



21ST CENTURY SKILLS AND THEIR IMPACT ON EDUCATION

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Abstract: The 21st century is definitely the century of innovation, development and ideation. Trends in technology, education and economics are moving towards automation. This revolution that the world is going through, and that is most felt in the workplace, would not have been possible without the preparation of a new generation who in the future will be the flourishing instruments of a dynamic modern world. When we say the preparation of young people for a new society and new economy, we refer to some skills which are vital in the individual growth of each of them, physically and mentally, and the benefits of which are felt not only in the individual but also those who surround it. These skills are also known as "21st Century Skills", a long list of soft skills, learning skills, literacy skills and life skills.

Learning skills

1. Critical thinking: to find unique solutions to modern problems
2. Creativity: thinking outside the box and engaging in innovations that help global development.
3. Collaboration: learning how to collaborate and work with others with a team spirit.
4. Communication: being able to communicate your ideas to others and understanding the perspective of others as well.

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Learning Skills



critical thinking



creativity



collaboration



communication

The four C's are by far the most popular 21st Century skills. These skills are also called **learning skills**.

More educators know about these skills because they're universal needs for any career. They also vary in terms of importance, depending on an individual's career aspirations.

The 4 C's of 21st Century Skills are:

Critical thinking: Finding solutions to problems

Creativity: Thinking outside the box

Collaboration: Working with others

Communication: Talking to others

Below, we'll consider each of these skills and their implications for students' careers.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is one the most important qualities for today's professionals to have.

In the classroom, effective critical thinking inspires students to solve problems and make new discoveries. It's what helps students *figure things out* for themselves when they don't have a teacher at their disposal.

In business settings, critical thinking is essential for improvement. It's the mechanism that eliminates obstacles and replaces them with fruitful endeavors.

Critical thinking is the practice of solving problems, among other qualities.

In addition to working through problems, solving puzzles, and similar activities, critical thinking also includes an element of skepticism.

This is important in the 21st Century because it's harder than ever to verify accurate information (mostly thanks to the internet).

Critical thinking empowers students to discover the truth in assertions, especially when it comes to separating fact from opinion.

With critical thinking, students don't just learn a set of facts or figures. Instead, they learn how to discover the facts and figures for themselves.

Through asking questions, learners become engaged in the world around them. Then they can help spread their knowledge to their peers, helping others to think critically, too. Students sharing the knowledge they've mastered with others might be the most important aspect of developing critical thinking skills.

Whether they learn how to think critically from spending time online or simply asking "Why?" in everyday life, this skill prepares students for a life of independence and purposeful thought.

Still, critical thinking is just one of the four C's in 21st Century skills.

It works just fine when students use it alone. But when students combine it with the *next* skill, the sky is the limit to what they can achieve.

Creativity

Creativity is equally important as a means of adaptation. This skill empowers students to see concepts in a different light, which leads to innovation.

In any field, innovation is key to the adaptability and overall success of a company.

Learning creativity as a skill requires someone to understand that "the way things have always been done" doesn't necessarily inspire progress or growth. It's the realization that change may be necessary to solve problems with innovative solutions.

Creativity allows students to embrace their inner strengths from big-picture planning to meticulous organization. As students learn about their creativity, they also learn how to express it in healthy and productive ways.

More importantly, they also become *motivated* to share that creativity with others. Just like with critical thinking, that makes creativity contagious.

When a student creates an interesting or innovative [solution to a problem](#), the next student can become inspired to try something similar.

That's not to say every single creative endeavor will be a ringing success. Students will fail at some point, and some of their ideas simply won't work. But that's okay.

The point of creativity is to encourage students to think differently than convention demands. They don't have to do things the way they've always been done. Instead, they can figure out a better way.

Students don't have to embrace their creativity alone, either. In fact, creativity works best when combined with the next [21st Century skill](#).

Collaboration

Collaboration means getting students to work together, achieve compromises, and get the best possible results from solving a problem.

Collaboration may be the most difficult concept in the four C's. But once it's mastered, it can bring companies back from the brink of bankruptcy.

The key element of collaboration is willingness. All participants have to be willing to sacrifice parts of their own ideas and adopt others to get results for the company.

That means understanding the idea of a "greater good," which in this case tends to be company-wide success.

Collaborative learning is the practice of segmenting students into groups and having them work in specific roles according to their strengths.

Then, the groups work toward a specific goal, like a presentation or project.

Each member of those groups is responsible for a different part of the project's completion, and the group members share what they've learned to achieve their common goal.

There may be a group leader, a researcher, a writer, a speaker, or any role that someone could fulfill.

But the key is that **your students don't get assistance from you** while they work.

This means every student has an incentive to work hard toward a specific goal that moves the group closer to its common goal.

They also have an incentive to perform methodical, detailed work so they know the information they share is accurate, current, and relevant.

Best of all, collaborative learning eliminates the main pitfall of group work — one student doing all the work.

If one part of a group's project isn't up to snuff, you know which student didn't pull their weight.

Then, you can grade your students accordingly.

But there's more to successful collaborative learning than just group projects. There are whole subsets of information students need to learn, and there's a little more work you have to do as a teacher.

Finally, communication is the glue that brings all of these educational qualities together.

Communication

[Communication](#) is a requirement for any company to maintain profitability. It's crucial for students to learn how to effectively convey ideas among different personality types.

That has the potential to eliminate confusion in the workplace, which makes your students valuable parts of their teams, departments, and companies. In the modern workplace, communication can make or break a career. High school students who develop strong communication skills early go on to nail that interview, negotiate that pay raise, or make a great case for that promotion. However, those who fail to communicate effectively often end up getting passed over--no matter how smart or skilled they are.

As an instructor, you want to ensure your kids have the best chance at success in their careers, and communication is a key element in that. But teaching communication skills to students can be tricky. What are these workplace communication skills, and where do you begin when teaching them in your career readiness course?

Many high school teachers have approached AES asking these questions, and in response, we've developed a list of the different types of communication your kids will encounter every day in the workplace.

Effective communication is also one of the most underrated soft skills in the United States. For many, it's viewed as a "given," and some companies may even take good communication for granted.

But when employees communicate poorly, whole projects fall apart. No one can clearly see the objectives they want to achieve. No one can take responsibility because nobody's claimed it.

Without understanding proper communication, students in the 21st Century will lack a pivotal skill to progress in their careers.

But the four C's are only the beginning. 21st Century skills also require students to understand the information that's around them.

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