

Task 1.3 Guiding Principles

Purpose

During *Task 1.2 Coop Detectives*, you learned how a cooperative is different from other types of businesses. All cooperatives follow seven guiding principles established by the Rochdale Pioneers, the first modern cooperative, in 1844. These principles guide cooperative operations and make the organizations unique to other types of business structures. How are these principles incorporated in a business?

Materials

Per team of three students:

- Computer with internet access and presentation software

Per student:

- Pencil
- *Task 1.3 Evaluation Rubric*

Procedure

Work individually to describe the cooperative guiding principles, then work with a team to research one cooperative business and explain how the business follows those principles.

Part One – Guiding Principles

1. Review the seven guiding principles listed in Table 1 on the student worksheet.
2. In your own words, record what you believe each principle means.
3. Using a computer go to <https://www.ica.coop/en/cooperatives/cooperative-identity>
4. Record the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) description of each principle in Table 1.
5. Discuss with your class how your meaning was different or similar to the ICA description. Your teacher will lead the discussion.

Part Two – Principle Examples

Your teacher will assign your team one of the following cooperatives to research.

- CHS www.chsinc.com
- Dairy Farmers of America www.dfamilk.com
- Sunkist Growers Inc. www.sunkist.com
- Touchstone Energy Cooperative www.touchstoneenergy.com
- 4th Street Food Cooperative www.4thstreetfoodcoop.org
- National Telecommunications Cooperative Association www.ntca.org
- Farm Credit Union www.farmcredit.com

Work with your team to develop a presentation explaining how the cooperative follows each of the seven guiding principles described in Table 1. Present your information to the class. Your team's presentation should meet the following criteria and will be evaluated using *Task 1.3 Evaluation Rubric*.

- Provides evidence on how the cooperative meets each principle
- Describes the products and/or services provided to its members
- Explains how a person can become a member
- Explains the process for making business decisions
- Includes examples of how the cooperative gives back to its community

- Organized in a logical sequence
- Effectively deliver the information with equal participation by all team member

Complete Table 2 on the student worksheet during each of the other teams' presentations.

Conclusion

1. How do cooperatives give back to members?
2. How do cooperatives benefit local communities?
3. What makes a cooperative a democratic structure?
4. Which principle do you believe is most critical for a cooperative to follow? Why?

Task 1.3 Student Worksheet

Table 1. Seven Principles

Principle	Personal Meaning	ICA Description
Voluntary and open membership		
Democratic member control		
Member economic participation		
Autonomy and Independence		
Education, Training, and Information		
Cooperation among cooperatives		
Concern for community		

Table 2. Coop Analysis

Coop Name:
What does the cooperative buy or sell?
How does the cooperative benefit its members?
How do members of the cooperative make decisions?
How does the cooperative benefit local communities?
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