



**Business Advisory Council
Wednesday, May 9, 2018**

MINUTES

1. Introductions

Tonjua McCullough – Blair Rubber Company

Sam Grida – Brunswick City Schools

Kent Morgan – Buckeye Local Schools

Daryl Kubilus – Cloverleaf School District

Geri Weiser, Cuyahoga Community College

Will Koran – ESC of Medina County

Michelle Masica – Gerspacher Real Estate Group

Laurie Boedicker – Highland Schools

Greg Thomas – Leadership Excellence, Ltd.

Kathy Breitenbucher – MCEDC

Annie Fink – MCEDC

Peggy Reeves – Medina County Career Center

Holly Colson – Mielke Holdings, Inc.

Denise Testa – University of Akron Medina

Elizabeth Bux – Williams & Batchelder

Soft Skills and integrating into the curriculum – The committee continued to put definitions around the list of soft skills.

“Attitude for gratitude” – Students need to understand the value of what they have and approach it with gratitude. They need to have appropriate expectations and appreciate feedback and coaching. It needs to be made clear that rewards aren’t required and appreciate it when they receive one. One behavior to illustrate this is to say Thank You.

Ability to brainstorm – It is important students understand the mechanics of brain-storming. All ideas are valid in brain-storming and it is important to listen. Everyone should feel comfortable in speaking up and bounce ideas. If your idea isn’t accepted or adopted, that’s ok. Separate your ego from your ideas to allow yourself more room to try.

Accountability – Own your direction. Don’t expect others to tell you who to be or what to do. Show up on time, pay attention, be able to take the end goal and figure out the steps in between on your own. Take ownership and meet deadlines. If you need help, ask. Accept mistakes and don’t look for blame. Be interested in on-going education (whether formal or not) and show respect to others.

Be on time – Changed to “be ready to work at the appointed time”. For an interview, 10 minutes early is enough. More than that and it can be a problem for the interviewer. But if you aren’t sure where you are going, get there early and stay in the car.

Be present – Engage in the discussion, take action, and show up. Do not do other “stuff” while at work. Don’t surf the net, no social media, no texting. Be focused on the task at hand. When your work is done, look for something else you can do that is work-related.

Budget accountability – This evolved in the discussion to be more focused around being able to understand how your work fits into the financial health of the company and the value you bring. It would be great if students could read a P&L, but there are plenty of jobs where that isn't relevant. Understanding the need to not waste and why everything contributes to the bottom line is most helpful.

Also discussed the need to understand benefits and the value of money. The topics would include money, budgeting, compounding interest, how to manage payments and large purchases and how to work with a bank. This resulted in the addition of a Financial Literacy aspect to our discussion.

Collaborate with others – This circled back a great deal to respect. Saying please and thank you, addressing people directly, when to talk vs. when to send email, text, social media and how those technologies change how we converse.

Communication skills – Verbal, written, social media and phones. How do you conduct yourself effectively on each platform. When should you use punctuation and spelling correctly, when are abbreviations appropriate, and what happens when you deal with multiple generations.

Conflict resolution – It was agreed this is a very complicated and in-depth topic but that there are certain traits that are desirable. Take out the emotion, don't look for blame, focus on solutions, seek first to understand and then be understood, listen to the other side and work to have both parties win were identified.

Deductive reasoning and problem-solving through both a team approach and as an individual

Entitlement vs. patience – Follow rules and understand why they are there. Have reasonable expectations. Complaining doesn't solve anything. You should have goals but understand the dues needed to be paid to reach said goals.

Ethics and Values – The group agreed this was too big a topic to tackle so instead we focused on Respect.

Flexibility – not everything is black and white

Innovation – the term "innovation" was determined to be the wrong word and was replaced with initiative. Under initiative, respectfully question things, identify a problem or task and come up with solutions or ways to improve. Don't be afraid of a negative response and know you aren't always going to have your suggestion used. Gauge your successes and failures and make sure you are on track.

Job Readiness – The discussion broke out in two categories. Things to do to get hired, and things to do on the job. Be ready to work, alert, awake, have the tools for the job and be organized. To get the job have the right clothes, resume, interviewing skills, job etiquette, and transportation. The other things mentioned were be organized for the next day and comprehend and implement your training.

Leadership skills and different ways to lead – fits with conflict resolution

Listening skills – active listening, following directions, demonstration of understanding,

Note taking

Perseverance – Once you think you are done, double check. Sticking with something all the way through is important. Not just checking it off the list. Consider the intent of the task. Don't be afraid to fail and if it doesn't work, stick with it to figure out why.

Practice creativity – Offer suggestions, make recommendations, understanding you have a fresh perspective, be open-minded. BUT, be careful how you present your ideas.

Prioritizing – Make sure you know what the priorities are, create and follow a task list, how might tasks be urgent vs. important, focus

Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking – Similar to creativity. Have specific questions vs. “now what?”, bring a problem and a solution, articulate the problem, don't require others to change your path – if you get stuck, figure out how to get unstuck, look at everything and think through what's going on, define the problem, look in the basic places for solutions, solution to a problem isn't to give it to someone else

Process improvement – Creativity and problem-solving

Respect for time, process, and people – Call back, dress appropriately, follow up, listen, ask questions, compliment appropriately, offer assistance, look someone in the eye, read non-verbal cues and make sure you display the cues you intend, self-awareness, please and thank you, how you address a problem, give people the benefit of the doubt, cell phone usage, acknowledge your mistakes

Responsibility – Own your task, behaviors and personal development.

Self-Management – Pride in the work, own the job, stay busy, ask for more tasks, discipline, filter what you say, self-motivation, self-awareness, management of personal life at work appropriately, cell phone use, emotional intelligence

Self-Reliance – Problem-solving

Social Media -

Thinking outside the box – Creativity and Problem-Solving

Use intelligence rather than be stifled by it – don't be afraid if you don't understand, respect, acknowledge people who know more than you do, reject things you don't understand, don't get in a rut

Want to be where you are – Attitude – Look ahead, culture, company, career path, don't spend all your time complaining

Work ethic – Honest, trustworthy, give a full day of work, managing time, understand what you are supposed to do, own mistakes, work hard

Other topics:

Financial literacy – the value of money, budgeting, compounding interest, how to manage payments on large purchases, how to work with a bank.

One suggestion was a class for parents to learn these things as well.

Respect individual differences and see where people are coming from came up multiple times.

Understand your strengths and then how to put yourself in other people's shoes.

Talk to companies about how to setup, manage and use a mentoring program effectively.

New Hire Orientation is a key factor in helping employees get acclimated. At SFS, they have their GM set the expectations up front, set the tone and be sure everything is clear day one.

We also talked about Employee Assistance Programs.

Next Meeting: May 9, 2018