

Life-Skills

In everyday **life**, the development of **life skills** helps students to: Find new ways of thinking and problem solving. Recognize the impact of their actions and teaches them to take responsibility for what they do rather than blame others. Build confidence both in spoken **skills** and for group collaboration and cooperation.

What Is Life Skills-Based Education?

Think of life skills as the building blocks or framework that allow students to apply the knowledge, they acquire in school to real world problems and situations. Also referred to as “[soft skills](#)” in a professional context, the ability to think abstractly and approach problems from multiple angles to find practical solutions, and the skill to communicate clearly and effectively are just as important as technical knowledge in a particular field or academic subject.

[According to Macmillan Education](#), “In a constantly changing environment, having life skills is an essential part of being able to meet the challenges of everyday life. The dramatic changes in global economies over the past five years have been matched with the transformation in technology and these are all impacting on education, the workplace, and our home life.”

But life skills go well beyond choosing a major in college or impressing a potential employer in the future. Life skills provide children with important tools for development, such as independent thinking, how to socialize and make new friends, and how to take action in situations where their parents or teachers may not be around to help or intervene ([dealing with a bully](#) or personal insecurities and fears, for example.) Unlike motor skills and basic intelligence, executive function and [decision-making skills are not innate but learned](#).

Examples of life skills include:

- Self reflection
- [Critical thinking](#)
- Problem solving
- Interpersonal skills



Personal-life-skills: Trust, Respect, Independence, Collaboration, Kindness, Listening, Empathy,

Description: NICEF, UNESCO and WHO list the ten core life skill strategies and techniques as: **problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication skills, decision-making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness building skills, empathy, and coping with stress and emotions.**

We all need a set of core **life skills** (or, **adult** capabilities) to manage work, family, and relationships successfully. These **skills** include planning, focus, self-control, awareness, and flexibility.

Community Attributes:

Thoughts	Life-Skills / Actions
Wisdom: good decisions and taking the path that provides value to all (society)	Thinking skills (creative, critical, system), SEL learning, Decision making, Reflection, Innovation
Community: People and relationships count	Listening skills, communication skills, teamwork, Interpersonal skills, Relationship, Measurements, Trust, Honesty, Empathy
Social justice: leaving the world a better place than you found it	Problem solving skills, positive outlook, Curiosity, Process skills, Executive functions
Purpose: Sense of direction that you achieve, the goals you set	Put first things first, Pro-active outlook, Begin with the ends in mind, and Win-Win for all, Time-management, Project planning,

The Following are readings documents regarding Life-Skills:



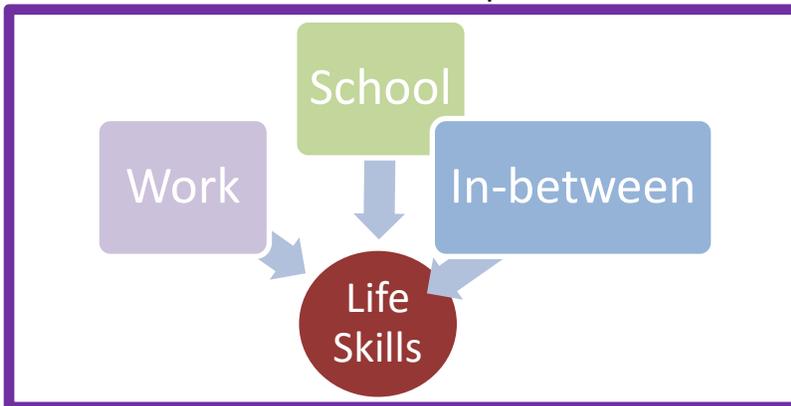


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Soft-Skills ...How can we help high school and college students,

drop outs and young workers achieve better lives and understand the work environment? Teach them the soft-skills of life. See work as a career that you can continuously get better. The training will be integrated with a “mindfulness approach” (You have control over your actions):

Objective: Offer a set of courses that demonstrates the fundamentals of the various soft-skills and a follow up method for success.



The top four skills needed to get a good job are: ...

The Global Achievement Gap, Tony Wagner, co-

director of the Change Leadership Group, Harvard School of Education

- Critical thinking and problem solving,
- Collaboration and leadership,
- Agility and adaptability,
- Initiative and entrepreneurialism

Most faculty understand the need to help students develop these abilities, but feel that they are being pushed into coming up with short-term strategies (such as grading rubrics) to improve student performance in the classroom at the expense of developing sustainable, higher order thinking skills.

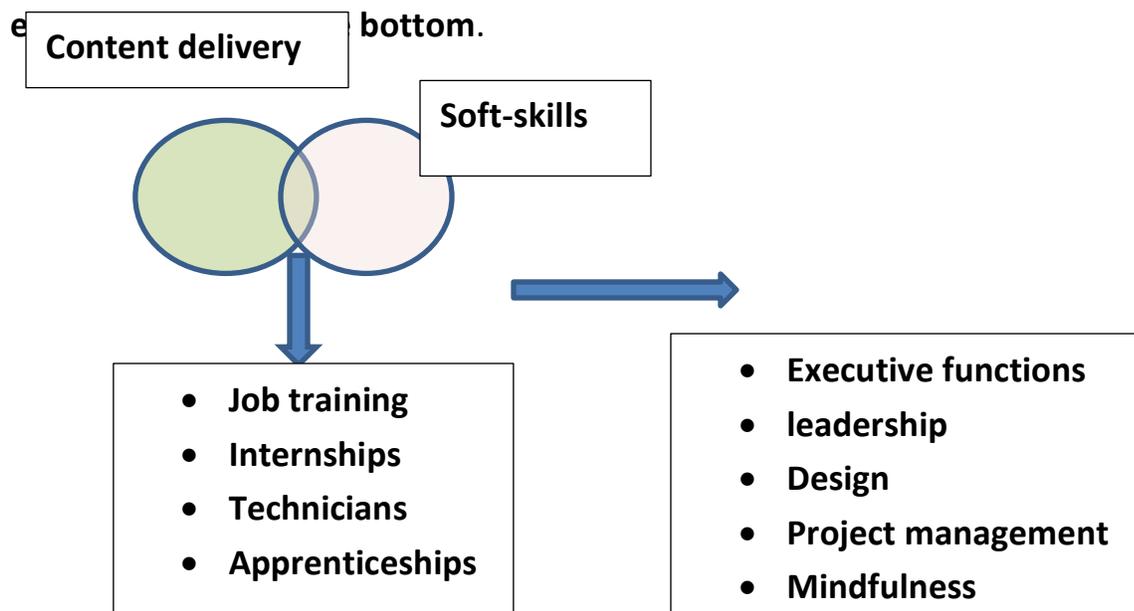
Examples of the Soft-Skills:

- Character Development
- Work in Teams ... Collaboration, decision making, brain writing



- Communication Skills... Presenting yourself, empathy for the other person's view, customer focus, thinking with clarity and precision
- Problem framing and solving, understanding what is the true problem and tinkering with ways to solve the problem
- Habits of Mind ... Persistence, problems as opportunities, finding humor, accuracy in your work, remain open to continuous learning
- Respectful dealing with others (Professionalism)
- Dialogue ... 6 Hats How to create dialogue and not shouting matches.
- Entrepreneurships / Innovation, business processes
- Brain Plasticity ... we continuously are able to learn new things
- Thinking skills ... Questions, creative and critical thinking, meta-cognitive reflection and system thinking. Quality focus and feedback
- Leadership ... What is it and how does it differs from management.
- Work Ethic and Professionalism

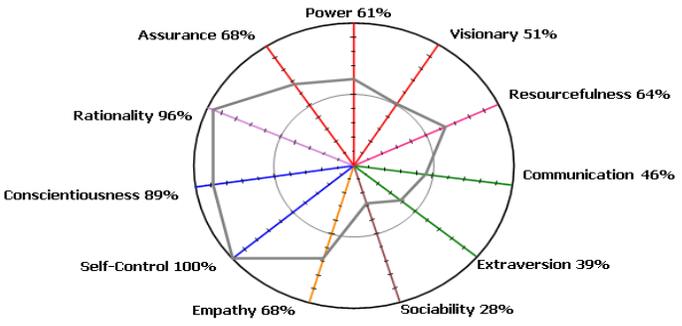
Focus on



- Get a partnership with industry that provides career opportunity if we provide a person with good soft-skills. Retail stores, Warehouses, etc.
- Relationship with non-profits that focus on this area.



Example Course Details:

Session	Major area	Theme
1	Introduction / Creating a learning collaborative in the classroom / pre-Assessment of their knowledge and thinking skill awareness	Attributes, Values, Teacher Skills and the relation to excellence in academics and the larger world of work. Developing the outcome goals for the class.
2	<p>Self-Assessment</p> <p>Quality focus Understand why you did certain things, What can you learn from your actions to improve</p> <p>How can you use data to improve?</p>	
2	Work in teams	Part of Team Project ... Collaboration, decision making, brain writing (brainstorming)
3	<p>Problem framing and solving</p> <p>Empathy</p>	Part of Hands on Learning ... understanding what is the true problem and tinkering with ways to solve the problem
4	Creative and critical thinking skills around the design process	Learn the tools of brainstorming, brain-writing, and decision making for divergent and convergent processing skills
	Project Planning, Execution and Measurement	
5	<p>Brain Plasticity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carol Dweck, Ph.D • Claude M. Steele Ph.D 	... we continuously are able to learn new things





	Mindfulness	Two 30 minutes discussions spent on a single idea: that the brain is a muscle . Giving it a harder workout makes you smarter.
6	Habits of Mind	Built into projects and continuous discussion
7	Infusion of thinking skills	Create an appreciation for life-long learning by providing opportunities to develop creative and critical thinking skills
8	Dialogue	... 6 Hats How to create dialogue and not shouting matches. Using dialogue question
9	Professionalism	Respectful dealing with others
10	Entrepreneurships / Innovation	Business processes... Persistence, problems as opportunities , finding humor, accuracy in your work, remain open to continuous learning
11	Community support Job training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internships • Technicians • Apprenticeship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a partnership with industry that provides career opportunity if we provide a person with good soft-skills. Retail stores, Warehouses, etc. • Relationship with non-profits that focus on this area.
12	On-Going Follow up Provide the student Scaffolding tools to continuously improve and collaborate with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffolding tools • On-line Collaboration

In her research, Duckworth examines two traits that predict success: **grit**, the tendency to sustain interest and effort in pursuing long-term goals, and **self control**, the regulation of behavioral, emotional and attentional



impulses. To Duckworth, grit allows people to pursue challenges over the course of years. Self control, on the other hand, helps us battle “hourly temptations.”

Reference Documents:

Habit of Mind

1. Persisting	5. Metacognition	9. Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision	13. Taking responsible risks
2. Managing impulsivity	6. Striving for accuracy	10. Gather data through all senses	14. Finding humor
3. Listening with understanding and empathy	7. Questioning and posing problems	11. Creating, imagining and innovating	15. Thinking interdependently
4. Thinking flexibly	8. Applying past knowledge to new situations	12. Responding with wonderment and awe	16. Remaining open to continuous learning

<http://www.habitsofmind.org/content/back-back-strategy-used-enhance-habits-mind>

Another View		
Appreciation of beauty and excellence	Curiosity	Grit (persistence and resiliency)
Bravery	Fairness	Hope (optimism)
Citizenship	Forgiveness and mercy	Humility/modesty
Creativity	Gratitude	Humor
Integrity	Kindness	Leadership
Love	Love of Learning	Open-mindedness
Perspective	Prudence/discretion	Self-control
Social Intelligence	Spirituality	Zest (energy and enthusiasm)



Massachusetts Definition of College and Career Readiness Approved by Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on February 26, 2013; Massachusetts Board of Higher Education on March 12, 2013.

All high school students should develop a foundation in the academic disciplines identified in the Mass Core course of study,¹ build competencies for workplace readiness as articulated in the Integrating College and Career Task Force Report,² and focus on applying academic strategies to problem solving in diverse professional and life contexts, appropriate to individual student goals

- 1) Workplace Readiness
- 2) Work Ethic and Professionalism
- 3) Qualities and Strategies
- 4) Brain Plasticity
- 5) Problem definition and solving

Workplace Readiness

Student preparation for college and career should emphasize career awareness, exploration and immersion as well as development of the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to successfully navigate the workplace. College and career ready students will demonstrate:

Work Ethic and Professionalism

- Attendance and punctuality expected by the workplace
- Workplace appearance appropriate for position and duties
- Accepting direction and constructive criticism with a positive attitude and Response
- Motivation and taking initiative, taking projects from initiation to completion
- Understanding workplace culture, policy and safety, including respecting confidentiality and workplace ethics Effective Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Oral and written communication appropriate to the workplace
- Listening attentively and confirming understanding
- Interacting with co-workers, individually and in teams³

Proficiency in these skills is common for success in all workplaces and should be viewed as the foundation upon which additional workplace and career skills are added based on the specifics of any job.

Qualities and Strategies

Preparation for college and career should help students develop a wide range of quantitative and qualitative abilities that go beyond the minimum levels of competence needed for entry-level college courses and employment. In high school, students should demonstrate:



- Higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- The ability to think critically, coherently, and creatively
- The ability to direct and evaluate their own learning, be aware of resources
- available to support their learning, and have the confidence to access these
- resources when needed.
- Motivation, intellectual curiosity, flexibility, discipline, self-advocacy, responsibility, and reasoned beliefs

Strengths of character ... From The KIPP School

Challenge! Zest

Zest: Actively participates. Shows enthusiasm. Approaches new situations with excitement and energy.

Challenge! Grit

Grit: Finishes what is begun. Sticks with a project or activity for more than a few weeks. Tries very hard even after experiencing failure. Stays committed to goals. Keeps working hard even when feeling like quitting

Challenge! Self Control (School Work)

Self Control (school work) - Comes to class prepared. Remembers and follows directions. Gets work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute. Pays attention and resists distractions. Works independently with focus

Challenge! Self Control (Interpersonal)

Self-Control (interpersonal) - Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked. Allows others to speak without interruption. Is polite to adults and peers. Keeps temper in check.

Challenge! Optimism

Optimism - Believes that effort will improve the future. When bad things happen, thinks about what could make it better next time. Stays motivated, even when things don't go well. Believes that you can improve on things you're not good at

Challenge! Gratitude

Gratitude - Notices when other people help. Shows appreciation for the good things in their life. Expresses appreciation by saying "thank you." Does something nice for someone else as a way of saying "thank you."

Challenge! Social Intelligence

Social Intelligence - Able to find solutions during conflicts with others. Shows that they care about other people's feelings. Adapts to different social situations



Challenge! Curiosity - Eager to explore new things. Asks questions to help learning. Takes an active interest in learning.



Life

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Life Skills	Definition	Where taught
Working as a Team	collaborate , get together, work as a team to achieve a common goal.	Beginning of the project. Lots of life skills are in this.
Negotiation	Give & Take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting learning targets Organizing the team roles.
Decision making	Choice, selection	Selecting between the two finalist ... show tutorial
Study skills teach students how to use study skills: www.studyskills.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage time be organized improve reading comprehension listen effectively take more comprehensive notes communicate more effectively in written and oral expression 	During the meeting: Listening, communicating and expression Prepare for presentations Planning process Scheduling processes
Innovation	Improvement, invent, advance	During reflection, How can I make a process better?
Entrepreneurship	Creating value where there was none!	During reflection.
Learning from failure	Not success, dissatisfaction	Rapid prototyping solutions and seeing what works.





Life Skills	Definition	Where taught
This reminds me of IDEO's philosophy of "fail early and often to succeed at the end".	Dyson argues that there is more we can learn from failures than from successes. Failure is a dress rehearsal for success	. I am always struck by James Dyson's claim that he built 5,127 prototypes before he got it right.
Risk taking/ Stretch goals	Possibility, Chance Probability	Strive for more innovative solutions, Shaping process
Planning	Arrangement, scheduling, forecasting	Developing plan for World project
Measurements/ feedback	Extent, coverage, range	Setting learning goals, How do we validate? Balanced scorecard
Process methods	Method, course of action, procedure	Problem solving process, Decision process, Use tools
Continuous improvement/ Quality	Value, worth, excellence	Continue to make the process or results better Quality plan review
Collaboration	Relationship, teamwork	During team meeting, 6-hat exercise
Self-control/ Values	Ethics, morals, principles, Will-power, restraint	Conduct one-self with others, develop a set of values to operate with
Character traits http://character.org/	Personality,	defines "character" comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and doing
Thinking skills Thinking does not occur spontaneously but must be	What the term refers to is the human capacity to think in conscious	Problem solving process, Wall hanging, Done thru facilitation



Life Skills	Definition	Where taught
evoked by problems and questions or by some perplexity; confusion or doubt ... John Dewey	ways to achieve certain purposes. Use of the mind to form thoughts, to reason, to reflect.	Creative thinking Critical thinking Meta-cognitive reflection Questioning System thinking
Time management ...MIT (Most important Task)	Point in time, control, schedule MIT first on list	Setting schedule, follow it, Part of planning process
Financial literacy	Monetary, Economic, Fiscal, Mastery, Knowledge	Planning, cost structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a critical consumer, loans • Risk management • Income • Money management • Planning, saving and investing • Happiness quotient ... How do you measure it?
Problem Solving	Challenge, solving, difficult	Following the process in solving the World problem
Social intelligence	social rules, effective listening, people watching, social self-efficacy, image management	During the problem solving process

How to Think Outside the Box with Entrepreneurship Lesson Plans





How To Think Thinking Skills
 Outside the Box with relationship to the €



Thinking Skills relationship to the engineering Design Process

Engineer design process*	Thinking skills
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Identify the need or problem</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare / Contrast • Decision process • Drawing Conclusions
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Research the need or problem</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification • Sequencing • Critical Thinking • Compare / Contrast • Root Cause
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Develop possible solution (s)</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm • Critical Thinking • Root Cause
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Select the best possible solution(s)</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare / Contract • Classification • Drawing Conclusions • Problem Solving
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Construct a prototype</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classification • Drawing Conclusions • Problem Solving
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Test and evaluate the solution(s)</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare / Contract • Classification • Drawing Conclusions • Problem Solving
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Communicate the solution(s)</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare / Contract • Classification • Drawing Conclusions





<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Redesign</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm • Compare / Contract • Classification • Drawing Conclusions
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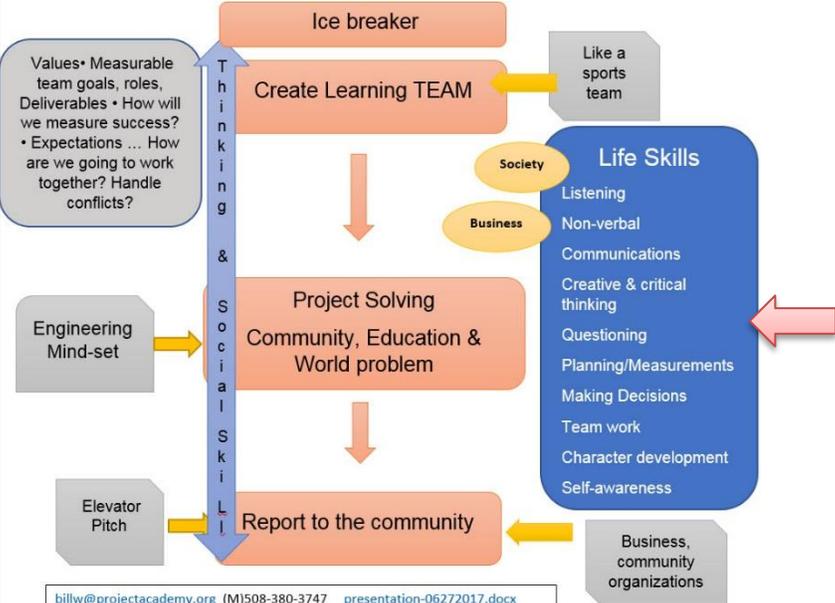
* Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Science and Technology/Engineering October, 2006



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Soft Skills = personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.



billw@projectacademy.org (M)508-380-3747 [presentation-06272017.docx](#)



KEY COMPONENTS TO SOCIAL SKILLS:

- ▶ Interpersonal skills
- ▶ Controlling your emotions
- ▶ Socializing at work
 - ▶ Networking
- ▶ Responding to conflict
- ▶ Helping customers



KEY COMPONENTS TO TEAMWORK:

- ▶ Respecting others
- ▶ Active listening
- ▶ Being reliable
- ▶ Actively participating
- ▶ Communication with your team members
- ▶ Solving problems as a group

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- ▶ Applying information
- ▶ Forming a hypothesis
- ▶ Decision making
- ▶ Problem solving



KEY COMPONENTS TO ATTITUDE:

- ▶ Determining to have a positive attitude
- ▶ Keeping your focus
- ▶ Doing your best
- ▶ Responding to guidance and direction

KEY COMPONENTS TO PLANNING AND ORGANIZING:

- ▶ Prioritizing
- ▶ Time management
- ▶ Coordinating resources
 - ▶ Delegating
- ▶ Creating systems
- ▶ Planning ahead

KEY COMPONENTS TO COMMUNICATION:

- ▶ Verbal communication
 - ▶ Listening
- ▶ Nonverbal communication
- ▶ Written communication
- ▶ Emotional awareness
- ▶ Com

KEY COMPONENTS TO PROFESSIONALISM:

- ▶ Knowledge of workplace expectations
 - ▶ Personal responsibility
 - ▶ Workplace ethics
 - ▶ Physical appearance
 - ▶ Using proper language
 - ▶ Minding your manners

