READING COMPREHENSION - Skills for the 21st-century workplace

Have you got the skills you need for the 21st-century workplace?



We need to develop all kinds of skills to survive in the 21st century. Some, like ICT skills and knowledge of the digital world, are taught explicitly in schools in the UK. Here are five less obvious ones for you to think about. These are the sorts of skills that employers may ask you questions about in interviews, so it's a good idea to think about how good you are in these areas. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Imagination

In the age of technology that we are living in now, it is no longer enough to keep on making the same products. Employers need people who can imagine new approaches and new ideas.

Think: Think of an object or gadget you use every day. How could it be improved? Can you think of three improvements?

Problem solving

Employers will value workers who are able to see problems before they happen and come up with creative solutions.

Think: Imagine you are organising an end-of-term social event at school. Think of some problems that you could face. Can you think of any solutions?

Communication skills

Workers will have to be good communicators. They will have to be able to negotiate and discuss key issues and also write in a clear way without using too many words.

Think: How do people communicate with each other in the 21st century?

Critical analysis

Employers want workers who are able to recognise the difference between information that can be believed and false information.

Think: Use the internet to find out three facts about a celebrity or famous figure. Can you verify the information by checking other websites?

Decision making

Individual workers have a growing amount of responsibility. It is important to be able to evaluate a situation and be confident in making a decision.

Think: Which three things could you do to (a) be healthier (b) do better at school and (c) help others? Make a decision now to do at least one of these things. Then … just do it!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

1.	21st-century skills are not taught in schools in the UK.	*True*	*False*
2.	Employers like workers to be imaginative.	*True*	*False*
3.	Employers want workers to think about possible problems.	*True*	*False*
4.	Employers like workers to be original when solving problems.	*True*	*False*
5.	Future workers will need to be able to write concisely.	*True*	*False*
6.	People communicate with each other less in the 21st century.	*True*	*False*
7.	Employers believe it is useful to know a lot of information about celebrities.	*True*	*False*
8.	Employers don't want workers to make decisions without asking them.	*True*	*False*

2. Check your vocabulary: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

have	make	value	differentiate
develop	discuss	teach	solve

1. UK schools and colleges _____ ICT skills.
2. Employers _____ people with ideas for new approaches.
3. Employers like workers who can _____ problems.
4. Workers need to be able to _____ their work with their team.
5. Workers need to _____ their writing skills.
6. It is important that workers can _____ between truth and lies.
7. Employees in the 21st century _____ more responsibility.
8. Employers like their workers to _____ decisions.

LIVEWORKSHEETS