Integrating Employability Skills into Everyday Instruction

September 2, 2015

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#employability
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A recording of the webinar and other resources will be available at www.ccrscenter.org and www.aypf.org.
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#employability
Introduction and Welcome

Ellen Cushing
The mission of the College and Career Readiness and Success (CCRS) Center is to build the capacity of states to effectively implement college and career readiness and success initiatives. Through technical assistance and supporting resources, the CCRS Center provides customized support that facilitates the continuous design, implementation, and improvement of state CCRS priorities.
Our Work

- Provide high-quality and timely technical assistance.
  - Written responses
  - In-person technical assistance
  - Thought partnership

- Develop relevant and actionable products.
  - Knowledge-building briefs and online tools
  - Practical guides
  - Professional learning modules

- Understand the CCRS context in states
CCRS Center Focal Areas

Measures and Outcomes

CCRS Center Focal Areas

Career Pathways

Data Use
Employability skills are the general skills and knowledge that are necessary for success in the labor market at all employment levels and in all sectors.
Today’s Webinar

- Discusses the importance of employability skills in today’s workforce
- Introduces key resources to support states and local education agencies in integrating employability skills
  - Employability Skills Framework
  - Employability Skills Professional Learning Module
  - Employability Skills Alignment Workbook
- Shares experiences from a state currently prioritizing employability skills in their education reforms
Today’s Presenters

- **Laura Rasmussen Foster**, Program Director of Adult Education Studies, RTI International

- **Kate Blosveren**, Associate Executive Director, NASDCTEc

- **Catherine Jacques**, Technical Assistance Lead, CCRS Center and GTL Center

- **Dr. Scott Myers**, Director of Teacher Licensure and Accreditation, Kansas State Department of Education
What is the Employability Skills Framework Website?

- One-stop resource for information on employability skills for instructors, administrators, employers, students, and more
- Key site content:
  - Interactive skills framework
  - Audience-based landing pages (educators, employers, and policymakers)
  - Crosswalk with academic and technical skills
  - Lesson planning checklist
  - Assessment comparison worksheet
Developed as part of OCTAE’s *Support for States’ Employability Standards in CTE and Adult Education* project

**Project Goals/Assumptions:**
- Highlight the importance of employability skills to college and career readiness
- Build on existing work to identify employability skills
- Create a common framework for employability skills

**Guided by technical work group and stakeholder groups**
The Framework is comprised of nine key skills, organized in three broad categories: Applied Knowledge, Effective Relationships, and Workplace Skills.

Skills for College and Career Readiness

Individuals require many skills to be college and career ready, including academic knowledge, technical expertise, and a set of general, cross-cutting abilities called employability skills.

Employability skills are general skills that are necessary for success in the labor market at all employment levels and in all sectors. These skills have a number of names—soft skills, workforce readiness skills, career readiness skills—but they all speak to the same set of core skills that employers want.

The Employability Skills Framework is a one-stop resource for information and tools to inform the instruction and assessment of employability skills.

Featured Resources

The source matrix compares the employability skills identified by a sample of national and state standards and assessments used to develop the framework.

View Matrix

Access resources and tools for...

- EDUCATORS
- EMPLOYERS
- POLICYMAKERS

Stay Connected!
Sign up for email updates and news.
Interactive Skills Framework

- Applied Academic Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Personal Qualities
- Workplace Skills
- Effective Relationships
- Technology Use
- Systems Thinking
- Information Use
- Communication Skills
- Resource Management
Understanding the Importance of Employability Skills

Kate Blosveren, NASDCTEc
NASDCTEc’s Role

• Member of technical working group to develop Employability Framework

• Partner of AIR’s College & Career Readiness & Success Center

• Partner of AIR’s Center for Great Teachers & Leaders (reviewer of new tools)
Why Employability Skills?
Core to College and Career Readiness

- Academic Knowledge & Skills
- Technical Knowledge & Skills
- Employability Skills

CCR
Why Employability Skills? Core to College and Career Readiness

• Requires adaptability and a commitment to lifelong learning, along with mastery of key knowledge, skills and dispositions that vary from one career to another and change over time as a person progresses along a developmental continuum.

• These include:
  – Academic Knowledge and Skills,
  – Technical Knowledge and Skills, and
  – Employability Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions, which are inter-dependent and mutually reinforcing.
Why Employability Skills? Core to College and Career Readiness

• Employability Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions include, but are not limited to:
  – Goal setting and planning;
  – Managing transitions from school to work and back again, and from one occupation along a career pathway to another;
  – Clear and effective communication skills;
  – Critical thinking and problem solving;
  – Working productively in teams and independently;
  – Effective use of technology; and
  – Ethical decision-making and social responsibility.
Why Employability Skills? Demanded by Employers

• Frequently cited as among the most important skills by employers (*Hart Research Associates*, 2015)

• Lack of employability skills contributes to “talent shortage” (*ManpowerGroup*, 2012)

• Top three most important skills identified by employers (*National Association of Colleges and Employers*, 2014)
  – Ability to work in teams
  – Ability to make decisions/solve problems
  – Ability to communicate inside/outside organization
Value of the Framework

- Non-Cognitive Skills
- Employability Skills
- Grit
- Soft Skills
- 21st Century Skills
- Emotional Intelligence (EQ)
- Workplace Readiness Skills
Value of the Framework

The Career Ready Practices

1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
3. Attend to personal health and financial well-being.
4. Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason.
5. Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
7. Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in them.
9. Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
10. Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals.
11. Use technology to enhance productivity.
12. Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competencies.
Value of the Framework

- Applied Academic Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Personal Qualities
- Workplace Skills
- Technology Use
- Resource Management
- Systems Thinking
- Information Use
- Communication Skills

Employability
Framework-Plus

- Value of Crosswalk
- Innovative models
- Resources
Putting Framework into Action
To submit live questions, please use the “Questions” box
Integrating Employability Skills: A Framework for All Educators

Catherine Jacques
Integrating Employability Skills
A Framework for All Educators

Facilitator’s Guide

JULY 2015

http://www.ccrscenter.org/technical-assistance-networks
Professional Learning Module

- Professional learning modules (PLMs) are free and customizable train-the-facilitator resources.
- PLMs help build a common language and understanding.
- This module is a collaborative partnership among:
  - College and Career Readiness and Success Center (CCRS Center)
  - Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center)
  - RTI International
Objectives of the PLM

- Introduces the Employability Skills Framework
- Connects the Employability Skills Framework with other education initiatives
- Provides strategies to prioritize employability skills at the state, employer, district, and individual teacher levels
- Shows how teachers can integrate employability skills into lesson plans
Employability Skills Framework

- Applied Academic Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Personal Qualities
- Resource Management
- Technology Use
- Information Use
- Systems Thinking
- Workplace Skills
- Communication Skills
- Applied Knowledge
- Effective Relationships
Policy and Practice Connections

- Important component of college and career readiness

  ![Diagram showing interconnections of Academic Skills, Employability Skills, and Technical Skills]


- Connections to relevant policy initiatives
  - New state college and career readiness standards
  - Professional practice rubrics
### Crosswalk With College- and Career-Ready Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employability Skills</th>
<th>State CCR Standards</th>
<th>Common Career Technical Core</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applied Knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Academic Skills</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effective Relationships</strong></td>
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<tr>
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Sample Crosswalk Language

Critical Thinking Skills
- Thinks critically
- Thinks creatively
- Makes sound decisions
- Solves problems
- Reasons
- Plans and organizes

Common Core
- ELA Anchor Standards
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific evidence...to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.
- Mathematics Anchor Standards
  - CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP2: Reason abstractly and quantitatively
  - CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP3: Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
## Crosswalk With Professional Practice Rubrics

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Communication Skills

- Communicates verbally
- Listens actively
- Comprehends written material
- Conveys information in writing
- Observes carefully

3b. Discussion techniques. Effective teachers promote learning through discussion. A foundational skill that students learn through engaging in discussion is that of explaining and justifying their reasoning and conclusions, based on specific evidence. Teachers skilled in the use of questioning and discussion techniques challenge students to examine their premises, to build a logical argument, and to critique the arguments of others. Furthermore, in conducting discussions, skilled teachers build further questions on student responses and insist that students examine their premises, build a logical argument, and critique the arguments of others.
Interpersonal Skills
- Understands teamwork and works with others
- Responds to customer needs
- Exercises leadership
- Negotiates to resolve conflicts
- Respects individual differences

2a. Student interactions with other students, including both words and actions. As important as a teacher’s treatment of students is, how students are treated by their classmates is arguably even more important to students. At its worst, poor treatment causes students to feel rejected by their peers. At its best, positive interactions among students are mutually supportive and create an emotionally healthy school environment. Teachers not only model and teach students how to engage in respectful interactions with one another but also acknowledge such interactions.
### 1. Applied Academic Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Employability Skills in This Category</strong></th>
<th><strong>Alignment to State College and Career Readiness Standards or District Professional Practice Framework</strong></th>
<th><strong>Question for Consideration</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Reading Skills:** Students interpret written instructions or project directions and constructing responses, interpreting technical language, using print and online materials as resources, completing worksheets, and seeking clarification about what they have read. | 1. What are the explicit or implicit connections to the employability skills for this category (at the left)? | To what extent is this employability skill explicitly included in the student standards or professional practice framework? (Circle one.)
   - a. To a great extent
   - b. To some extent
   - c. Not at all |
| **Writing Skills:** Students rely on writing skills to construct lab reports, posters, and presentation materials, take notes, and compose responses to essay questions. | **Instructional Skills and Supports** |
| **Mathematics Strategies and Procedures:** Students use computational skills appropriately and make logical choices when analyzing and differentiating among available procedures. These skills occur in real-world contexts that integrate academic skills in authentic situations in all classes, including mathematics, science, language arts, and social sciences. Students follow procedures, experiment, infer, hypothesize (even as simple as “what if we do it this way”), and construct processes to complete a task. This work can occur outside of mathematics and science classes. | 2. What actions, habits, or practices do teachers and students need to demonstrate in order to be proficient in this employability skill? | In your view, how often do teachers and students demonstrate proficiency for those actions, habits, or practices? (Circle one.)
   - a. All or nearly all of the time
   - b. Most of the time
   - c. Only some of the time |
| **Scientific Principles and Procedures:** Students follow procedures, experiment, infer, hypothesize (even as simple as “what if we do it this way”), and construct processes to complete a task. This work can occur outside of mathematics and science classes. | **Professional Learning Opportunities (Initiatives, Offerings, Structures, Programs, or Supports)** | **Question for Consideration** |
| | 3. What professional learning opportunities teachers need to effectively implementing these actions, habits, or practices into their instruction? | To what extent do your state and district professional learning opportunities align to the identified professional learning needs? (Circle one.)
   - a. To a great extent
   - b. To some extent
   - c. Not at all |

**Additional Notes:** Insights, Concerns, Questions Raised, Potential Policy Implications, Funding Streams
## 2. Critical Thinking Skills

### Employability Skills in This Category

**Thinks Creatively:** Students create innovative and novel ideas or solutions and display divergent thinking. This thinking can be seen in oral presentations, creative-writing assignments, open-ended tasks, and project design.

**Thinks Critically:** Students display analytical and strategic thinking. This thinking can be seen in debating an issue, converging on an understanding, assessing a problem, and questioning (e.g., playing devil’s advocate).

**Makes Sound Decisions:** Students differentiate between multiple approaches and assess options.

**Solves Problems:** Students assess problems involving the use of available resources (i.e., personnel and materials) and review multiple strategies for resolving problems.

**Reasons:** Students negotiate pros and cons of ideas, approaches, and solutions and analyze options using an “if-then” rationale.

**Plans and Organizes:** Students plan steps, procedures, or approaches for addressing tasks. This planning occurs naturally in most assignments, ranging from solving one problem to completing a long-term project, mathematics and science classes.

### Alignment to State College and Career Readiness Standards or District Professional Practice Framework

1. **What are the explicit or implicit connections to the employability skills for this category (at the left)?**
   - **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRS.R1 & SL.4; CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP2 & MP3**

### Question for Consideration

To what extent is this employability skill explicitly included in the student standards or professional practice framework? (Circle one.)

- a. To a great extent
- b. To some extent
- c. Not at all

### Instructional Skills and Supports

2. **What actions, habits or practices do teachers and students need to demonstrate in order to be proficient in this Employability Skill?**

   Teachers and students can benefit from explicit models and strategies to facilitate critical thinking (e.g., Socratic discussions, “fishbowl classroom configurations”). The district and schools can direct teachers to collections of curated, online resources that they can use with their students. Other school-wide materials such as daily planners and regular student work planning sessions with teachers could help with organization and decision skills on long-term projects.

### Question for Consideration

In your view, how often do teachers and students demonstrate proficiency for those actions, habits or practices? (Circle one.)

- a. All or nearly all of the time
- b. Most of the time
- c. Only some of the time

### Professional Learning Opportunities (Initiatives, Offerings, Structures, Programs, or Supports)

3. **What professional learning opportunities teachers need to effectively implementing these actions, habits or practices into their instruction?**

   - **PLOs that train teachers in facilitating Socratic discussions (TI SIG & TII, CTE, REAP)**
   - Encourage PLCs and free, online resources.

### Question for Consideration

To what extent do your state and district professional learning opportunities align to the identified professional learning needs? (Circle one.)

- a. To a great extent
- b. To some extent
- c. Not at all

### Additional Notes: Insights, Concerns, Questions Raised, Potential Policy Implications, Funding Streams

In order to make the most effective use of free, online resources, it may be helpful to design a webpage that serves as a repository for these resources. This could be piloted at first, with the intention that teachers increasingly take ownership of the site and contribute their own successes.
Employability skills are crucial for all students.

With competing initiatives, prioritizing the use of employability skills is imperative.

Different roles exist for state, district, and teacher stakeholders and employers.
Utilizing the Professional Learning Module

- Access the Employability Skills PLM:
  - [http://www.ccrscenter.org/technical-assistance-networks](http://www.ccrscenter.org/technical-assistance-networks)

- Connect with Regional Comprehensive Center staff

- Work with the CCRS Center or GTL Center to customize the PLM
  - Email: crscenter@air.org
To submit live questions, please use the “Questions” box
Kansas: A System’s Approach

Employability Skills Work
A Bit of History

- Accreditation Work
- Moving away from AYP and high stakes testing
- System’s Perspective: District vs. Building
  - % R’s
    - Rigor
    - Relevance
    - Relationships
    - Responsive Culture
    - RESULTS
RESULTS

- Academic/Cognitive
- Technical Skills
- Post Secondary
- EMPLOYABILITY Skills
Givens for Kansas...

• LOCAL FREEDOMS
• Needs to “make sense”
• Needs to flow logically from where we are with what we are doing/have been doing
• Avoid duplication of effort
Process of Discovery

- 2013-Present: SEA grappling with defining “Employability Skills”
- May 2015: C3 arranged for College & Career Readiness & Success Center, Center on Great Teachers & Leaders, and the Research Triangle International to provide their collaborative work
- Summer 2015: Kansas Accreditation Advisory Council
- Summer 2015: Accreditation Subcommittee on Employability Skills
- August 2015: Mid-sized middle school engaging with materials provided
Moving Forward Continued...

• Mid-sized middle school staff efforts to figure out possible data points/see how they are already doing

• Framing Questions:
  ○ WHAT are Employability Skills?
  ○ WHY is this important?
  ○ What are currently doing?
  • “Twenty things kids need to know before going to the high school” to Lesson Planning Checklist
MS Pilot Work

• Messaging Matters: Not looking to start something new

• Completing crosswalk one category at a time (looking at lesson plans to see how they line up with the definitions)
  - Workplace Skills
  - Applied Knowledge
  - Effective Relationships
MS Pilot Work

- Documented where 20 Success Skills fit the 5 areas of the Workplace Skills
- Flowed easily and lined up
  - “Not just another thing I have to do. We’re already doing it.”
- Doing all of this BUT have not been explicit with the students to tie together for them
Next Steps

- Following crosswalk with Lesson Planning Tool, build on success/momentum...
  - “Resource was great”
  - “...Already doing this. Not yet another new thing...”
  - “Broad enough to fit all schooling levels.”
- Throughout year address other two categories
  - Applied Knowledge
  - Effective Relationships
- Address the Employability Skills Workbook in small doses throughout the year
  - Leads directly into professional learning opportunities/needs
Continued Future Work

• Plans to take to ES and HS
• Professional learning steps relate to other SEA work
  o Fuels DI for teacher professional learning
  o Data analysis
• Fold together with state feedback to new commissioner/State Board vision and goals
• Present “finished” accreditation system to State Board for approval
Audience Q&A

To submit live questions, please use the “Questions” box.
Contact Today’s Presenters

- Ellen Cushing  
  CCRS Center  
  • ecushing@air.org

- Catherine Jacques  
  GTL Center  
  • cjacques@air.org

- Laura Rasmussen Foster  
  RTI International  
  • lrasmussen@rti.org

- Scott Myers  
  KSDE  
  • smyers@ksde.org

#employability
Thank you

- Please fill out the survey upon exiting the webinar.
- Materials and video will be posted online at [www.aypf.org](http://www.aypf.org) and [www.ccrscenter.org](http://www.ccrscenter.org).

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