

## First Assumptions

**Interpersonal Skills:** Work effectively with people who have diverse personalities and backgrounds.

### Overview

Our perceptions are influenced by many things, including age, gender, experience, careers, etc. These influences cause us to make assumptions about interactions in our everyday lives. Critical thinking requires student to be able to view a situation from a variety of perspectives.

In the workplace, making assumptions about a situation without first thinking critically about assumptions can lead to unnecessary conflict or mistakes. It is important to push our students to think beyond their own experiences and view situations from other points of view.

### Directions

Prepare each of the below scenarios on separate cards. Divide the class into groups and select a scenario. Each group will list the most obvious cause for the scenario, and then brainstorm a list of alternative explanations. Encourage students to keep an open mind and consider multiple perspectives.

As a class, have each group read their scenario out loud and ask for the reason behind the scenario. Then students will complete the **Assessment: First Assumptions** for inclusion in their portfolio.

## First Assumptions

### Scenario:

Your supervisor gave you a negative performance review.

## First Assumptions

### Scenario:

Your teacher was late to class.

## First Assumptions

### Scenario:

Your coworker didn't show up for work and didn't call in.

## First Assumptions

### Scenario:

You weren't offered a promotion although you were qualified.

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### Scenario:

Your customer decided to switch providers.

**Directions:** Answer the following questions to see what you have learned from the activity **First Assumptions**.

1. Was it difficult to come up with alternative explanations for the scenarios? Why or why not?

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2. How do you know which explanation is correct?

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3. Why do you think it is important to question your assumptions in the workplace?

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4. What three things can you do to avoid making assumptions at work?

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