

Career Readiness Skills Checklist



Top 20 Career Readiness Skills Every
Middle School Educator Should Cover



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Introduction

Why Career Readiness?

Everyone knows about the infamous **skills gap**. Unemployment is too high, yet employers say that it's difficult to find qualified workers.

The problem is complicated, but you can do your part to help.

Take a look at this list of 20 career readiness skills and make sure you are teaching these skills in your middle school career readiness courses.

Score yourself, and then read more about each skill on the following pages.

How Many Do You Cover?

- ☐ Career Awareness
- ☐ Digital Citizenship
- ☐ Written Communication
- ☐ Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication
- ☐ Entrepreneurship
- ☐ Active Listening Skills
- ☐ Resumes
- ☐ Interview Skills
- ☐ Personal Appearance
- ☐ Attendance/Punctuality
- ☐ Policy Awareness
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Business Ethics
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Sales
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Customer Service
- ☐ Technology Skills
- ☐ Global Awareness
- ☐ Financial Literacy

How did you do?

Not sure **why** you should cover these skills? Read the next few pages to learn more about each one.



1. Career Awareness

Students need to be aware of career opportunities available in their local community. They also need to be aware of the training/education requirements necessary to obtain and maintain employment in those industries.

2. Digital Citizenship

Students need to understand the impact of their digital footprint and how to use social communication tools to be in control of that footprint. They need to understand the impact of decisions they make both in personal and professional environments.

3. Written Communication

Written communication skills are growing in importance for all industries as we move from paper to digital. Students will need to be able to compose effective emails, documents, and even tweets.

4. Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication

Video communication is increasingly used as a communication tool for business. Your students will need to be able to manage and observe non-verbal communication through tools like Skype, as well as communicate verbally over phone and video.



5. Entrepreneurship

The spirit of entrepreneurship is critical, even for those that are not starting a new business. We live in an environment of constant change, and the employees that can best adapt and take advantage of that will thrive.

6. Active Listening Skills

Active listening skills are another key piece of effective in-person or video communication. Students that listen and provide feedback will be more effective communicators of their own ideas.

7. Resumes

Electronic resume and job systems make it easier for individuals to apply for jobs. Employers will be sorting through more resumes than ever, so you need to make sure your students **stand out**. Students also need to understand the benefit of a well written cover letter.

8. Interview Skills

Job openings are competitive situations and the resume/cover letter are just the first part. Once they have that food in the door, your students need to be able to prove that they are capable and are the best candidate for the position.

9. Personal Appearance

Teachers don't always like to lecture students on personal appearance for interviews, networking events, or jobs. There are important lessons that students need to learn, because employers may be of a generation where tattoos and piercings are not acceptable. Students will need to adapt to the culture of the company, especially during the hiring process.

10. Attendance/Punctuality

Some say that half the battle is showing up, yet this can be a problem for some students.

11. Policy Awareness

Students must understand that employers have policies that should be followed if they want to maintain employment.

12. Teamwork

Students are sometimes assigned group projects in school, but teamwork in the workplace can be much different.



13. Business Ethics

Ethics are an important part of any business, and students should be aware that the choices they make could have an impact greater than their own reach inside the business.

14. Marketing

The internet has revolutionized marketing, yet the fundamentals remain the same. It's important for students to recognize the impact of marketing as both consumers and providers of goods and services.

15. Sales

Online purchases are becoming popular, but many transactions still require a person-to-person sales effort. Sales teams are going to need individuals with technology skills so they can gain efficiency.

16. Leadership

Some employers are looking for individuals to fill a position, but the best employers are looking for people that can grow within the organization. Students that exhibit leadership will have opportunities to excel in the workplace.



17. Customer Service

Customers are increasingly connected to brands via social media and other channels. All employees in many organizations are working to get “closer to the customer,” and any employee could be called on to help a customer solve a problem.

18. Technology Skills

Can you imagine any career over the next 20 years that will not be impacted by technology? Mastering today’s technology won’t be enough. Students need to learn how to continually adapt and learn as new technology is introduced.

19. Global Awareness

The world is becoming smaller, and employers want employees that can think and operate on a global scale.

20. Financial Literacy

Students need to understand personal and professional finance so they can make decisions and understand the implications of those choices.



Sources:

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http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Career-Tech/Information-Technology-Career-Field/InformationTechnology_StandardsDocument_September2013-pdf.pdf.aspx

Massachusetts Strand 4: Employability and Career Readiness

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/cte/frameworks/strand4.pdf>

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Career Development

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter127/ch127a.html>

Career Readiness Curriculum

Do you need Career Readiness or Career Exploration materials for your classroom? Learn more about this important topic:

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