruitment problem.

Most of the hospital staff reside outside of the Centerville community, some as far as 30 or 40 miles away. This distance sometimes poses problems with maintaining full staff when adverse weather conditions exist or when accidents or general congestion cause severe traffic problems. Recruiting medical staff will become a greater challenge as the hospital expands its operations; it plans to hire approximately 250 to 350 medical staff during the next two years.

Role Play Scenario #4: Homebuilder Employer

ABC Homebuilder is a medium-sized firm that builds moderately priced homes throughout the state. Jack Williams, ABC’s president, appreciates the value of EAH and believes that offering some form of EAH to employees would demonstrate his commitment to affordable housing and distinguish the company as a leader in the community. The company’s HR department also appreciates EAH but is concerned that the plan may require the company to make large cash outlays. Five years ago, the company implemented a matching 401(k) program, which requires the company to make large contributions.

Role Play Scenario #5: Restaurant Franchise

*Note:* In this scenario, one person plays the real estate professional, and the other plays the CEO of the restaurant.

Home Cooking is a chain of restaurants located throughout the state. Martha Child, manager of the Home Cooking restaurant in a growing city, has been challenged by the chain’s CEO to make the restaurant feel like a local neighborhood business. The CEO believes that this will encourage repeat business and send the right message to community leaders – especially because some people did not support the restaurant’s move into the neighborhood. To make Home Cooking seem more neighborly, Martha has asked the staff – the host/hostess and waiters/waitresses – to welcome customers by name if possible. Many customers have commented positively to Martha about the warm greeting. Martha, however, has noticed that providing this personal touch is not working out as well as she would like because of the high staff turnover.