

Students must practice professional behavior during class to prepare for entering the workforce. This skill station asks students to identify professional behaviors and provides the opportunity to practice them during class.

Professionalism



Your behavior affects your success and the success of your classmates. This skill station addresses professionalism. Unprofessional behavior is often easy to identify—we have all experienced situations that made us feel uncomfortable. Luckily, professionals are equally easy to identify—they are competent and knowledgeable and behave in ways that promote everyone's success.

Think about professionals you have interacted with. As a group, define what professionalism looks and sounds like. Fill in the table below.

Professionalism	
Looks like:	Sounds like:

Having trouble? Think about these questions. How do professionals build trust and respect? Promote each other's success? Ensure that goals are met? Present themselves?

Practice professionalism as you work in class today. Identify professional behaviors displayed by members of your group.

Group Processing:

1. What professional behaviors have you seen in your group members?
2. What could *you* do to improve your professionalism?
3. Based on your responses to the previous questions, rate how well your group displayed professional behaviors today.

Skill	1 Excellent	2 Good	3 OK	4 Poor
Professionalism				

Professionalism Teaching Notes



Approximate Time Required

Skill Station: ~5 minutes + 5 minutes for class discussion

Group Processing: 5 minutes at end of class session

- A. Explain the Need:** Professionalism is a collection of many skills-too many to address in one skill station. This skill station introduces professionalism by providing a venue for students to think about how behaviors affect their performance and the classroom atmosphere.

Professionalism in the classroom is an attitude of mutual respect for the course, the other students, and the instructor. Each instructor will have different criteria for professionalism in the classroom, and it's important to express your views to the class. This is a good time to lead a class discussion about what professionalism means to you and to being a successful student. Have some questions prepared in advance to stimulate discussion. For example,

- *Does the way we dress or talk affect our performance in a group or the atmosphere of the classroom (how, why)?*
- *Is professionalism related to classroom or laboratory safety?*
- *What behaviors could undermine the success of the group?*
- *How is professionalism related to the success of your classmates?*
- *Why would you want to behave professionally toward your instructor?*

- B. Define and Model:** Students create a T-chart to define what professionalism looks and sounds like. Here is an example T-chart for professionalism.

Professionalism

Looks like:	Sounds like:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At class on time with all needed learning materials• Wear closed-toed shoes for lab safety• Dressed professionally• Read assignment, prepared to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I read about ____ in the text book."• "The instructions clearly state that..."• "I like the way you paraphrased that information"

Filling out the chart can feel awkward for students. Remind them that these behaviors do not have to be complicated. Try adding some of your own elements to the T-chart before class; this will help you define what you want in your classroom and prepare you to address student questions.

- C. Practice:** Students practice being professional and observing professionalism in their group during the classroom activities. Ask students to identify ways they could be more professional in their own behaviors.

- D. Evaluate:** At the end of the period, take time so each student can evaluate how well the group performed the skill.
- E. Feedback/Reflection:** Tell your students when you observe professional and unprofessional behavior in class. Offer ways to improve.

This exercise can be expanded to include time for student reflection on unprofessional behaviors. Unprofessional actions are easy to identify. Starting with this task helps students identify the opposite, more professional behaviors. Give the following task to your students first, then ask them to fill in the professionalism T-chart.

Think about situations where you felt uncomfortable, then discuss unprofessional behaviors you have experienced. As a group, identify what they look like and sound like. Fill in the table below.

Unprofessional Behaviors	
Look like:	Sound like: