

***Are We Career
Ready Yet?***
**Updated NACE
Competencies and
Behaviors
Employers Desire in
New Graduates**

University of Houston  Clear Lake



**Dr. Monica Thompson, Executive
Director, University Career Services, UH**

Kathy Knapp, Director, Main Career Center, UHD

Chuck Crocker, Director, Career Services, UHCL

Amy Hatmaker, Director, Career Services, UHV



Learning Outcomes

- Learn NACE's framework on core competencies that shape career readiness for college graduates.
- Learn examples of how to prepare students for success in the workplace and lifelong career management
- Identify competencies employers deem “most essential” and compare with student proficiency levels based on evaluator ratings with student self-assessment ratings;
- Explore how participating students compare to the project’s large national sample of other students and 87,000 job candidates rated on the same behaviors;
- Learn how participating institutions leveraged the study’s assessment data to develop and support students’ competency development and awareness

The Career Readiness Project **By The Numbers**



37,000+

Students Evaluated

Using an adapted HR solution designed by I/O Psychologists in collaboration with NACE



60,000+

Supervisors/Coworkers

Rated students on 28 behaviors following an internship of student employment

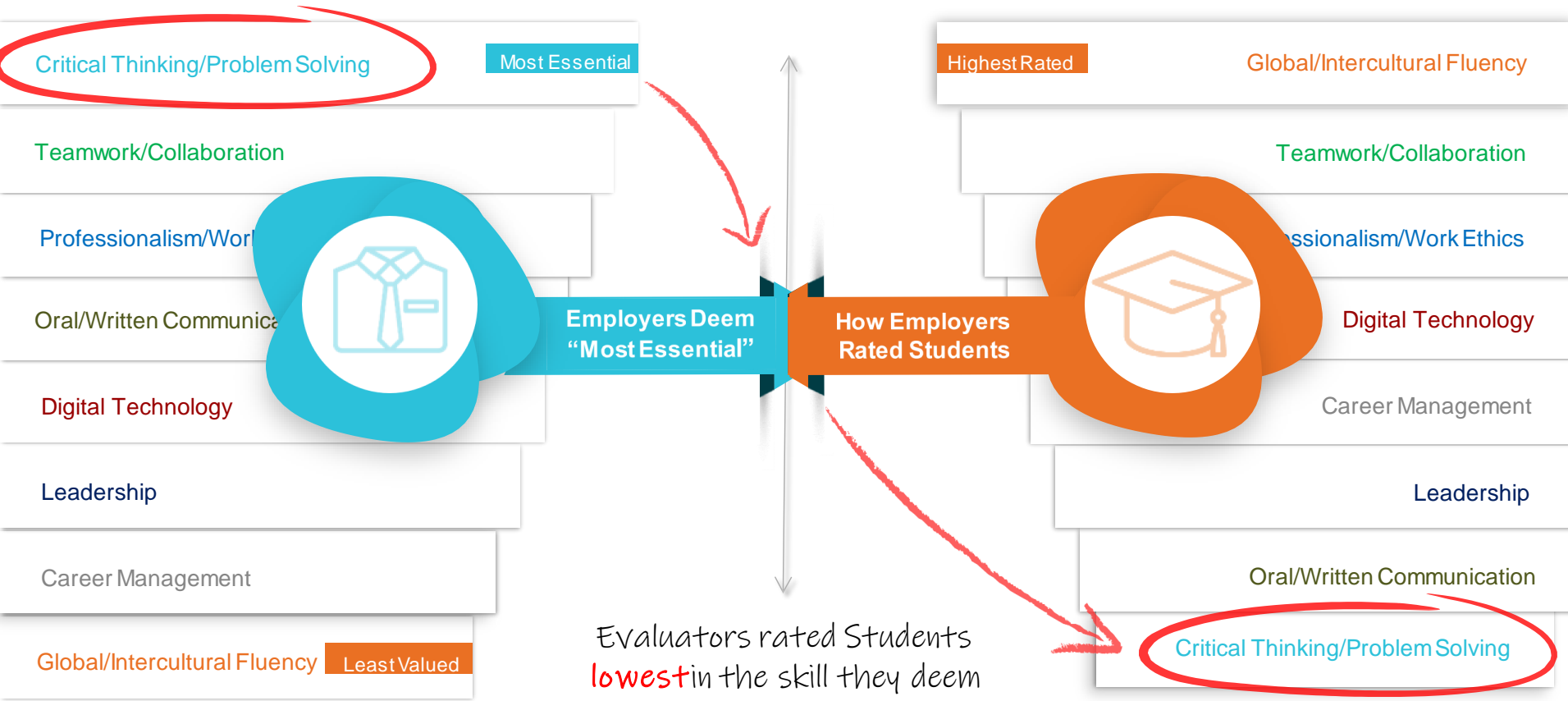


10,000+

Unique Employers

Where supervisors/coworkers evaluated student experiences using SkillSurvey

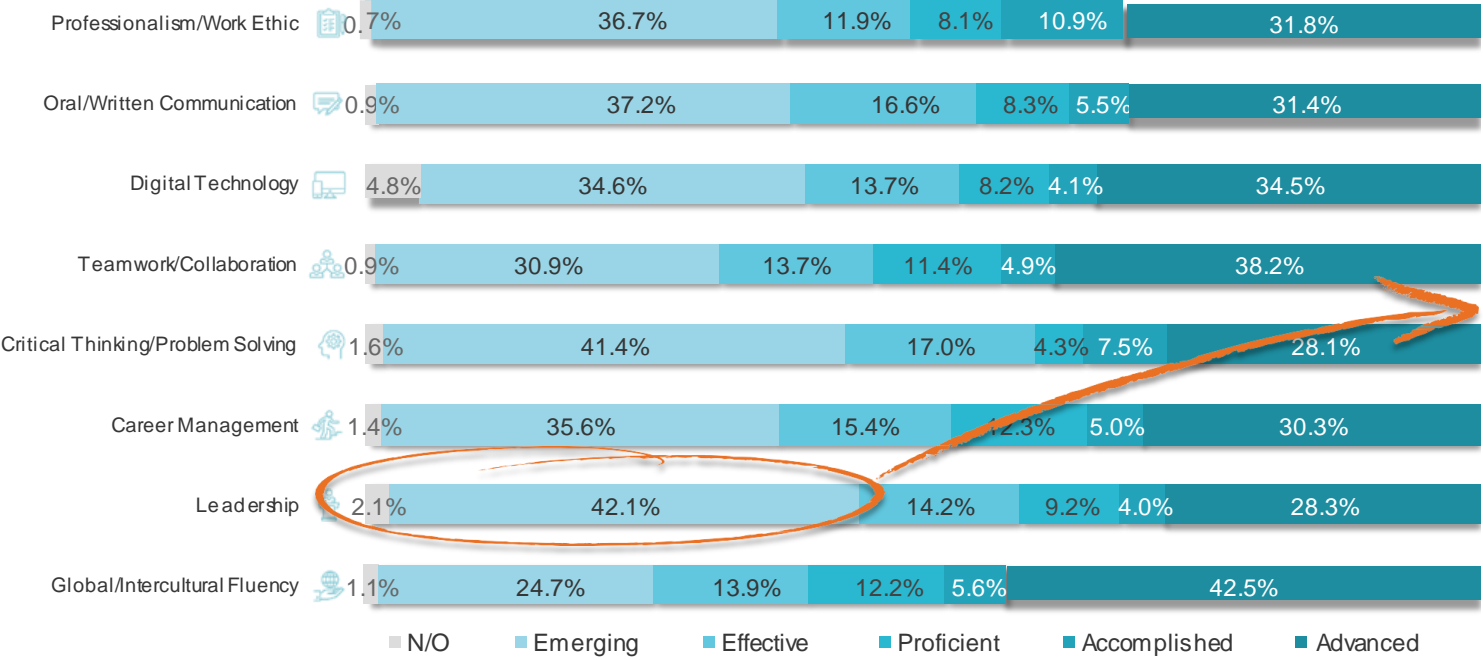
NACE Employers Value Most vs How Evaluators Rated Students



Evaluators rated Students **lowest** in the skill they deem **most** essential

Students Compared to 87,000 Job Candidates

n=38,466



Compared to actual job candidates, Students are often rated lower



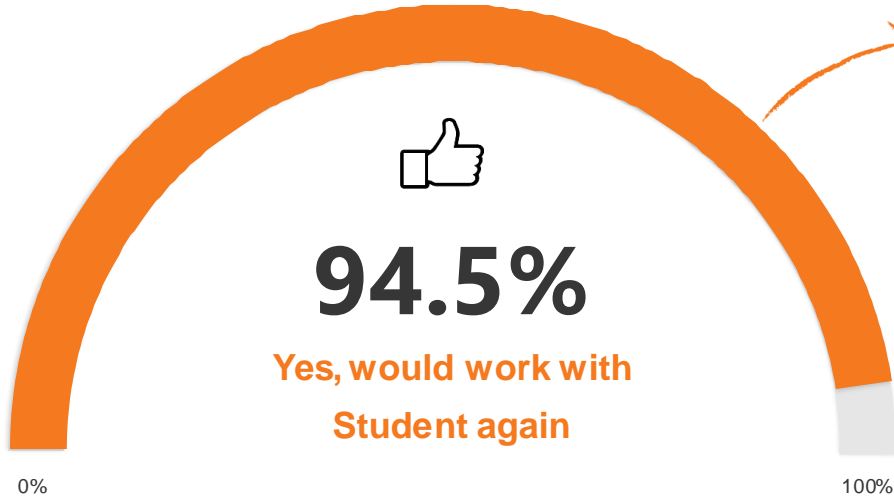
20% of the National Sample Falls into Each of the Five Categories

As detailed in a previous slide, SkillSurvey also maintains a norm group of numeric behavior ratings for 87,000 Professional Job Candidates. The results in this graph above show how your Students' numeric ratings compare to the ratings provided by employment references for those in the Professional Job Candidate sample. (view slide notes for more information)

Would you work with this person again?

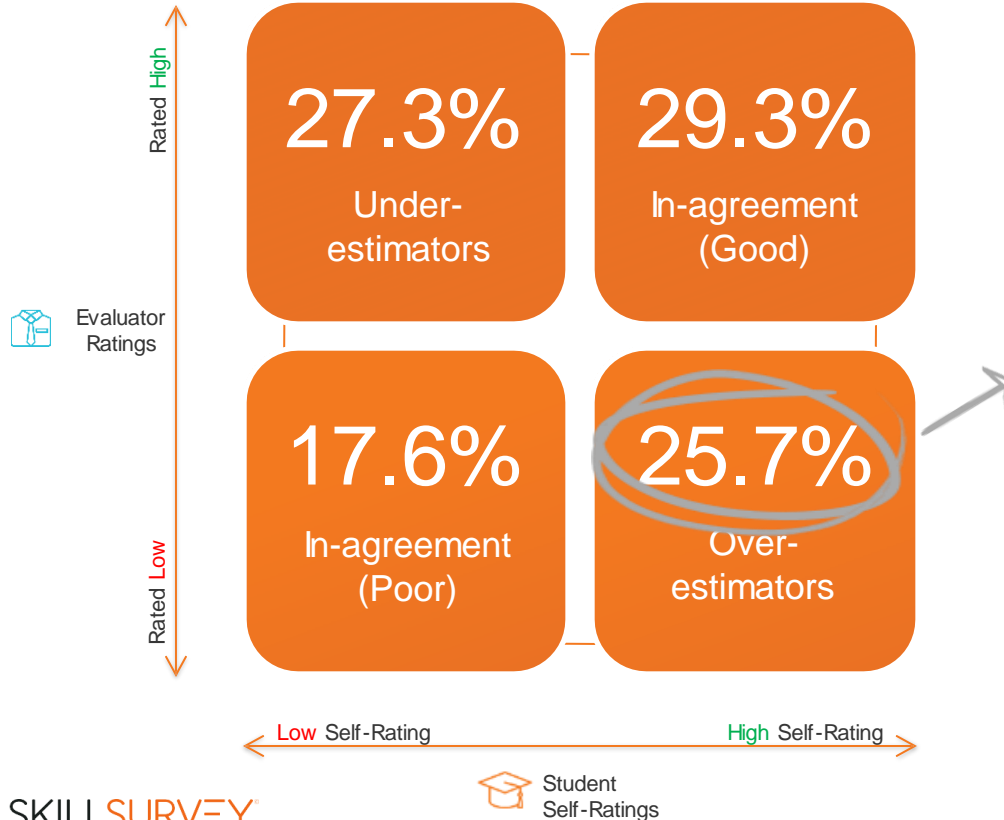
Please note: Your response to this question is confidential and will not be shared with the Student.

31. Would you work with this person again? Yes No Don't Know



Biggest mean difference in ratings (1.80) between those evaluators who said "no" and those who said "yes" was for Professionalism

Student Self-ratings *versus* How Evaluators Rated Students



25.7% of Students nationally rated themselves *high* but their Evaluators rated them *low*

Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce **Overview**

Competencies

There are eight career readiness competencies, each of which can be demonstrated in a variety of ways.



Career & Self Development



Equity & Inclusion



Teamwork



Communication



Leadership



Technology



Critical Thinking



Professionalism

What is Career Readiness?

Career readiness is a foundation from which to demonstrate requisite core competencies that broadly prepare the college educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management.

[naceweb.org/
career-readiness-
competencies](https://naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies)



Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce Definitions



Career & Self Development

Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.



Communication

Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.



Critical Thinking

Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.



Equity & Inclusion

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.



Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.



Professionalism

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.



Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.



Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Communication

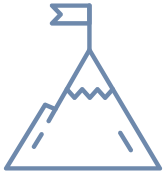
Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

Sample Behaviors

- Understand the importance of and demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language, abilities.
- Employ active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills.
- Communicate in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand.
- Frame communication with respect to diversity of learning styles, varied individual communication abilities, and cultural differences.
- Ask appropriate questions for specific information from supervisors, specialists, and others.
- Promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance with assigned tasks.

naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Sample Behaviors

- Inspire, persuade, and motivate self and others under a shared vision.
- Seek out and leverage diverse resources and feedback from others to inform direction.
- Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
- Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude.
- Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust.
- Plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate projects.

naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Sample Behaviors

- Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting.
- Effectively manage conflict, interact with and respect diverse personalities, and meet ambiguity with resilience.
- Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables.
- Employ personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to complement those of others.
- Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile.
- Collaborate with others to achieve common goals.
- Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Sample Behaviors

- Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
- Gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem.
- Proactively anticipate needs and prioritize action steps.
- Accurately summarize and interpret data with an awareness of personal biases that may impact outcomes.
- Effectively communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders.
- Multi-task well in a fast-paced environment.

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Professionalism

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

Sample Behaviors

- Act equitably with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization.
- Maintain a positive personal brand in alignment with organization and personal career values.
- Be present and prepared.
- Demonstrate dependability (e.g., report consistently for work or meetings).
- Prioritize and complete tasks to accomplish organizational goals.
- Consistently meet or exceed goals and expectations.
- Have an attention to detail, resulting in few if any errors in their work.
- Show a high level of dedication toward doing a good job.

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

Sample Behaviors

- Navigate change and be open to learning new technologies.
- Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity of their work.
- Identify appropriate technology for completing specific tasks.
- Manage technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making.
- Quickly adapt to new or unfamiliar technologies.
- Manipulate information, construct ideas, and use technology to achieve strategic goals.

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Equity & Inclusion

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

Sample Behaviors

- Solicit and use feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make inclusive and equity-minded decisions.
- Actively contribute to inclusive and equitable practices that influence individual and systemic change.
- Advocate for inclusion, equitable practices, justice, and empowerment for historically marginalized communities.
- Seek global cross-cultural interactions and experiences that enhance one's understanding of people from different demographic groups and that leads to personal growth.
- Keep an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking.
- Identify resources and eliminate barriers resulting from individual and systemic racism, inequities, and biases.
- Demonstrate flexibility by adapting to diverse environments.
- Address systems of privilege that limit opportunities for members of historically marginalized communities.

naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies

Definition and Sample Behaviors



Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

Sample Behaviors

- Show an awareness of own strengths and areas for development.
- Identify areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback.
- Develop plans and goals for one's future career.
- Professionally advocate for oneself and others.
- Display curiosity; seek out opportunities to learn.
- Assume duties or positions that will help one progress professionally.
- Establish, maintain, and/or leverage relationships with people who can help one professionally.
- Seek and embrace development opportunities.
- Voluntarily participate in further education, training, or other events to support one's career.

naceweb.org/career-readiness-competencies

Using this First-of-its-Kind Data



**Intervention
& Evidence**



**Program
Enhancement**



**Accreditation
Process**



- Freshmen Seminar & Accelerated Transfer Academy workshops
- Update student satisfaction survey
- Student organization leadership development
- Career Coach & Liaison with Colleges promote to faculty/Faculty Resource webpage



- UH's QEP: Cougar's Initiative to Engage (CITE)
- Scarlet Seals of Excellence – receive a seal in
 - [Diversity](#)
 - [Leadership](#)
 - [Personal Development](#)
 - [Thinking & Communication](#)

- University Sponsored Internship Program
 - Health, Energy, Civic Engagement.
- New Initiative to develop Internships from Student Employment Opportunities/Partnerships



- 4 Pillars of Student Engagement (in development)
- Leadership Conference/Fall 2021 -
Collaboration with Student Involvement and Leadership
- Use of Learning Outcomes attached to high impact programs
- Resume Reviews/Mock Interviews
- Mocktail Mixer/Etiquette Dinner
- Industry and Major Specific Panels



- Jaguar Career Excellence Program
- Specialized Departmental Student Programs
- Resume Critiques
- Employer Panel Discussions
- Professional Seminar Courses
- Student Worker Orientation
- Introduction to Career Planning Presentations

Top 10 Areas for Needed Improvement



Career Readiness Project Students Nationally

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---|
| 01 | Communication | Only 1 out of 197 themes is in both the top 10 areas of strength and improvement |
| 02 | Great/excellent | |
| 03 | Confidence/assertiveness | |
| 04 | Proactive/takes initiative* | |
| 05 | Attention to detail/accuracy* | |
| 06 | Experience | |
| 07 | Time management/prioritizing | |
| 08 | Asking for help* | |
| 09 | Sharing* | |
| 10 | Punctuality/attendance* | |



Representative Sample of Actual Job Candidates**

- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 01 | Great/excellent |
| 02 | Communication |
| 03 | Confidence/assertiveness |
| 04 | Knowledge* |
| 05 | Experience |
| 06 | Commitment/dedication* |
| 07 | Time management/prioritizing |
| 08 | Workaholic – works too much* |
| 09 | Delegating* |
| 10 | Further education/certification* |

Evaluator Comments on Students' Areas for Improvement

ask questions before spending too much time working a specific problem - lean on those with more experience when needed - ensure time is used as efficiently as possible

being on time - communicate with supervisor better - be more efficient - take more initiative on the job

over-communicate - a weekly summary/follow-up would be helpful - feel free to ask questions

communicate in a more appropriate way based on the situation and leave out any ambiguity - don't be afraid to ask for help: teaching helps the teacher gain a better understanding too!

overcommunicate! even more important during the pandemic when we cannot be in the office together - be available and responsive via Slack or flagging when offline for an extended period of time - in any publicly facing role, attention to detail is critical - slow down and make sure everything is spelled correctly and accurate - take notes

improve on clear communications with others, especially when it comes to delivering a report - improve prioritizing the important stuff assigned by managers - improve writing skills to differentiate how to write a memo vs a proposal

be more open and confident - tends to talk quietly which comes across as shy, not confident - focus on outputting more than what is requested - overachieve! - stay busy on task, can get distracted at times by cell phone

ask the question, 'What else could I do that brings value to the team this week?' - look for new ways to grow

Top 15 Areas for Improvement* Across 4 Time Periods

Rank	July 2018-Jan 2019	April 2020	July 2020	October 2020
1	Communication (15.7%)	Communication (17.0%)	Communication (25.7%)	Communication (20.4%)
2	No Text Provided (13.7%)	Good, Great, Endorsement (14.7%)	Good, Great, Endorsement (17.7%)	Confidence/Assertiveness (11.0%)
3	Confidence/Assertiveness (13.4%)	Confidence/Assertiveness (11.6%)	Confidence/Assertiveness (11.4%)	Good, Great, Endorsement (10.1%)
4	Good, Great, Endorsement (12.5%)	No Text Provided (11.0%)	TIE Specific Skills or Tasks Writing/Presenting Skills (10.9%)	TIE Time Management and Prioritizing TIE Proactive/Takes Initiative (8.7%)
5	Proactive/Takes Initiative (9.3%)	TIE Experience Specific Skills or Tasks (8.7%)	Asking for and Accepting Help (9.9%)	Can't Think of Anything; No Improvement Needed (8.4%)
6	Attention to Detail; Accuracy (9.0%)	Writing/Presenting Skills (8.6%)	TIE Proactive/Takes Initiative TIE Attention to Detail; Accuracy (9.6%)	Specific Skills or Tasks (7.9%)
7	Can't Think of Anything; No Improvement Needed (6.3%)	Asking for and Accepting Help (8.2%)	Computer/Technology Skills (9.1%)	TIE N/A TIE Attention to Detail; Accuracy (5.8%)
8	Experience (6.0%)	Time Management and Prioritizing (7.7%)	Can't Think of Anything; No Improvement Needed (8.8%)	Dependable/Reliable/Meets Deadlines (5.7%)
9	Asking for and Accepting Help (5.7%)	Proactive/Takes Initiative (7.0%)	TIE Experience TIE Knowledge (7.8%)	TIE Asking for and Accepting Help TIE Sharing (5.3%)
10	Time Management and Prioritizing (5.0%)	Can't Think of Anything; No Improvement Needed (6.5%)	TIE Time Management and Prioritizing TIE Sharing (7.5%)	TIE Computer/Technology Skills TIE Leadership TIE Non-Codable (4.5%)
11	Writing/Presenting Skills (5.0%)	Attention to Detail; Accuracy (5.8%)	Understanding (6.5%)	Not Observed (4.2%)
12	TIE Sharing TIE Punctuality/Attendance (4.4%)	Knowledge (5.7%)	Problem Solving (4.4%)	Learning Orientation (3.9%)
13	Shyness/Quiet (3.6%)	Computer/Technology Skills (5.5%)	Accepting Feedback (4.2%)	Punctuality/Attendance (3.6%)
14	Computer/Technology Skills (3.5%)	Sharing (5.3%)	Learning Orientation (3.9%)	Building Relationships (3.4%)
15	TIE Problem Solving TIE Specific Skills or Tasks (3.5%)	Understanding (4.8%)	TIE Dependable/Reliable/Meets Deadlines TIE Organization TIE Building Relationships (3.4%)	Writing/Presenting Skills (3.3%)

References

NACE Updated Competencies. [What is Career Readiness?](#)
[\(naceweb.org\)](#)

NACE Webinar on Skills Survey: Career Readiness Project
[Groundbreaking Results: The Career Readiness Project,](#)
[NACE and Skill Survey \(naceweb.org\)](#)

Thank You!

