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**2017 Summer Immersive Workforce
Experience Program
A Partnership To Impact The Youth Of
The City of Charlotte**

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Breakthroughs in neuroscience research over the last two decades have taught us more about how the brain functions than in any time in the course of human history. Many of these ongoing and evolving studies are helping us understand how the brain processes information in various emotional states and during different life situations.

At We Connect The Dots we've developed a unique training methodology steeped in this research, which we integrate with STEAM experiential project based learning programs. We teach both students and teachers on how to learn, collaborate, lead and teach in a more effective, "brain-friendly" way. Helping students to shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset and transforming into Life-long learners.

Our education programs specifically employ a blend of neuroscience-based principles with coaching competencies and strategies, which are used to generate education practices that support positive learning experiences for everyone involved.

With a focus on STEAM (science, technology, education, arts and math) our programs support building the strategies for critical thinking, synthesizing information and broadening understanding of career opportunities in STEAM industries. Our metrics clearly demonstrate a shift in thinking by students who participate in our programs, producing students who are well informed, more confident, and able to empower their own future.

Join us in building more cohesive education environments that teach 21st century workforce skills and develop the next generation of Scientists, Technologists, Engineers, Artists, and Mathematicians: a new generation that is self-aware, self-motivated, and accountable for changing the world in positive ways.

EIN:46-3412001

Regards,

Laurie Carey
Founder &
Chairman of the Board



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Experiential Learning Programs - Designed with a Brain-Based Learning Approach

At We Connect The Dots our teaching approach is combined with experiential learning and brain-based research to ensure students come away with positive outcomes and skills they can apply today and in their future. There is nothing more enjoyable than to see a student intense in their learning experience that they cannot be easily pulled away from their work. The learning experience becomes a creative energy like a magnet. Helping a student find his or her passion is a wonderful, yet intense feeling, and seeing it happen often can be a very rewarding experience for the students and facilitators. In our programs we are cognizant of setting timelines and expectations of when the creativity must come to an end or where they need to wrap up their creative thought. Whether it is about taking a break to eat lunch or moving to the next topic. Many times we find ourselves re-defining the agenda only because the students are in such a creative moment that breaking it would be destructive to the learning experience. So we always create space in our agenda for the possibilities of shifting.



Our organization is run by and for students in many ways. We include one student ambassador on our board for a two year term to provide them the experience of being a part of a board as well as ensuring the students interests are taken into consideration. This position is an elected position by the student ambassador community. Every program we create is designed in partnership with students, teachers, and industry experts. This methodology provides a diverse perspective of content creation and delivery concepts as well as alignment with today's industry needs and career opportunity awareness. This is what we like to call our "STEAM Recipe for success".

About We Connect The Dots / Our mission is to excite, inform and educate students about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) careers. Through a collaboration with the community, education, government and the technology industry, WCTD provides awareness and education of the 21st century workforce skills, as well as the opportunities available to students embracing STEAM careers. Impacting students at a local, national and global level, our programs create a hunger for learning that empowers students to find their own paths to success. Learn more at www.we-connect-the-dots.org.

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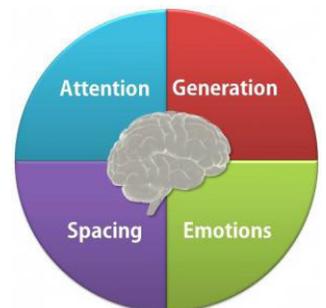


Developing Life-Long Learners

The most important thing you can do for a child is to give them the gift of education. However, in that process of giving a positive learning experience, you must integrate the importance of self-empowerment. Teaching a student how to empower their own learning and develop them into lifelong learners, leads to successful careers and creates a sustainable future. Students that are excited to learn and enjoy teaching others in the process of their own learning develop into amazing leaders.

Our teaching approach is based on neuroscience research where we deliver short modules of learning in no more than 60-90 minutes sessions. We integrate activities within the modules that allow for application of concepts in real world project based experiential learning. We teach the importance of reflection and ensure that everyone has a voice in the learning experience. That everyone is a part of learning and teaching their peers, in a model of learning together. Our model is based on what we know creates a positive experience for students and research based on the AGES model (See image)

A core component of all of WCTD programs is teaching the value of diversity and how important different perspectives of thinking and problem solving impact innovation. Working in teams of girls mixed with boys with ages ranging from 13-18 creates the real world experience for students. Teaching diversity at a younger age will ensure our female students sustain in careers where there is a higher ratio of male population, which over time will create the shift we seek. Providing critical learning for both genders to understand the value and the impact to our society long term. In order to ensure the right mix of students we designed an algorithm that evaluates a number of variables including, age, gender, skills in coding, and visual arts skills/interest. This approach creates the dynamics for teaching diversity and the value it brings to innovation and creativity. Today the algorithm does not incorporate personality traits, however we are working to incorporate that in the near future. We monitor teams closely and begin each program with team building activities to ensure students make connections that will bond them as they engage in learning together. As we notice challenges in teams we make adjustments to create a better balance which results in a better experience for everyone.





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Neuroscience Research-Based Teaching Approach

We Connect The Dots mission is to deliver programs that engage students in positive brain friendly ways and address the learning gaps in today's school programs. Our design process integrates industry experts, teachers, students and our delivery team to develop programs that bring 21st century workforce skills and neuroscience research together. We call it "The STEAM Recipe for Success". Each program is designed with a learning goal in mind that introduces students to industry concepts, teaches the value of lifelong learning, supports a path that can lead to additional knowledge or experience, and above all engages to create an interest where there may have not existed before.

This collaborative approach allows us to see the learning experience from multiple perspectives and ensures we are teaching concepts that can be expanded into an interest to go deeper where there is a desire. We build foundational skills that can be leveraged in their future learning experiences and in their careers no matter what path they choose to take.

We integrate knowledge reference to the real world to create an understanding of how they might apply the concepts they learn and then introduce the experience through real world project experiential learning. Teaching students what the career might feel like is important in the process of discovery for students. Where possible we provide students with an understanding of certifications that align with the program.

Each new program is developed with a pilot program which we like to call "Science Experiment" and then evaluated for efficacy and modified as needed or redesigned were necessary. Phase I is our pilot testing and performed each year in our Discovery Day program. During Phase II, the program is integrated into our CreatingSTEAM program where it will live within our 10 day holistic program. The final Phase III of the design is compiled and made its own program that can be delivered over a 5 day summer program, delivered as an after school program or integrated into the school year mixed with a traditional class curriculum. Everything is modular to ensure it is brain friendly and can be flexible enough to support a school's needs. A student handbook and a facilitator's guide is developed. We deliver "Train the Trainer" programs for teachers to support schools interested in delivering our programs independently. Our goal is to provide schools with valuable enrichment programs that teach 21st century workforce skills, that are continually modified to stay relevant with the workforce needs in the industries of STEAM. We maintain an online community where we support teachers in developing confidence and continued learning opportunities as well as collaboration with industry experts.



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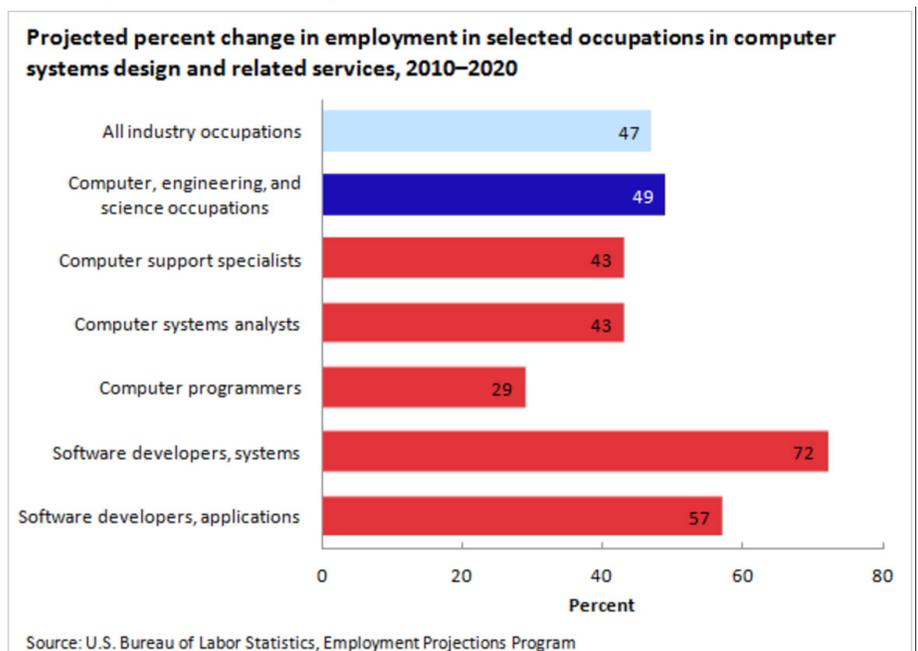
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Our program offers skills that transfer to nearly every industry and this will help create a broad impact and economic benefit. The Bureau of Labor Statistic states “computers and information technology (IT) touch nearly every aspect of modern life. Information technology can help with such diverse tasks as driving motor vehicles and diagnosing diseases. IT enables integration and communication between businesses anywhere in the world.” <https://www.bls.gov/opub/btn/volume-2/careers-in-growing-field-of-information-technology-services.htm>

Our program offers training in Information Technology and other technological skills that are transferrable to any industry. Within the IT industry, for instance, understanding how to utilize tools and resources like Office 365 position students for employment from entry level positions to customer service representatives, computer programmers and cybersecurity specialists. These technology skills in IT apply across the global industrial marketplace as industry increases its technological sophistication, communicates and does business through technology, and touches every aspect of the workplace from general office management, project management, inventory, finance, accounting, auditors, customer service representatives and research and development.

Moreover, this program transcends current levels of transferability: it offers to close yawning gaps of increased demand that workers be technologically savvy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 47 percent growth in IT over the 2010-2020 time period for all industries. “Because of the high demand for computer systems design and related services, all the occupations in this industry have fast growth rates and high wages relative to the same occupations across all industry. The Bureau of Labor Statics adds, “While many occupations may not directly involve computer system design and related services, all occupations in IT have fast growth rates and high wages relative to the same occupations across industries”. See the table right:





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Learning to work together

Day 1	
Time Slot	Session
9:00-9:30	Program Kick Off
9:30- 10:00	Mind Mapping
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-11:00	Device Distribution
11:00-11:30	Introduction to Yammer/Office 365
11:30-12:00	Introduction To Final Project - Blog/Case Study
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30- 1:00	Team Building Activity
1:00- 2:00	Case Study Learning Model
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-3:15	iMind Map
3:15- 4:00	OneNote
4:00- 4:30	Reflection

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Building Problem Solving Skills

Day 2	
Time Slot	Session
9:00-10:00	Review Case Study - Ben & Jerry's
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-11:00	OneNote - Research Skills
11:00-12:00	Introduction to Foundations in Computer Networking
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:30	Databases /Big Data Excel - Power BI
1:30-2:30	Cybersecurity
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45-3:00	Installing Adblocker/Malware Bytes
3:00-4:15	Team Building Activity - "Unlock The Box"
4:15-4:30	Reflection

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Applying New knowledge

Day 3

Time Slot	Topic
9:00-10:00	Introduction to Wordpress
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-11:15	Wordpress continued
11:15-12:00	Activity - Build a website - Create Individual sites
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-2:00	Agile Development Process
2:00--2:15	Break
2:15- 3:15	Activity - Kanban (Website Design)
3:15-4:15	Skype For Business - Office 365
4:00- 4:30	Reflection - Setup for homework (4 day gap) Independent learning

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Why:

- The arts helps individual express themselves
- Art is not represented well / valued in schools & communities (low income c)
- Allows students to succeed in a new way
- Good qualities for employment (Creativity + Problem Solving)
- Now art lets to stir clear of a dangerous path

How?

- Offer classes for each specific art
- Donations will be used to help local schools + communities include arts in their curriculum
- Offer classes for local schools + communities to include the arts in their curriculum

What:

- Non-Profit Organization that offers arts education to a variety of students, regardless of their financial or living situations. Serves as an outlet to at-risk youth to stir clear of a dangerous path. Showcases students' art on a broader platform.

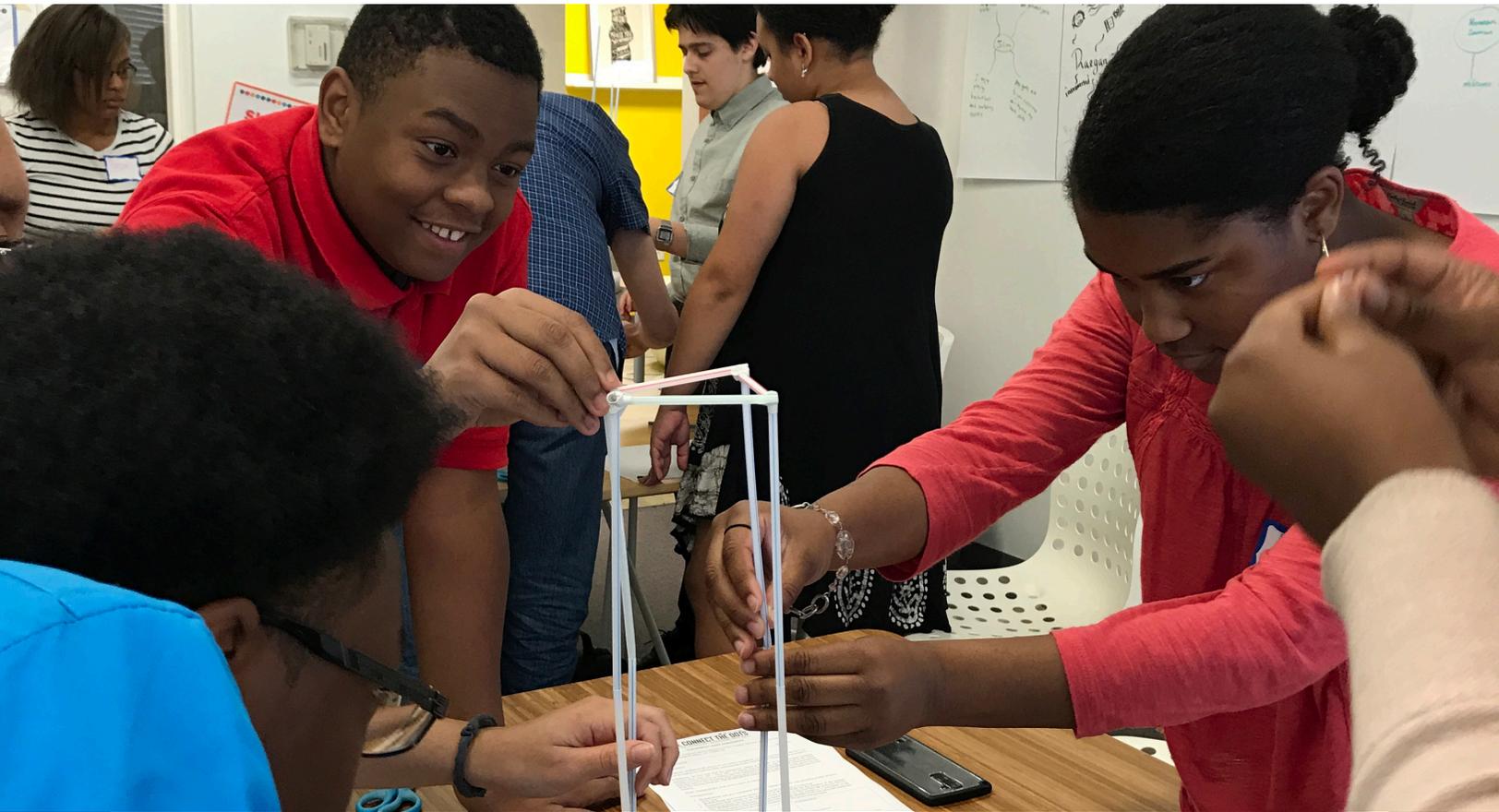
Building Collaboration Skills

Day 4	
Time Slot	Session
9:00-10:00	Presentation Skills - Building Confidence
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-12:00	Case Study Outline
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Skype For Business Activity
1:00-2:00	Team Project Time - Why - How- What
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-4:15	Team Project Time
4:15-4:30	Reflection



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Developing Confidence in Communications

Day 5	
Time Slot	Session
9:00-10:00	Case Study Discussion - Coke & Pepsi Wars
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-12:00	Project Time
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Active Listening Activity
1:00--2:00	The Neuroscience of Attention
2:00- 2:15	Break
2:15-3:00	Team Project Wrap Up - Presentation Practice
3:00- 3:15	Reflection
3:15-4:30	Team Project Presentations

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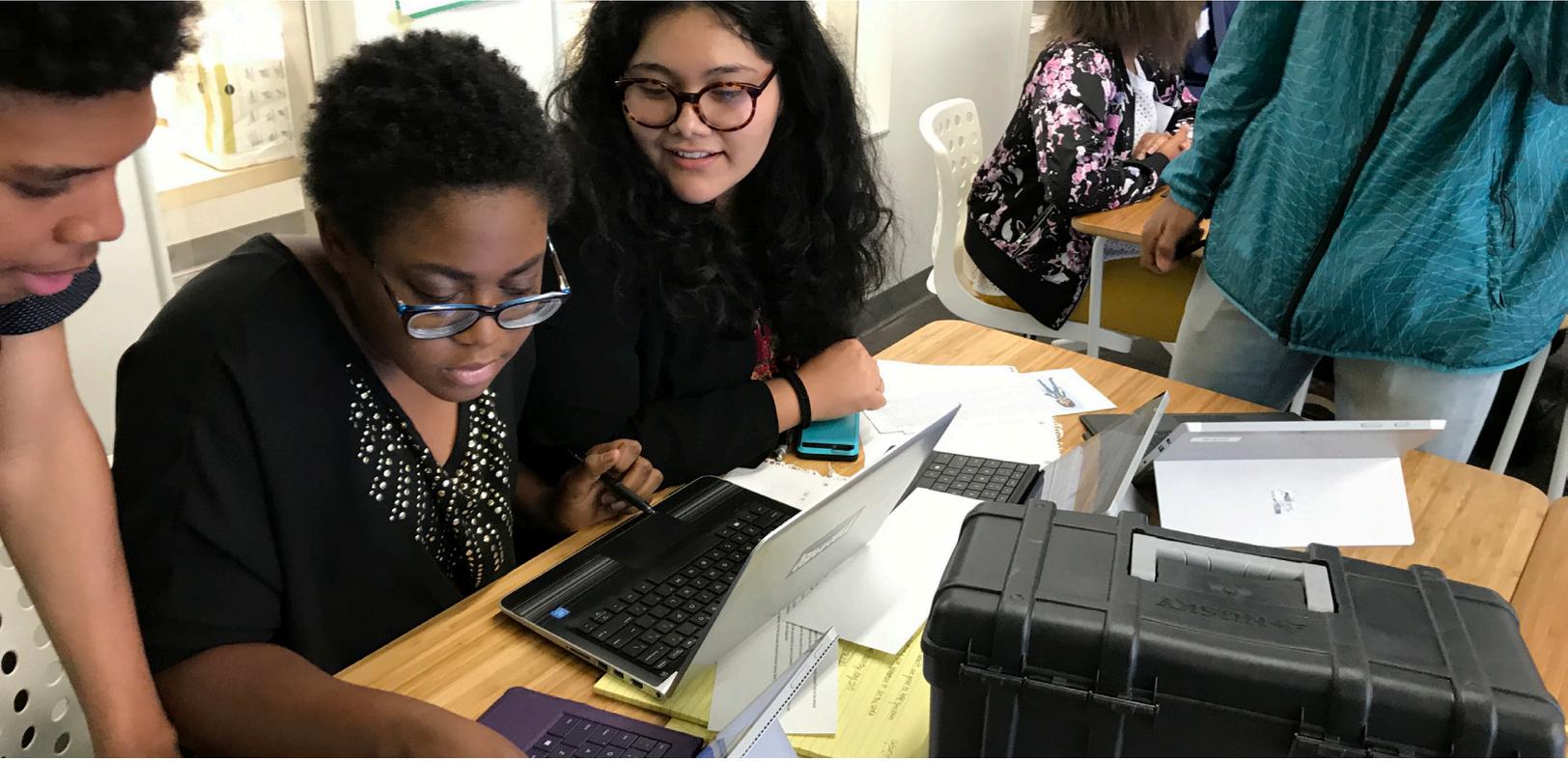
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Workforce Readiness

Day 6

Time Slot	Session
9:00-9:15	Review Projects
9:10-10:00	Case Study Method
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-11:00	Why are we here - Making a great 1st impression
11:00-12:00	Connecting through Communication
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30--1:00	LinkedIn - Setup Account
1:00-2:00	Managing Conflict - Neuroscience of emotions
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-3:15	Assignment Process & Getting Feedback
3:15-4:15	Next Steps - Work Experience & Career Readiness - Making a Great Lasting Impression
4:15-4:30	Final Reflections

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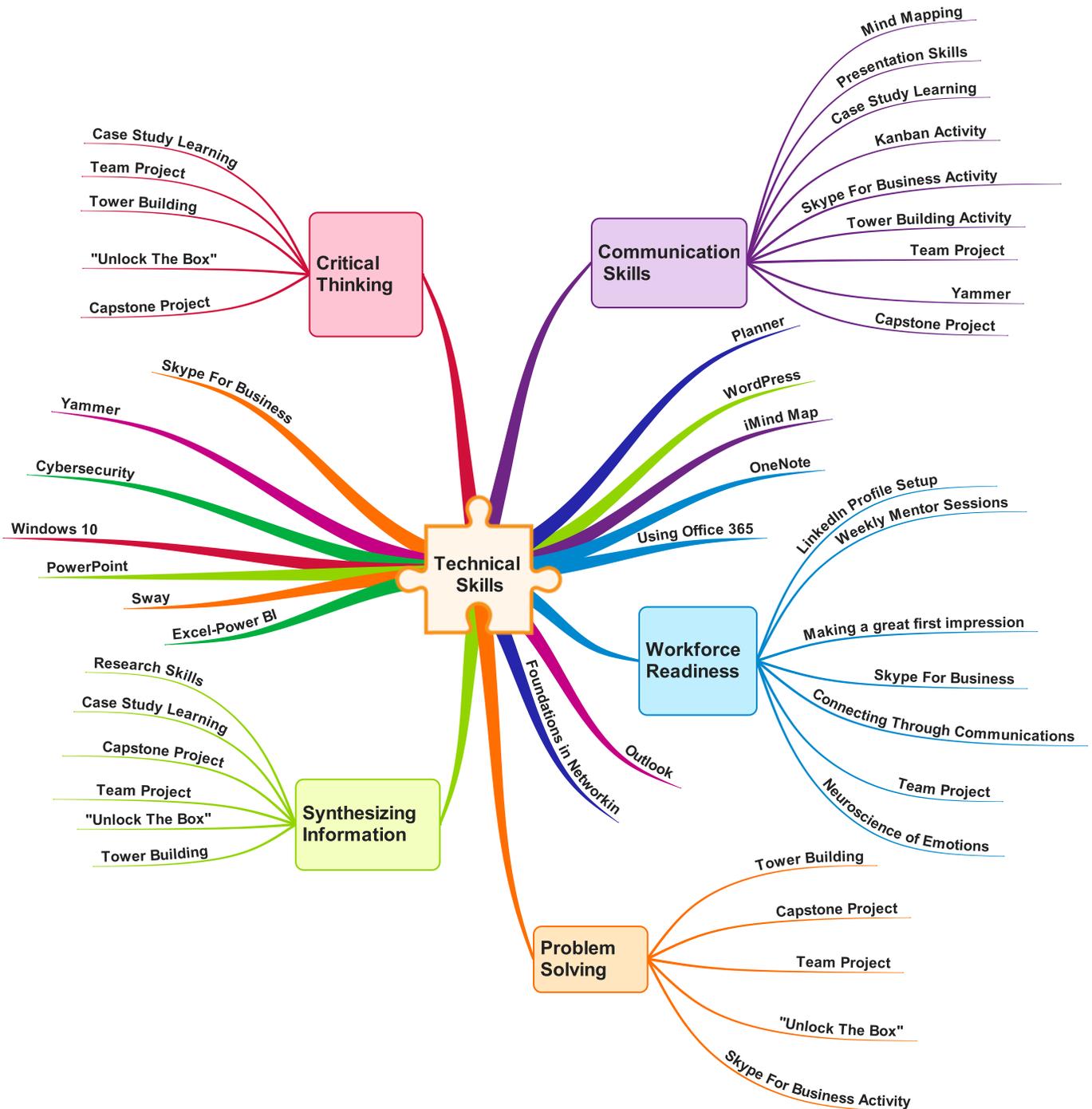
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Learning Outcomes



Case Study Learning

With case-study learning, students develop skills in analytical thinking and reflective judgment by reading and discussing complex, real-life scenarios.

What is a Case Study? The term ‘case study’ covers a wide range of problems posed for analysis, but most types include several key elements. Most cases are either based on real events, or are a construction of events which could reasonably take place. They tell a story, one involving issues or conflicts which need to be resolved—though most case studies do not have one obvious or clear solution. The information contained in a case study might be complex (including charts, graphs, and relevant historical background materials) or simple—a human story that illustrates a difficult situation requiring one or more decisions.

Case-study learning provides students an opportunity to learn through real experiences that are told through a story. By providing students with what is expected of them both in the reading of the case study and the activity of discussing the case study ensures that the students engage in active participation and learn through the discussion how others see the problem and their different perspectives.

The facilitation of the discussion is critical to the overall successful outcomes of the learning experience. Students learn that it is important to be a part of the conversation and that they must bring facts to their opinions and that they must take a stance on their opinions and also be open minded to listening to others.

Case Study Assignment

Students were asked to learn about the organization that they will be spending 6 weeks with. From that learning, shape a Case Study that will provide the company they are supporting with value and insight to their business, and how technology can support their future success. This assignment provided students the opportunity to express their ideas, knowledge and demonstrate what they have learned through the experience.

This is a unique opportunity for students to show future employers how you are able to apply knowledge, skills, and research to support business development. Like any assignment they are in control of the outcomes, how well they engage with the company they are supporting, understanding their business model and the challenges they face. The final product they share is a story written by them of how they might integrate technology to support business growth.

Evaluations are judgements about the worth, value, or effectiveness of a performance, act or outcome of some kind. An evaluation essay must look at both sides of the subject – factors supporting your bottom -line assessment, those opposing it, and any that fall in between.

Students were provided the following as a possible outline to model:

1. Bottom-line evaluation (position statement)
2. Evaluation focus
3. Proof of the evaluation
4. Applying learning skills
5. Action Plan



CapStone Project

Students were asked to complete a final CapStone Project that consisted of a **Blog Post, Case Study, and Presentation** for the final wrap up of the program. Each student was provided a sample outline for completing each component of the capstone project.

Final Program Wrap Up - Presentation: A four slide presentation that included an introduction to the Work Experience with a brief description of the organization and the position they held while there along with responsibilities. The presentation would outline their learning objectives and outcomes, along with the Case Study topic and why they selected that focus, and final thoughts on the experience and how this opportunity will impact their career trajectory.

Final Blog Post outlining their overall experience: A story with images that describes the overall workforce experience including their learning objectives with how they achieved each, sharing any challenges they had to overcome, and final thoughts on the overall experience. This piece is designed to share within their LinkedIn profile to support future employment opportunities.

Case Study outlined on previous page for reference:

All the content students created was shared within the Yammer community in the TechCharlotte group where peer and mentor review and feedback took place throughout the entire program.


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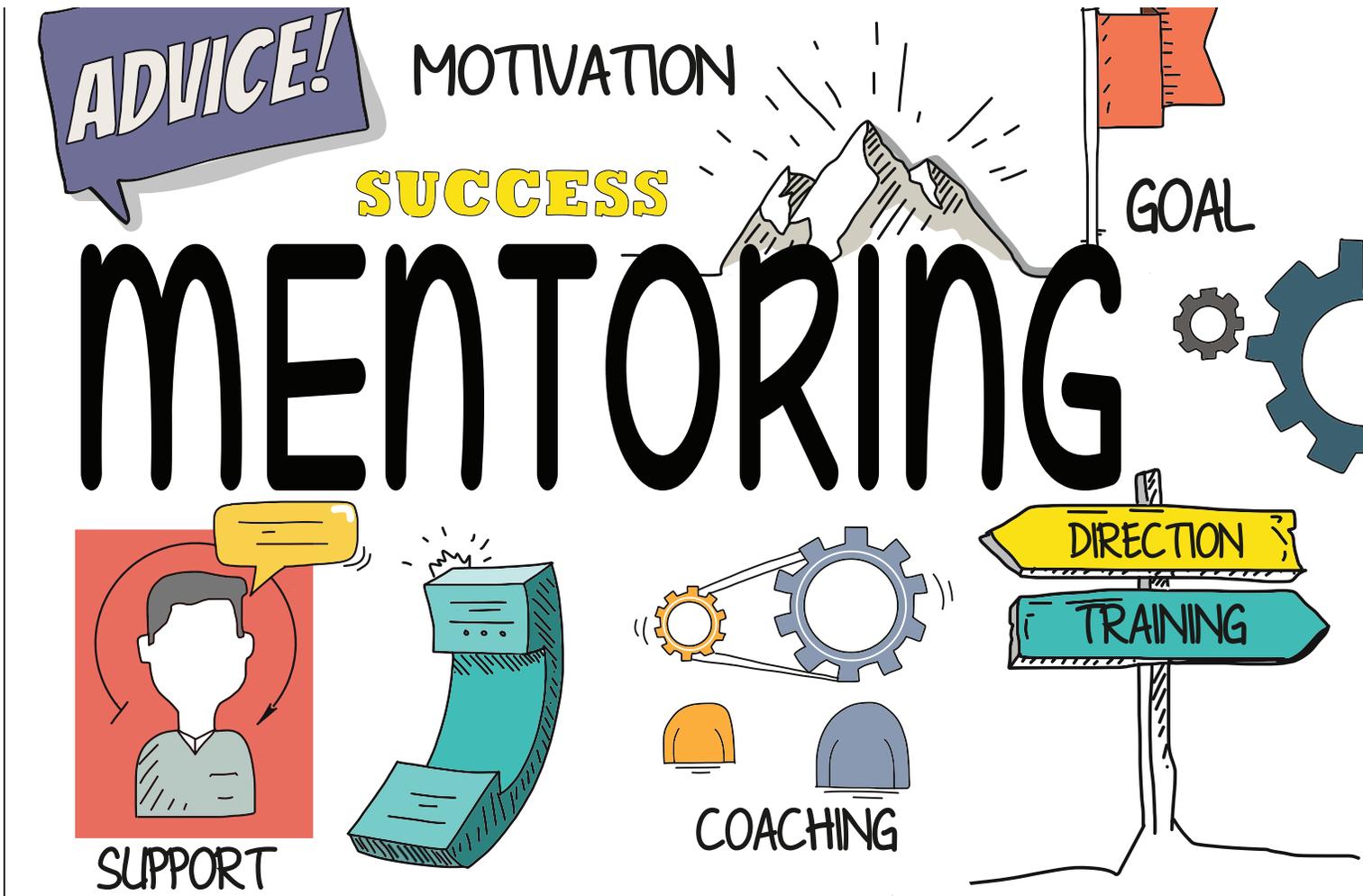
Workforce Readiness

On the final day of training students begin a journey of workforce readiness, where communications skills activities addressed a number of a key topics:

- How to make a great 1st impression
- Connecting through Communication
- Creating your LinkedIn Profile
- Dealing with Conflict in the Workplace
- The Art of Asking Questions & Assignments – get, manage, deliver
- Getting feedback
- Next Steps – Learning Objectives, Blog and Self-Studies

Characteristics	Maturists (pre-1945)	Baby Boomers (1945-1960)	Generation X (1961-1980)	Generation Y (1981-1995)	Generation Z (Born after 1995)
Formative experiences	Second World War Rationing Fixed-gender roles Rock 'n' Roll Nuclear families Defined gender roles — particularly for women	Cold War Post-War boom "Swinging Sixties" Apollo Moon landings Youth culture Woodstock Family-orientated Rise of the teenager	End of Cold War Fall of Berlin Wall Reagan / Gorbachev Thatcherism Live Aid Introduction of first PC Early mobile technology Latch-key kids; rising levels of divorce	9/11 terrorist attacks PlayStation Social media Invasion of Iraq Reality TV Google Earth Glastonbury	Economic downturn Global warming Global focus Mobile devices Energy crisis Arab Spring Produce own media Cloud computing Wiki-leaks
Percentage in U.K. workforce*	3%	33%	35%	29%	Currently employed in either part-time jobs or new apprenticeships
Aspiration	Home ownership	Job security	Work-life balance	Freedom and flexibility	Security and stability
Attitude toward technology	Largely disengaged	Early information technology (IT) adaptors	Digital Immigrants	Digital Natives	*"Technoholics" – entirely dependent on IT; limited grasp of alternatives
Attitude toward career	Jobs are for life	Organisational — careers are defined by employers	Early "portfolio" careers — loyal to profession, not necessarily to employer	Digital entrepreneurs — work "with" organisations not "for"	Career multitaskers — will move seamlessly between organisations and "pop-up" businesses

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Mentoring Sessions and Support

Students continue their learning experience via Skype For Business each week during the 6 week workforce experience. Calls run for approximately 1 hour each week with a predefined agenda each week posted in the Yammer group. The mentor sessions provide students an opportunity to reconnect with their peers, learn how others are doing and to share their own updates.

Students are asked to develop learning objectives and post their objectives within the Yammer community for peer discussion and mentor support. This provides a regular rhythm of engaged conversation from all students on the call. This type of communication provides students with real-world experience on how conference calls are run and their role and responsibility for the calls each week.

Learning conference call etiquette and accountability for remote meetings is a 21st century workforce skill that will position students for career opportunities and provide portfolio experience they can share with potential employers.

Metrics - Our Impact Results

Every program we deliver has an assessment model that is delivered with the program. We continued to research new forms of assessments to learn how our programs are impacting students and teachers. The following is a brief sample of the impact assessment looking for balance in gender diversity as well as building "Grit". Answering questions like; Did we support students tenacity, determination, motivation, and ability to complete tasks they set goals to achieve?

Diversity Data

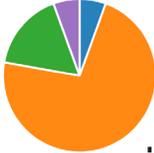
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say



Pre- Assessment Data

I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.

- Very much like me
- Mostly like me
- Somewhat like me
- Not much like me
- Not like me at all



Post- Assessment Data

I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.

- Very much like me
- Mostly like me
- Somewhat like me
- Not much like me
- Not like me at all



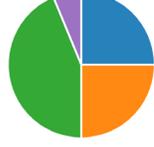
Setbacks don't discourage me.

- Very much like me
- Mostly like me
- Somewhat like me
- Not much like me
- Not like me at all



Setbacks don't discourage me.

- Very much like me
- Mostly like me
- Somewhat like me
- Not much like me
- Not like me at all



I finish whatever I begin.

- Very much like me
- Mostly like me
- Somewhat like me
- Not much like me
- Not like me at all



I finish whatever I begin.

- Very much like me
- Mostly like me
- Somewhat like me
- Not much like me
- Not like me at all



Voice of the Students

At the end of each day the students spent 15 minutes reflecting on their experience. This was done within a Microsoft OneNote collaborative space, where students could share their thoughts of the day. As the days progressed we saw the students increase their feedback responses, gaining confidence in sharing collaboratively, and enjoying the time to see how others felt about the experience. Here are a few of those comments:

"I had a good day and can't wait to learn more about how to operate Microsoft 365."

"I enjoyed today, I learned new operating systems and programs which will be helpful in the future."

"For the first day of this internship I really got to visualize and listen to the great things of Microsoft. The apps, the competition between other great markets out there, also the technology that we are blessed to have with us. I like that we have the tools to become better as people and to maybe get great job in the future."

"Today was very informational and beneficial for my future success. I enjoyed listening to Laurie inform me about the different resources Microsoft can offer me in the business world. Also, she touched bases on a lot of personal tactics that could help become more ready for my actual intern. I enjoyed the hands on activities we completed such as "building a tower", this activity taught me networking skills and problem solving skills. I looking forwarded to the next few days in this training."

"Today was very exhausting and also very fun. We had to do the book activity and it was great to really test our minds and get know our groups and the people we were working with."

"Today was very fun but also exhausting. There is no improvements I can think of."

"Today was pretty good. I learned a lot of things I didn't know about cyber security. The unlock the box activity was pretty cool."

"Today was actually more hands-on and engaging than yesterday what with the visual perspective of things being incorporated. In this way, I was happy to learn about the communication networks and systems that power our everyday lives. Our Unlock the Box Activity supported the valuable knowledge we previously were exposed to regarding CyberSecurity. In addition, we were able to better solidify relationships utilizing collaboration skills within the activity, something I spoke in reflection on yesterday."

"Today I was glad to see everyone's social side come out a little bit more. The bases for relationships started to be built. People started to put themselves out and there a sense of community was established amongst this Tech Charlotte group. Additionally the information given concerning WordPress was greatly essential for it leads directly into our projects."

"Today was a very productive day. We spent a perfect amount of time on perfecting our websites and we were introduced to Skype for Business. We also did an activity where we had our peers record us discussing a topic. We were recorded to look at any bad habits we had while speaking in front of a crowd. This activity was interesting."

"I had a great time today preparing to present and actually presenting. The judges were great; they were so nice. I enjoyed everyone's presentations, they were interesting and I could see all the work and effort they put into their projects. The activity for today was also super fun and I learned so much about Skype Business. Honestly, the activity was the best way to learn about the program in a non-boring way."

Feedback from Host Employers

Our programs are designed to educate, excite, and train students to become skilled and workforce ready. Our approach is to train students not only on the technical skills but also on the “soft skills” that will make them successful in the workplace. In addition, the program includes the identification of learning and business objectives, and provides ongoing support throughout the duration of the program. This multi-prong approach encompasses some of the following objectives:

- To create students who “get it” – providing more value to the Host Company, and allows the student to be more successful onsite
- Define learning objectives and business objectives – understand the key takeaways for both parties
- Provide guidance on conflict – how to handle difficult situations, challenges with boss/ colleagues, etc.
- Communication training – how to effectively communicate, pitch ideas, present assignments, etc.
- Proactive mediation – if there is an issue “brewing”, we can step in prior to the issue becoming exacerbated

Here are some comments from this years host employers:

“Because we mainly work with girls ages 4-12 and then college students, her voice and opinions as a high schooler were important to some of the projects she assisted with including survey collection, volunteer outreach etc. She helped us take things off paper and into the digital world by building a user-friendly app that we can have parents use weekly.

During her time with Project Scientist, she came in contact with many different people including participants, parents, funders, corporate volunteers and more. Her training prepared her to interact with these diverse groups of Project Scientist advocates so that she could have positive, professional, and productive goal-centered conversations, in-person and online.”

“As a host employer, Tech Charlotte youth provided valuable assistance in testing our technology and providing a GenZ perspective on how our platform can be successful with their peers.

Having active high school students within our organization was key to us having a unique user perspective as we seek to build the college and career planning platform that will appeal to this demographic.

Our Tech Charlotte interns were key in product testing and providing feedback to our development team on how to improve our technology.

Training provided through We Connect the Dots proved valuable as the students exhibited a professional mindset when asked to complete tasks. The interns displayed tech project management skills by planning and executing an event to onboard their fellow cohort members onto the GAMEPLAN platform.”



Individually Strong, Collectively Powerful

We Connect Students, Teachers, Parents and Industry Experts
to Create Amazing Learning Experiences