



COLLEGE-LEVEL READY TO WORK Program Guide

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The program guide is intended as a rough outline for the topic and can be adapted as you see fit to meet the needs of your program, students/clients, or situation. The guide also includes copy-permissible activities as a supplement to instruction. **Please note that color handouts are copyright protected and duplication in any form is strictly prohibited.** See our website www.dreamcatchercurriculum.com for additional info, updates and new curriculum topics.

➡ **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:** This workshop requires minimal prep, however, it is strongly recommended that you read and review the program guide along with the handout before meeting with students.

READY TO WORK OBJECTIVE & INCLUDED TOPICS:

To familiarize college students/clients with important information about hard skills vs. soft skills, top skills employers are seeking and how to improve upon those skills, conscientiousness in the workplace, important workplace skills, conflict resolution, leadership skills; *Improve Upon Existing Skills, Top Skills Employers Desire, Conscientiousness and Workplace Readiness, Brain-Based Conflict Resolution, Leadership Development*

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP /SESSION:

This workshop would be ideal for any level of college students, as many work during college and would benefit from developing workplace skills. Schedule this workshop any time of year in conjunction with career exploration/readiness. Consider inviting a professional from a human resources department to discuss common HR issues in the workplace. You could also invite a recruiting professional responsible for identifying talent to hire to discuss career advancement.

STEP ONE TIME: 15 MINUTES

DreamCatcher Extra: Distribute the *Ready to Rank Your Skills* activity included with this program guide. Explain that this workshop covers workplace skills and that this self-ranking activity will establish a baseline. Read the descriptions from the *Ready to Work* handout for each skill in the dark blue hexagons (also listed below) to create understanding of each skill. Participants will then rank their abilities with each skill from 1 to 8, with 1 being the highest.

- **Leadership:** Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals. Use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. Assess and manage your emotions and the emotions of others. Use empathetic skills to guide and motivate. Organize and prioritize work. Take on projects/tasks that challenge you. Delegate work so that you don't become overwhelmed. Seek feedback from delegates and supervisors.
- **Professionalism and Work Ethic:** Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, and workload management) and understand the impact of non-verbal and verbal communication on your image. Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior. Act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind. Learn and grow from your mistakes.
- **Career Management:** Identify and articulate your skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to career goals. Identify areas necessary for professional growth. Explore job options. Understand and take steps necessary to pursue opportunities and understand how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.
- **Technology Application:** Leverage digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. Demonstrate adaptability to new and emerging technologies. Take advantage of training opportunities for new software and hardware. Use new forms of technology in your work when relevant. Update computer hardware and software regularly.
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. Obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data to demonstrate originality and inventiveness. Think through and solve problems by connecting ideas or information. Ask questions about new information. Try reversing your thought process. Be aware of cognitive biases and assumptions.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Build collaborative and positive relationships with colleagues and customers/clients representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. Work within a team structure, and negotiate and manage conflict. Share the tasks of a team project equitably and ensure everyone is working together. Take on different roles within a team for each project.
- **Oral and Written Communication:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral communication to people inside and outside of your workplace. Use and improve upon public speaking skills. Write/edit memos, letters, emails, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively. Seek out feedback from peers and incorporate the changes and edits into your spoken language and written work.

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STEP ONE (CONTINUED)

- **Global/Intercultural Fluency:** Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. Demonstrate openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences. Practice a new language and consider traveling abroad.

Ask everyone to keep their *Ready to Rank* page out for the remainder of the workshop, turned to the blank side for notetaking. Distribute the *Ready to Work* handout and discuss the *Highlight and Improve Upon Your Existing Skills* section. Explain the difference between **hard skills** and **soft skills**. Next, ask participants to compare their personal rankings to the *Top Skills Employers Desire in Employees*. Ask if anyone ranked their top skill as the top employer desired skill. Have students jot down the top skill and one way they can improve upon that skill on their notetaking page. Also ask if employer ranking of skills was surprising to anyone. Point out that the strategies to improve each skill that were reviewed during the ranking activity are also listed within the dark blue hexagons at the bottom of the front page of *Ready to Work*. If time allows, you can discuss your work experience and knowledge gained as a result.

STEP TWO TIME: 15-20 MINUTES

Move to the inside of the handout; note that the content is laid out left to right across the whole of the unfolded document. Begin with the *Ready for a Quiz* section that spans the page in **blue** hexagons. Students should answer the 9 questions with a yes or no response. Next, discuss the meaning of **conscientiousness**. Conscientiousness is one of the main factors that determines success in the workplace and can be improved upon by addressing any prompt to which they answered "no," as well as practicing self-control and resilience. Be sure to discuss the *More Conscientiousness Tips* section. Ask participants to jot down the meaning of conscientiousness in their own words on their notetaking page.

Next, discuss the *Ready for the Workplace* section in **orange** hexagons. The main ideas are in bold and the explanation or strategy follows. As you cover this section, ask follow-up questions/prompts such as:

- Raise your hand if you have a professional mentor
- Talk about a time where you had to stand up for yourself at work
- Describe someone you admire/admired at work or in class and why
- Raise your hand if you've ever experienced office gossip or conflict
- Discuss a situation in which you had to make small talk with someone you didn't know

Have everyone write down one new tip they've learned so far on their notes page.

DreamCatcher Extra: If time allows, everyone can participate in a mock networking session using the *Ready for Small Talk* cards included with this program guide. Each student should receive one set of cards (one full page printed and cut out); mention that these cards are meant to keep the conversation going, not get the conversation started. Explain how to start a conversation before beginning the mock networking session (saying hello, introducing yourself, asking how someone is doing, etc.). Ask them to change partners or small groups every few minutes.

STEP THREE TIME: 10 MINUTES

Discuss the *Ready for Conflict Resolution* section in the green hexagons. Ask participants what might cause conflict at work (some responses included in the first hexagon). Discuss strategies on how to deal with conflict in the workplace. Be sure to discuss how conflict affects the brain and the mindful approaches in bold to be able to address conflict. Have everyone jot down a strategy to handle conflict resolution.

DreamCatcher Extra: Divide the group of students into 6 groups. Give each group a *Conflict Resolution Role-Play* scenario. Groups will read the scenarios and determine a solution. Ask them to either discuss their situation and how to handle it or perform a brief skit displaying their handling of the conflict.

STEP FOUR TIME: 15 MINUTES

Turn to the last page titled *Ready to Lead*. Ask if anyone has been able to participate in a leadership position before, whether in high school, college, or at work. Ask those who responded "yes" to briefly discuss how they came to be in a leadership position and what that experience was like.

Read the introduction, emphasizing that one doesn't have to be in a supervisory or managerial role to be a leader. Discuss the leadership skills sections, reading through each section and the accompanying explanation.

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STEP FOUR CONTINUED

If you require an activity for this step, split students into eight groups. Assign one leadership section to each group and ask them to read the explanation in addition to doing some brief research (on smartphones, tablets, or computers) for deeper understanding. After some preparation time, groups will present their sections to the group as a whole, one group at a time.

LAST STEP & ASSESSMENT TIME REMAINING

Distribute one assessment to each student and ask them to answer the prompts. Students should be able to respond without using their notetaking sheet (each "note" they took corresponds to a prompt on the assessment). Explain that writing notes by hand increases focus and aids in higher rates of information retention.

OTHER DISCUSSION POINTS:

Ask participants to describe any working experience they may have and the skills they've gained as a result. Let them know of any professional training on campus or locally, such as technology training, networking opportunities, and other professional development opportunities. Assist in finding and making connections with appropriate professional mentors. Establish a student mentoring system in your school or program. Check with the campus career center (if applicable) to find out if professional training sessions are provided.

Discuss the importance of professional development and continuing education. Everyone should approach their chosen field as a life-long learning process that should continue throughout one's career. Encourage students to seek training/development opportunities whenever possible to be a better employee/supervisor/person.



Ready to Rank Your Skills?



Rank the skills to the left 1-8, with 1 being the strongest skill you possess and 8 being the weakest.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____



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Ready for Small Talk cards:

**What's the last book you read?
Would you recommend it?**

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**What was your first job?
What did you learn from that role?**

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**Tell me one out-of-the-ordinary
thing about your day today.**

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**How did you choose your
major/area of study in college?**

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**How do you clear your mind
after a long day?**

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**What's the most unbelievable-but-true
thing that's ever happened to you?**

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**When you were young, what did
you want to be as a grown-up?**

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**If you had a free round-trip ticket to
anywhere in the world, where would you go?**

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**What's your go-to meal to cook if you
want to impress a dinner guest?**

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**Do you collect anything?
What is it and why?**

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**Do you take any classes or practice a
particular hobby? Would you like to?**

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**What charities or social causes do you
support? If you don't, which would you?**

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**What's the most exotic food you've ever
tried? Would you eat it again?**

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**What's your favorite accessory to wear?
How many do you own?**

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**What's your guilty pleasure TV show/
musical/artist/movie?**

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**Do you follow the zodiac? Do you think
your sign represents you?**

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Conflict Resolution Role-Play: Read the scenario below and decide how you would productively address the situation.

Your boss accuses you of leaving a big mess in the break room because you have a history of not cleaning up after yourself, but it wasn't you.

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Conflict Resolution Role-Play: Read the scenario below and decide how you would productively address the situation.

One of your coworkers has heard some juicy gossip about another person you work with and invites you to chat about it over lunch.

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Conflict Resolution Role-Play: Read the scenario below and decide how you would productively address the situation.

Your colleague has worn a strong fragrance, even though you've asked them not to because it gives you a headache. You have to work closely with them today.

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Conflict Resolution Role-Play: Read the scenario below and decide how you would productively address the situation.

You arrive late to work only to come face-to-face with your manager, who is upset by your tardiness.

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Conflict Resolution Role-Play: Read the scenario below and decide how you would productively address the situation.

Your co-worker takes your lunch from the refrigerator and finishes eating it just as you come into the break area.

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Conflict Resolution Role-Play: Read the scenario below and decide how you would productively address the situation.

While your boss is going over today's duties to be accomplished, you receive a text message you've been anxiously awaiting.

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Ready to Work Assessment

What is the **TOP** skill
desired by employers?

How can you improve upon
that skill?

What does being
CONSCIENTIOUS mean?

Name one **NEW** workplace
skill you learned today:

What is one mindful
approach you can use when
dealing with conflict?

Rank the effectiveness of
this workshop on a scale of
1 to 5, with 5 being the
MOST effective.

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