



# The Role You Play at Work

## Reading, discussion, game (40 min):

Materials: Copies of "Quiet on the Job" from the Stories section of the website.

### I. Read and discuss the story (20 min)

Pass out copies of the story "Quiet on the Job," from the Stories section of the website. Ask for volunteers to take turns reading the story aloud. Pause to ask questions whenever you feel there's a line or passage that's ripe for discussion.

Then ask the group:

- If Danielle wants to continue working in jobs like these, how would she need to change?
- What would she need to do to feel comfortable enough to stop being so "quiet"?
- Do you feel like you are a different person in different situations? What are some examples? How is it helpful? How is it a problem?

### II. The "Real" You: Group game and discussion (20 min)

This is a four-part activity. Tell participants that you are going to play a game called "Mingle, Mingle, Huddle."

Explain the rules: You are going to say, "Mingle, Mingle!" When you do, they are to walk around the room saying hello and introducing themselves to one another *as they would at school or on the street*. When they hear you say, "Huddle," they should find a partner and discuss the question you read aloud. (There may be one group of three if you have an odd number).

Start the activity by saying "Mingle, Mingle." After they've walked for a few seconds, say "Huddle." Ask this question: "What are three words you would use to describe yourself? Why?" Give them a minute to come up with their three words, and then stop them.

Next, tell them they're going to do the same activity, but with these changes: Instead of being friends on the street, they are in a workplace and everyone is a professional colleague. As they mingle, they meet and greet each other as professionals, not as casual friends.

Say, "Mingle, Mingle," and give them a minute to walk around introducing themselves (playing their professional roles). [If teens are having a hard time making the transition, suggest that they shake hands as they meet each other and make good eye contact as they talk.]

Then stop them again by saying "Huddle." When the teens are in pairs, tell them that one of them is an "employer" and the other is a potential "employee" seeking a job. (For this round, the employer can be the shorter of the two.) Tell employers to ask the following question: "What are three words you would use to describe yourself? Why?"

After a few minutes, stop them, ask them to SWITCH roles, and give the new "employee" a chance to answer the same question.

Finally, stop the group and discuss the following questions:

- What was the difference in how you behaved when you were just being yourself versus when you were the "employer" or the "employee"? For example, did the three words you used to describe yourself change? How?
- When you were the employer or the employee, did you feel like you were being "fake"? Why or why not?
- Is it important to always be "real"? Why or why not? What does it mean to be "real"?
- Can someone be "real" and professional at the same time?