

МИНИСТЕРСТВО НАУКИ И ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ РФ
ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ БЮДЖЕТНОЕ
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«ВОРОНЕЖСКИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ
УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»

STUDENTS' LIFE IN THE MODERN WORLD

PART 1. ACADEMIC LIFE

Учебно-методическое пособие

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C. Before you read the article discuss the following:

1. What abilities and skills do you need to have in order to study at university?
2. What skills are most important for successful study? Why?

D. Read the article. Do you agree with the top five skills listed by the author? Why?

Five 21st Century Skills Students Need to Master Today

College is demanding; there are essay and assignment deadlines to juggle, exams to study for, summer internships to find, and a graduate job to pursue. The transition from college student to young professional can be equally tough.

So, what are the top five skills you need to be working on to get you through college life and out the other side to employment with ease?

Clue: If you are only concentrating on your college work, you may not be working on all the right skills you need for a great job after graduation.

1. Communication

The ability to communicate with others is vital. It's not just about being able to voice your own opinions and arguments; equally important is the ability to read and understand others.

There's a theory that over 90 percent of communication is non-verbal, which means people largely **get their message across through body language and tone of voice**, rather than the actual words they choose to use.

People spend lots of time chatting with peers. This kind of talk is informal and unstructured. Most feel more comfortable talking with individuals from a similar generation and background.

However, when meeting with college tutors, attending interviews for employment and further down the line in professional work, more formal dialogue is required.

For this reason, it's vital to work on your interpersonal communication skills – to hone your ability to read others by taking the time to listen, watch and converse with people from all walks of life. This is a particularly important part of interview preparation.

Part-time or voluntary work can offer you opportunities for improving your communication skills.

2. Writing

Perhaps you thought learning to write was for grade-schoolers? Not so at all. Thanks to the internet, **there's never been a greater demand for the written word**. Every day, people write through direct messaging, email and social media; they read blogs and online news.

Although much of what is read and written may have gone online, this doesn't mean quality has been compromised. Students still need to turn in first-rate essays and reports, and people are all keen that whatever they write on social media gives a good impression.

Outside in the post-college world of work, email is a dominant form of communication, detailed business proposals and scientific reports are still being

written, and companies need to be able to market their products and services through quality web content, blog posts and succinct social media. In fact, according to the most recent NACE survey, 4 out of 5 employers see good written communication as a vital skill.

Without a doubt, you need to be able to write well. You may not want to be a journalist or novelist, but whatever your goals, you absolutely do need to be able to get your point across through the written word.

It can be simple to improve written English skills. The most straightforward way to learn to write in a more advanced way is to read. By reading the kind of styles you wish to emulate, you can observe the structures, the style, the formality and the vocabulary used.

3. Critical Thinking

People today live in an age wherein they are continually bombarded with information via the internet and their smartphones; never before have they had to contend with such a volume of media passing by their eyes.

However, their ability to evaluate this vast quantity of information and form their own arguments is often lacking.

Unfortunately, the way in which people were taught in high school meant that they were expected to regurgitate a required response to pass tests. This often means that people find it difficult to analyze the swathes the information they receive at college level, where greater understanding and depth of knowledge is required.

It is vital for students to think critically enough to identify and evaluate different arguments and see that there may be bias, misinformation or alternative ways of looking at the subject in anything they read or view. This will enable

them to construct their own arguments and responses in written or oral discussions.

In the graduate world, employers are increasingly looking for candidates who can think critically, evaluate problems and provide alternative solutions, rather than passing the buck.

4. Initiative

Initiative is a skill in demand from graduate employers.

This is because, in the world of work, students who willingly show initiative demonstrate that they take responsibility for something. They know that if the project they are working on does not produce good results, they are responsible for that. They will therefore work hard to ensure the best outcomes.

For this reason, demonstrating initiative shows the beginnings of leadership skills, too. **Initiative is about taking decisions and ownership of a situation.** This person will not need to be micromanaged and can help engage others.

To practice this skill in student life, look for opportunities where you can get a handle on something that interests you and show you can make the most of situations. It could be starting a micro-business, writing a blog, or taking an active interest in student politics.

5. Teamwork

Finally, over 82 percent of employers questioned in the NACE survey say they actively search for team players when sifting through résumés, and this figure has been rising in recent years.

Once in employment, very few people work autonomously. Their role and input are nearly always part of a bigger picture, where colleagues are of equal value and importance to the finished results.

However, as a college student where you are largely working alone on essays, projects and assignments, it can be hard to gather much experience of teamwork during your college years.

Potential employers need to see evidence of teamwork, so for a fully-rounded résumé, you need to have something concrete that demonstrates you've worked successfully alongside others.

Your contributions to sports teams, music and drama ensembles, political or charity campaign groups can all show that you're a team player, so make the most of opportunities to take part in life outside of the classroom.

Comprehension

E. Read the article more carefully. Which of these statements are true?

Correct the false statements.

- 1.) More than a half of communication is non-verbal, which means people largely get their message across through the actual words they choose to use.
- 2.) Most employers do not appreciate good written communication as an important skill.
- 3.) The ability to construct one's own arguments and responses in written or oral discussions is important to develop critical thinking.
- 4.) Initiative helps to make decisions and cope with difficult situations.
- 5.) Most of employers appreciate people who work autonomously rather than in a team.