

Lesson 4

Showing Up As and For Your Authentic Self

Ligaya Franklin
Jehan Senai Worthy

OVERVIEW

Bard College at Simon's Rock offers a non-traditional entry point into the workforce. A core value of the institution is to encourage students to define and embrace their uniqueness whilst learning to navigate hegemonic socio-cultural beliefs. Therefore, this lesson seeks to promote a self-reflection on authenticity and how one navigates through self-definition in a system that profits off of individualism predicated on adherence to societal normativity.

MATERIALS

1. [Convocations #1 video](#)
2. [Susan McPherson, "How Much of Your 'Authentic Self' Should You Really Bring to Work?" *Harvard Business Review*, February 12, 2021, <https://hbr.org/2021/02/how-much-of-your-authentic-self-should-you-really-bring-to-work>.](#)
3. [Dede Henley, "How To Be Your Authentic Self At Work \(And Why It Matters\)," *Forbes*, December 14, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dedehenley/2019/12/14/how-to-be-your-authentic-self-at-work-and-why-it-matters/?sh=584362c565b7>.](#)
4. [Jodi-Ann Burey, "Why You Should Not Bring Your Authentic Self to Work," TEDxSeattle, \[video\] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRi-jpzBiGo>](#)
5. [Lakeya Omogun, "\(Be\)coming Professional," TEDxUTAustin, \[video\] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3377nOPruPI>](#).

ACTIVITIES

VIDEO RESPONSE

Respond to the following prompts via the creation of a 30-90 second video:

1. How do you define yourself?
2. What strategies do you use to maintain authenticity?

WATCH: [CONVOCATIONS #1 \(2:30-6:50\)](#)

RESPOND

Do you feel as though you can always be your authentic self at school? At work? If not, what keeps you from being “you?” What are your worries or concerns?

WATCH: [CONVOCATIONS #1 \(7:00-9:30\)](#)

READ

Students should read the two articles listed below:

1. [“How Much of Your ‘Authentic Self’ Should You Really Bring to Work?” by Susan McPherson](#)
2. [“How To Be Your Authentic Self At Work \(And Why It Matters\)” by Dede Henley](#)

RESPOND

1. How do these articles connect to Convocations #1 (2:30-6:50)?
2. What do the articles convey about the relationship between maintaining an authentic self and workplace culture?

WATCH: [“WHY YOU SHOULD NOT BRING YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF TO WORK”](#) TEDX TALK BY JODI-ANN BUREY

RESPOND

1. What stood out to you the most in the TEDTalk?
2. How does this TEDTalk complicate the idea of bringing your authentic self to work?
3. List at least three reasons why Jodi-Ann Burey says you shouldn’t bring your authentic self to work.

WATCH: [“\(BE\)COMING PROFESSIONAL”](#) TEDX TALK BY LAKEYA OMOGUN

RESPOND

1. What stood out to you the most in the video?
2. What challenges did Lakeya Omogun face while trying to bring all of the parts of herself to her professional world?
3. What does Lakeya Omogun do to remind her of home and who she is?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. What stood out to you the most in the video and the readings as to how to show up as your most authentic self?
2. What would it mean for you to bring your authentic self to the professional world?
3. What can you do to remind yourself of who you are at times when you feel like you are asked to be someone or something you are not?

PROJECT: TIME CAPSULE

Students should collect their writings, musings, and ideas that have come from the lessons and interviews with alumni, and their expertise, and place them in a box, envelope, or other casing. Students should re-open these when they are in need to remind themselves of who they are, their goals, and thoughts at this moment in time.

In a box, envelope, or other casing:

- List professional goals and commitments to yourself .
- List five or more potential issues that may arise as you navigate the workforce .
- For every issue, list strategies and reminders for yourself to follow when you face said issues.
- Compile 10 resources for future you to utilize or reflect upon.
- You may wish to include tangible items that make you feel safe, comfortable, and secure (ex: a journal, a piece of your favorite sheet music, a bracelet, or a teddy bear).
- You may also wish to include items that remind you of who you are at the very core when you are feeling most authentically yourself.