

Preparing Students for 21st Century Skills

Preparing students for their place in 21st Century careers is important not only for their future lives but for the businesses and communities in which they will one day work and live. To guide instruction in life and career skills, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills provides a framework which can be found online at www.p21.org/overview/skills-framework/266.

Among the skills highlighted are: Adaptability and Flexibility, Initiative and Self-Direction, Social and Cross-Cultural Skills, Productivity and Accountability, and Leadership and Responsibility.

Each year, businesses working with Linking Learning to Life providing internships, job-shadows, and other opportunities for our students, are asked to complete an evaluation of the program. Recently we completed a cross-reference between the employers' responses to the prompting question, "List the top 3 skills that high school students need in order to be successful while working at my business," when compared to the 21st Century Skills framework, we found much agreement between the two sources.

86% of those responding to our survey identified using their own words skills that can be found in the Social and

Cross-Cultural Skills category of the 21st Century Skills framework. These include the skills of patience, courtesy, and respect for people with diverse perspectives.

57% identified skills which we found in the Leadership & Responsibility section of the framework: honesty, responsibility, safety oriented, work ethic, and creative thinking/problem solving.

50% of employers identified skills which can be found in the Productivity & Accountability framework, and 50% named skills found in the Initiative and Self-Direction skill set. These include timeliness, reliability, organization, attention to details, and enthusiasm.

22% said a key skill is adaptability and a willingness to learn, which we identified as falling in the Adaptability & Flexibility.

By providing high school students with the opportunity to learn valuable life skills and grow as individuals, employers help shape their own business culture, and the community in which they work.

To learn more about how you can become involved in Linking Learning to Life as a business partner, please email info@LLLvt.org or call (802) 951-8845.

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