

EDUCATOR GUIDE

BEHIND THE SCENES AT EDGE

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- **Engage** in problem solving
- **Discover** how to use interpersonal skills
- **Apply** interpersonal and problem-solving skills in a presentation

GRADE RANGE

6-12

DURATION

One class session (approximately 45–60 minutes)

OVERVIEW

How does the Director of Operations solve the real-world problems of being on the front lines of managing and caring for visitors to Edge?

Drawing on the video, featuring Desiree Thurman, students will step into the shoes of the team leader who manages all customer service aspects of operations at Edge. Students will embark upon the journey and discover how to handle the real-world challenges that the operations team face daily. The Director of Operations manages dedicated team members and the guest experience for thousands of visitors every day. The guest journey begins with elevators that take visitors to the 100th floor in less than a minute! Ensuring everything runs seamlessly, efficiently, and effectively can be challenging! Students will get a 360-degree view of how Edge management team members solve problems through leadership, organization, patience, and collaboration with other Edge team members. Students will analyze the guest experience at Edge in order to solve operational problems similar to those Desiree and team solve every day.

KEY STUDENT QUESTIONS

- What interpersonal skills are necessary to be part of the Operations Team at Edge?
- Using problem-solving skills, break down a problem encountered during a typical day at Edge and determine how to solve it efficiently and effectively.
- Using interpersonal skills, what is the best way to present a solution to a problem?

REACH FOR THE SKY

NATIONAL CONTENT STANDARDS

ISTE Standards

- Knowledge Constructor
1.3.d Students build knowledge by actively exploring real-world issues and problems, developing ideas and theories and pursuing answers and solutions.

NGSS Standards

- MS-ETS1-1 Engineering Design
Define the criteria and constraints of a design problem with sufficient precision to ensure a successful solution, taking into account relevant scientific principles and potential impacts on people and the natural environment that may limit possible solutions.
- HS-ETS1-2 Engineering Design
Design a solution to a complex real-world problem by breaking it down into smaller, more manageable problems that can be solved through engineering.

Common Core English Language Arts Standards: Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.5
Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Materials

- Internet device with ability to project video, one per educator
- Device with internet access, one per group
- Pens or pencils
- *My Guest Experience* student capture sheet
- *Guest Experience at Edge* student capture sheet
- *Defining Interpersonal Skills* student capture sheet
- *Exit Ticket* student capture sheet
- *Team Collaboration Rubric*
- *Presentation Rubric*

Background Information

Students learning about careers at Edge will get to understand customer service through the guest experience of the Director of Operations—Desiree Thurman. Desiree manages a dedicated team that ensures everything runs seamlessly, efficiently, and effectively at Edge, the highest outdoor sky deck in the Western Hemisphere with a one-of-a-kind design. Visitors from all over the globe come to New York City to stand on the observation deck 100 stories up where it seems as if you are suspended in mid-air and gives you the feeling of floating in the sky with 360-degree views.

REACH FOR THE SKY

Edge is a marvel of architecture, engineering, and technology with panoramic views of New York City. The visitor adventure begins as they enter an immersive multimedia experience—before heading up over 1,100 feet into the air. Visitors step out into the sky, suspended more than 1,100 feet up with 7,500 square feet of outdoor space, spanning 80 feet straight out into the air. Edge’s unique vantage point on the western side of Manhattan lets them take in the entire skyline. They can see all the way from the tip of Central Park down to the Statue of Liberty and beyond.

Guests feel the thrill of leaning out over the edge with the busy city below. The outdoor deck is made of frameless glass panels boldly angled outward. Guests stand on top of a glass floor and look 100 stories straight down to see the city streets below their feet. They get an even higher perspective from the outdoor stairs, where they may look out over the top of the glass panels and past the edge of the deck.

Guests are encouraged to enjoy the view and hang out in the sky with your friends and family. At the Eastern Point, there’s space for one person to stand alone, surrounded by glass, air, and sky.

SESSION FLOW

Engage | Guest Experience

- Ask students to think about a time that they had to wait in line in order to participate in an experience.
 - Prompt students by giving examples, such as going to a theme park, zoo, aquarium, concert, ball game, movie, or museum.
- Have students use the *My Guest Experience* student capture sheet to record the steps of their experience. Ask them to identify things that might have improved their experience.
- Next, have students turn and talk to share their thoughts with a partner.

Teacher Note: *Activating students’ prior knowledge of previous experiences they have participated in will help them connect to Edge and understand the learning this activity is engaging them in.*

- Explain to students that there are individuals that help us navigate these experiences. It is their job to take tickets, direct traffic, help visitors find their seat or navigate the venue, keep visitors safe, sell refreshments, and more. All of these individuals work within the hospitality industry, which includes lodging (hotels), events, theme parks, attractions, restaurants, travel, and tourism. This industry or business sector is dedicated to ensuring that customers have a positive experience because if people enjoy an experience they will often return or give positive reviews which will encourage more customers. If a business has more customer traffic, it will often have higher revenue or income generated by the sale of goods or services.

Learn | Investigate/ View: Interpersonal Skills

INQUIRY QUESTION

What kinds of problems does the Operations Team encounter at Edge and what interpersonal skills are necessary to solve them?

- Share the official Edge website with students: <https://www.edgenyc.com/en/discover-edge>.
- Explain to students that the website explains the experience of a visitor to Edge. Be sure to have students click along the bottom or use the linked buttons to watch all the videos and read the content on the website.
- Have students work in pairs to record on the *Guest Experience at Edge* student capture sheet what they NOTICE and what they WONDER about the experience at Edge.
- The goal is for students to become aware of what the guest experience is like and the role that the director of operations and her team play in creating an experience that the customer enjoys and that increases visits to the business in the future.

Teacher Note: An alternative activity is to have students view "The Future is Now" virtual field trip (<https://reachfortheskynyc.com/virtual-field-trip/>) that allows students to discover the awe and wonder of Edge.

Career Connection—Desiree Thurman

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

What interpersonal skills does Desiree Thurman exhibit on the job that make her an effective leader? How is she able to manage her entire team and the facility at Edge?

- Introduce this portion of the activity by showing students "The Sky is Not the Limit" topic series video featuring Desiree Thurman. Take time to pause and discuss inquiry questions.
- After viewing the video have a whole group conversation about the importance of an attraction, like Edge, to keep guests moving through the experience in a timely manner. Also discuss the importance of having diverse team members who are able to connect with visitors from all over the globe. Desiree Thurman says in her video:

"Work smarter, not harder. My main responsibility is to develop, implement, and execute policies and procedures for the operation. 104 employees report directly to me. Diversity is very important in the operations because we have visitors who come from all over the world. To have a diverse team who speak different languages and be able to connect with them makes their experience even better!"

Application of knowledge: Students will take a deep dive into the work of Desiree Thurman and how she uses interpersonal skills to help others.

- Have students work in teams, using the Defining Interpersonal Skills student capture sheet, to explore the interpersonal skills Desiree uses to be successful in her career.

REACH FOR THE SKY

Apply

Application of Knowledge: Now that students have a general understanding of the guest experience at Edge, ask them to share some potential problems that could arise for guests at Edge. Record these ideas where all students can view them.

- Have students work in groups to identify one problem that they would like to problem-solve.
- As a group, students will break down the problem as if they are the Director of Operations at Edge and determine how to instruct their team to handle it.

Teacher Note: *Circulate among the student groups as they come up with potential problems and ensure they are choosing problems that are realistic but that can be handled without emergency services (police, ambulances, fire trucks, etc.) being required.*

- Acting as the Director of Operations at Edge, students will work in their groups to create a presentation on how the operations team members would address the problem.
- Students will work to communicate with each other in their groups during the presentation planning portion of the task and show effective interpersonal skills in their group work to solve a problem.
- The presentation should answer the following questions:
 - What interpersonal skills are necessary to be part of the Operations Team at Edge?
 - Did you effectively break down a problem typical of a day at Edge and determine how to solve it efficiently and effectively?
- The presentation will also explain how that team member would use interpersonal skills to address the problem identified above.
- Students will need to be sure to explain each step in the problem and how it is addressed.
- Students can use [SlidesMania](#), [SlidesCarnival](#), [Discovery Education Studio](#), or a presentation software of their choice.

Teacher note: *Another alternative is to have students use an interactive tool like [Genially](#) to create their own interactive image of how they solved their problem. This interactive image will be similar to images on the website for Edge here: <https://www.edgenyc.com/en/discover-edge>.*



Challenge: Edge Team Member Evaluation

- After all presentations are complete, have each group present to the class.

Teacher resource and note: *Use the Presentation Rubric to evaluate student presentations. Be sure to give the rubric to the teams in advance and explain any required elements in the presentation before students begin working.*

REACH FOR THE SKY

Reflect

- As a reflection activity, have students individually complete the following in an *Exit Ticket*: If you had to design a shirt for your operations team, at Edge, that reflects being a team member with good interpersonal and problem-solving skills, what would it say?

Assessment suggestions (optional):

FORMATIVE	SUMMATIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guest Experience Activity• Guest Experience at Edge Notice and Wonder Activity• Defining Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation Rubric• Team Collaboration Rubric• Exit Ticket

LEARNING EXTENSION

1. Have students take their problem and solution to create a video that could be used to train Edge team members on an operational procedure.

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Think about a time you had to wait in line in order to participate in an experience. Then, think about all the people involved in ensuring you enjoyed the experience to the fullest. Complete the table below being as detailed as you can.

Experience examples: theme park, aquarium, concert, ball game, movie, museum, zoo, etc.

Describe the experience in at least five steps.	What people were involved to help that experience go smoothly?	What skills or knowledge did those people have to have to be helpful to you?
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Name _____ Date _____

Directions: In pairs, record what you NOTICE and what you WONDER about each part of the experience at Edge.

NOTICE What do you notice about the guest experience at Edge?	WONDER What do you wonder about the guest experience at Edge?

DEFINING INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

STUDENT CAPTURE SHEET

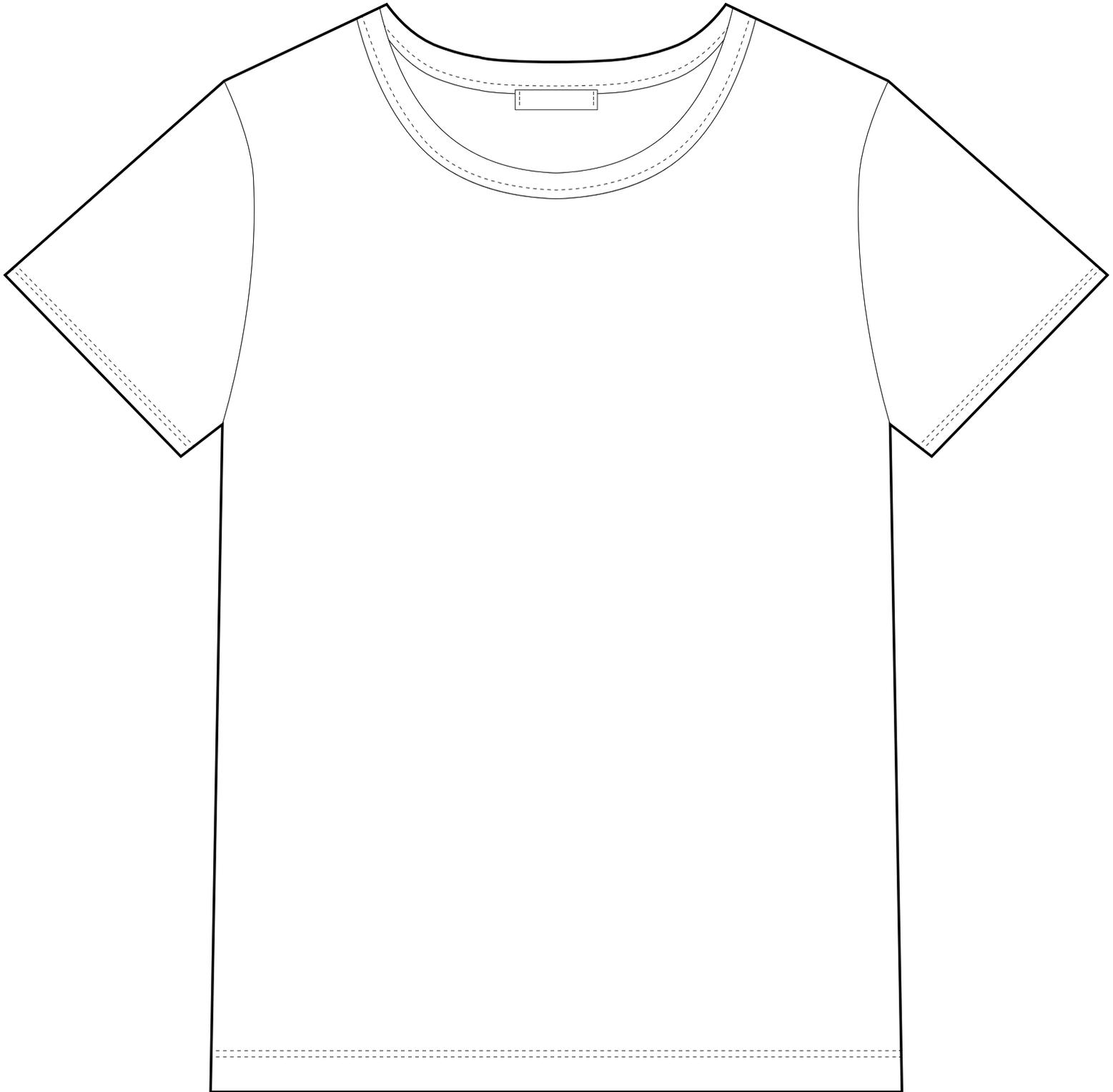
Name _____ Date _____

Directions: With your groups, research each interpersonal skill and create a definition for it. Describe what that skill looks like in action.

INTERPERSONAL SKILL Desiree Thurman discusses some skills employees at Edge need.	DEFINITION How would you define that skill?	ACTIONS What does Desiree Thurman or other team members at Edge do to show they have this skill?
Communication		
Time management		
Critical thinking		
Empathy		
Patience		
Listening		
Positive attitude		
Teamwork		

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: If you had to design a shirt for your operations team at Edge that reflects being a team member with good interpersonal and problem-solving skills, what would it say?



Name _____ Date _____

Scoring Guides	Exemplary Score 4	Proficient Score 3	Emerging Score 2	Not Yet Score 1
Student communication skills.	The student communicated effectively throughout the group project and clearly communicated their ideas as well as actively listening to their peers.	The student communicated effectively throughout the group project and mostly communicated their ideas and listened to their peers.	The student attempted to communicate effectively throughout the group project and inconsistently communicated their ideas and listened to their peers.	The student had consistent problems communicating effectively throughout the group project and did not communicate their ideas or listen to their peers.
Student group contributions.	The student made significant contributions to the project throughout the entire work of the project.	The student made effective contributions to the project throughout the entire work of the project.	The student made some contributions to the project and was inconsistent in their efforts throughout the project.	The student made minimal or no contributions to the project and mostly lacked in their efforts throughout the project.
Student work.	The student contributed high quality work to the project.	The student contributed good quality work to the project.	The student contributed work to the project but the work was low quality.	The student either contributed no work to the project or the work was such low quality it could not be used.

Comments:

Name _____ Date _____

Scoring Guides	Exemplary Score 4	Proficient Score 3	Emerging Score 2	Not Yet Score 1
Student presenting skills: eye contact, voice quality and intonation, posture, and ease in speaking.	The student exhibited excellent presentation skills and clearly communicated their ideas.	The student exhibited good presentation skills and effectively communicated their ideas.	The student exhibited some moments of acceptable presentation skills but was inconsistent in communicating their ideas.	The student had few or no moments of presentation skills and ineffectively communicated their ideas.
Student presentation elements.	All the required presentation elements were effectively included in the presentation.	Most of the required presentation elements were effectively included in the presentation.	Some of the required presentation elements were effectively included in the presentation.	None of the required presentation elements were effectively included in the presentation.
Student presentation design: graphics, fonts, image quality and placement, text quality and placement, colors and other design elements.	The presentation design was of excellent quality and clearly contributed to the overall understanding of the information through aesthetically pleasing design work.	The presentation design was of good quality and contributed to the overall understanding of the information through aesthetically pleasing design work.	The presentation design lacked quality in more than one place and inhibited understanding of the information through the jumbled or overbearing design work.	The presentation design was of an unacceptable quality throughout and failed to provide understanding of the information through unacceptable design work.

Comments: