

10 NECESSARY SKILLS

YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL

How do we prepare students for the future? What are the skills that our students need to be successful? In order to help students, develop these skills, what type of projects and assessments can we engage them in? Approximately 65% of our students will be employed in jobs that don't exist yet. So how do we prepare them for this?

ADAPTIVE THINKING

In the digital age, things are changing at exponential rates. By the time employees learn the newest software or program, a better version is coming about. Future employers will need to continuously adapt to changing conditions as well as be able to learn new things quickly and efficiently. We need our students to learn how to learn.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

There continues to be an emphasis on the ability to communicate. In the digital age, however, we have access to a wide variety of new ways to communicate from videoconferencing to social media. Future employers need to be able to communicate with people within their team, as well as people outside of the team and organization.

COLLABORATION SKILLS

Most classrooms foster a culture of competition and independence rather than one of teamwork and collaboration. Future employers will need to quickly adapt to a culture of collaboration. They will need to collaborate with others within and outside of the organization, often using a number of new technologies.

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

There is a decreased emphasis on employers following directions and an increased emphasis on employers thinking critically and solving problems. In a rapidly changing world, employers need employees who can solve problems, provide ideas and help improve the organization.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT

This includes the ability for employers to independently plan, organize, create and execute, rather than wait for someone to do this for them.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

This skill is mentioned often. I believe that it correlates with the ability to ask good questions and the ability to problem solve. Employers will be looking to employees more and more for creative and innovative solutions to issues that exist.

INQUIRY SKILLS

The large majority of academic assessments ask students for answers. Rarely do we assess students on how well they can ask questions. The ability to ask great questions, however, is a critical skill that is desperately needed in a culture which requires constant innovations.

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Almost every business that I talked to said that employers will need to be skilled at using technology. In the digital age, technology is everywhere. Schools, however, have been slow to adapt to this change. Rarely are students required or taught to learn technology efficiently. This needs to be emphasized.

EMPATHY AND PERSPECTIVE

Although this skill has always been important, it seems to be another one that is slowly disappearing. The ability for our students to put themselves in someone else's shoes, to understand their feelings, and to help solve their problems

SOFT SKILLS

Schools rarely spend time teaching students' soft skills, including skills such as time management skills, organizational skills, the ability to look someone in the eyes when talking to them, or using a firm handshake. I have heard several times, by different business leaders, that these skills seem to be disappearing.