ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: The Value of Soft Skills: Preparing the Next Generation of Workforce for Future Work

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Graduates are not only expected to attain a degree but a range of soft skills. Soft skills such as communication, creativity, and critical thinking are among the most desired skills employers seek. Soft skills are well respected among employers, as they represent an employee's ability to function successfully in life and at work. Evidence suggests the deficit in soft skills is growing; employers find it challenging to hire new graduates with soft skills. As a result, employers have raised concerns about the widening gap between graduates' skills and capabilities to meet the workforce needs. They fear a disconnect between our education system and the labor market.

This research paper provides an overview of the growing demands of soft skills in higher education and within the workplace. The report shows that higher education plays a critical role in maintaining our current and future workforce. Research shows universities must integrate soft skill curriculum through work and project-based learning, micro-credentials, and cross-sector partnerships to address the soft skills deficit.