

Soft Skills: One Major Key to Life, College, and Career Success:

MMS Staff Presentation- Beth Roemer



A word cloud of soft skills on a light green background. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape and vary in size and color. The colors include purple, green, blue, and red. The words are: ambition, ADVOCACY, SUCCESS, self-regulation, happiness, GOALS, COMMUNICATION, resilience, GRIT, THINKING, LIFE, integrity, CRITICAL, career, college, and innovation.

What are Soft Skills? Hard Skills?

SOFT SKILLS can be defined as desirable qualities for successful experiences/employment that **do not depend** on acquired knowledge. In short, soft skills refer to non-cognitive competencies.

HARD SKILLS can be defined as cognitive skills learned in academic subjects.

WHY THE EMPHASIS ON SOFT SKILLS?

VOICES FROM HIGHER EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY CITE THE NEED FOR SOFT SKILLS...

- ...a 2013 survey by the Workforce Solutions Group finds that more than 60% of employers say applicants lack “communication and interpersonal skills”.
- ...University of Chicago Consortium’s study on the value of noncognitive skills:
<http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Noncognitive%20Report.pdf>
- Books such as *How Children Succeed* by Paul Tough, former Time Magazine Editor, outline the importance of essential character traits.

Can we talk?



Soft Skill Survey

In your opinion, what are the top three soft skills you would like your students to have?

TURN AND TALK!

Desirable Soft Skills

- Independence and Self-Advocacy
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Collaboration across Networks and Leading by Influence
- Perseverance, Agility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Entrepreneurialism
- Effective Verbal and Written Communication
- Accessing and Analyzing Information
- Curiosity and Imagination

-From Teaching Students to Dig Deeper:

The Common Core in Action by Ben Johnson

A Different Take on SOFT SKILLS

- Active Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking
- Reading Comprehension
- Time Management
- Social Perceptiveness
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Service Orientation
- Complex Problem Solving
- Writing
- Active Learning

....from Hanover Research Study, 2014

LIFE SKILLS: MORE THAN LESSONS!

<http://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teaching-more-than-lessons>



COOL STORY BRO

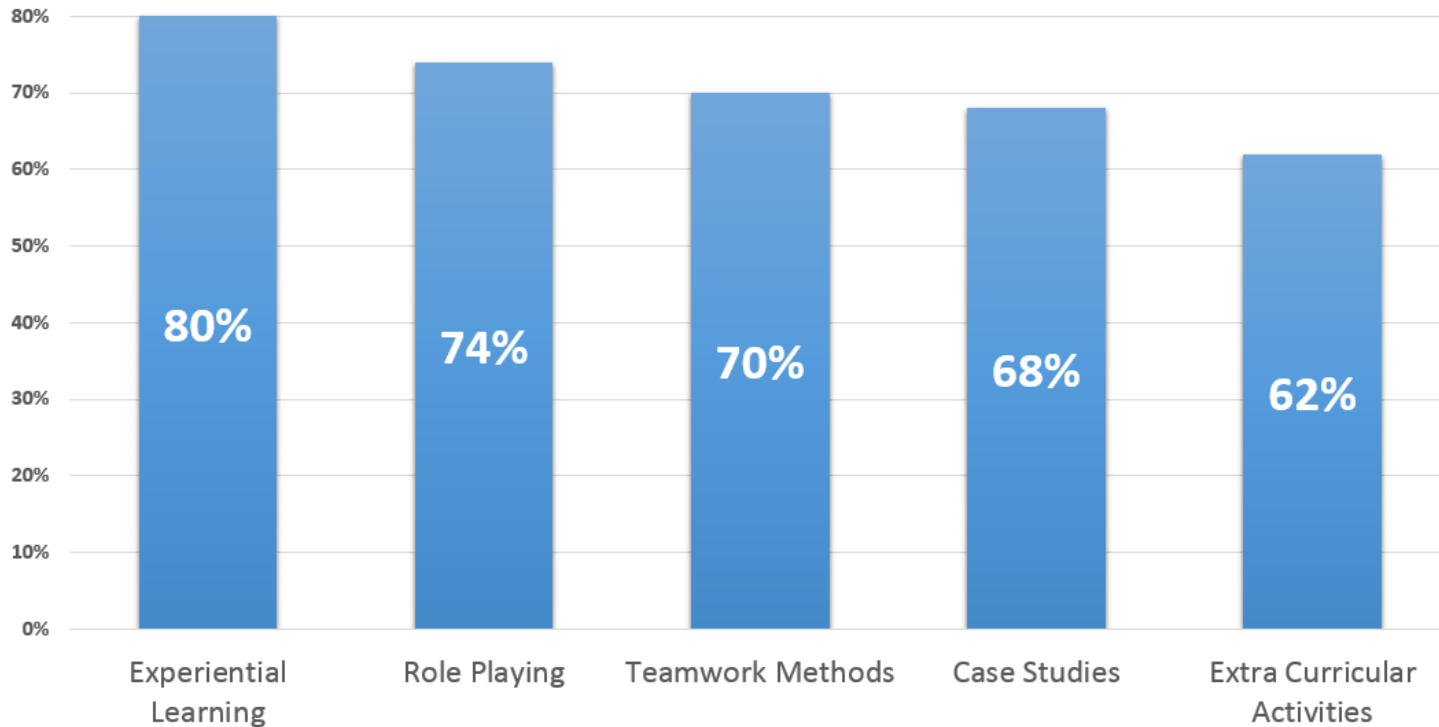
MY TURN TO TALK?

TABLE TALK

What do you think about the lists of soft skills (attributes) for 21 century learning?

How do you weave them into your learning activities in your classroom?

METHODS FOR DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS IN STUDENTS:



Source: Wats, M., & Wats, R. (2009). Developing Soft Skills in Students. *International Journal of Learning*, 15(12), 1-10.

WOULD YOU WANT TO TEACH THIS COURSE? TAKE THIS COURSE?

- This course is to be taught using a hands-on experiential approach. Learning occurs in the context of real-life situations and repeated practice is encouraged. It is recommended that the course be delivered in a laboratory setting and involve a minimum of 75 percent hands-on instruction. The use of relevant tasks, laboratories, simulations, and community involvement is an integral part of the course as is the use of research, class discussions, and group activities. Students are expected to be actively involved in learning in a participatory, supportive environment and to have the opportunity to practice and develop the process skills as related to the content topics.

NYSED Music Standard 3: Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art

- Students will demonstrate the capacity to listen to and comment on music. They will relate their critical assertions about music to its aesthetic, structural, acoustic, and psychological qualities. Students will use concepts based on the structure of music's content and context to relate music to other broad areas of knowledge. They will use concepts from other disciplines to enhance their understanding of music.

NYS Personal Health and Fitness Standard 1

- Develop leadership, problem solving, cooperation, and team work by participating in group activities
- Combine and integrate fundamental skills and **adjust technique based on feedback, including self-assessment**

NYS Physical Education Standard 2:

- Understand the role of physical activity, sport, and games as a balance between **cooperative and competitive behaviors**
- Develop and sharpen leadership and problem solving skills of **cooperation and collaboration**, as well as fairness, sportsmanship, and respect for others
- **Work constructively** with others to accomplish a goal in a group activity, demonstrating consideration for others involved

NYS FACS Process Skills: The “How” of Learning

- The process skills are not taught as separate entities but are infused into the content areas using the vehicle of essential questions. In order for the full curriculum to be delivered, teachers must dovetail **process skills with content topics.**
- The process skills are:
 - ◦ Communication (C)
 - ◦ Leadership (L)
 - ◦ Management (M)
 - ◦ Thinking (T)

HOW DO WE MEASURE SOFT SKILLS?

Non-cognitive areas include “soft skills” not always measured in educational assessments, such as interpersonal skills, creativity, one’s skills in verbal and non-verbal communication, empathy and emotional maturity.

HOW THEN ARE THEY MEASURED?

(SAMPLE RUBRIC)

COGNITIVE AND NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS: CAN WE TEACH BOTH?

As intuitive teachers, you already do! To name a couple....

- Dove Real-Beauty Ads and Musicians' Image-Building (GV)
- Scientists' struggle through achievement-oriented background (GW)

**NOT SURE IF ACTUALLY
LISTENING**

**OR JUST WAITING FOR HIS TURN TO
TALK**

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TABLE TALK

HOW DO YOU TEACH BOTH COGNITIVE AND
NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS AT THE SAME TIME?

SELF-REFLECTION: ARE WE....

- TEACHING SKILLS FOR WORKING IN TEAMS?
- TEACHING ACTIVE LISTENING?
- TEACHING TIME MANAGEMENT?
- TEACHING SOCIAL PERCEPTIVENESS?
- TEACHING SELF-MONITORING?
- INTEGRATING DECISION MAKING INTO THE CURRICULUM?

THE SERENITY PRAYER

- Accept the things that are out of our control;
- Change the things within our control;
- Possess the courage to know the difference.

WE ARE IN CONTROL OF THE CURRICULUM,
(SOME OF) THE ASSESSMENTS, AND THE CO-
CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES THAT WILL ENHANCE
LEARNING!

QUESTIONS?

Resources/Articles

- www.collegeparentcentral.com
- http://www.glisi.org/sites/default/files/GLISI_SSResearchBrief_E1.pdf
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/carol-j-carter/how-soft-skills-passion-c_b_4124034.html
- <http://national.deseretnews.com/article/875/should-schools-teach-8216soft-skills8217-many-say-8216yes8217.html>
- http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/08/opinion/nocera-a-ray-of-hope-in-education.html?_r=0&adxnnl=1&pagewanted=print&adxnnlx=1414416196-5z4ohOPyeOe+HwMrGUDETQ
- <http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/high-school-notes/2013/06/03/ways-teachers-can-bring-21st-century-skills-into-high-schools>
- http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/11/14/12softskills_ep.h32.html
- <http://www.gallup.com/poll/162818/21st-century-skills-linked-work-success.aspx>
- <http://business.time.com/2013/11/10/the-real-reason-new-college-grads-cant-get-hired/print/>
- <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Incorporating-Soft-Skills-into-the-K-12-Curriculum.pdf>