Hard Look at Soft Skills

With
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How to Implement Soft Skills Development

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WAINHOUSE
Research

The Role of Education in Building Soft Skills

Putting into Perspective the Priorities and Opportunities for Teaching Collaboration and Other Soft Skills in Education

Alan D. Greenberg

Andrew H. Nilssen
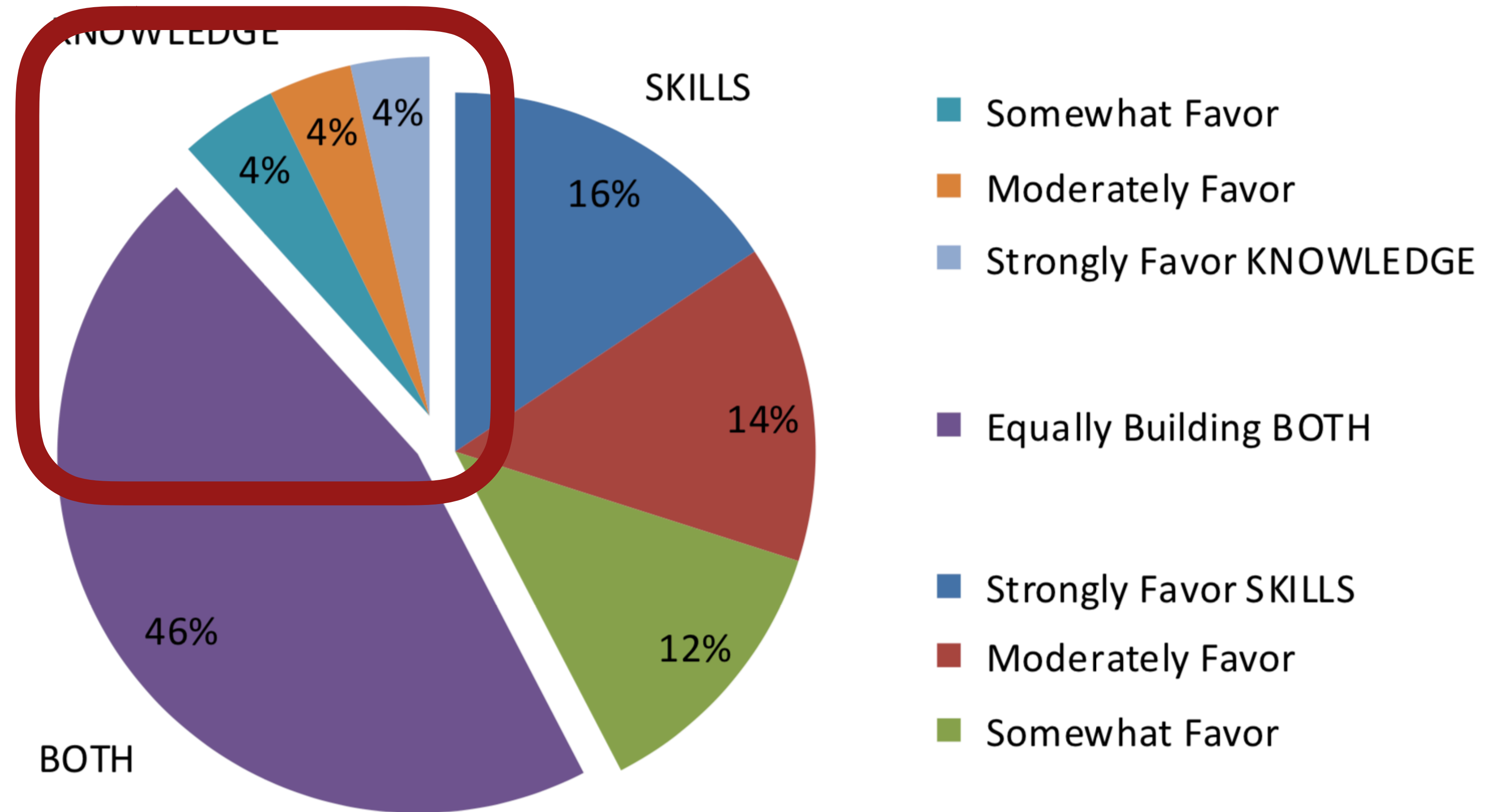
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Study sponsored by:

SMART.

Figure 3 Focus on Ideal Mix of Skills versus Knowledge

We need to equip students with skills, knowledge, and empathy that will make them constructive leaders in a volatile future. We thought educators could guess

The Why

What does a **model graduate** look like at your school?

Veterinary Tech
Home Inspection
Medical Assisting   Design
Massage Therapy   Industrial
Hospitality   Criminal Justice   Culinary   Aviation   Billing and Coding
Nursing   Welding   CDL Training
HVAC   Dental   Cosmetology
Information Technology
Business   Media   Nutrition

Teamwork
Critical thinking
Collaboration   Critiques
Adaptability   Troubleshooting
Leadership
Resourceful   Tolerant of Change

Communication
Work Ethic
Verbal
Dependable   Make Deadlines
Writing   Body Language
Time Management

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"Repetition of the same thought or physical action develops into a habit which, repeated frequently enough, becomes an automatic reflex."

-Norman Vincent Peale
Author & Minister

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How do we **embed** it into the curriculum?

How to Start

Standards

Look to the career field for guidelines to include

4.7 Given a scenario, use proper communication techniques and professionalism.

- Use proper language and avoid jargon, acronyms, and slang, when applicable
- Maintain a positive attitude/ project confidence
- Actively listen (taking notes) and avoid interrupting the customer
- Be culturally sensitive
  - Use appropriate professional titles, when applicable
- Be on time (if late, contact the customer)
- Avoid distractions
  - Personal calls
  - Texting/social media sites
  - Talking to coworkers while interacting with customers
  - Personal interruptions

- Dealing with difficult customers or situations
  - Do not argue with customers and/or be defensive
  - Avoid dismissing customer problems
  - Avoid being judgmental
  - Clarify customer statements (ask open-ended questions to narrow the scope of the problem, restate the issue, or question to verify understanding)
  - Do not disclose experiences via social media outlets

- Set and meet expectations/timeline and communicate status with the customer
  - Offer different repair/ replacement options, if applicable
  - Provide proper documentation on the services provided
  - Follow up with customer/user at a later date to verify satisfaction
- Deal appropriately with customers' confidential and private materials
  - Located on a computer, desktop, printer, etc.

CompTIA A+ Certification Exam: Core 2 Objectives Version 2.0 (Exam Number: Core 2)

CompTIA.

Community

## Look to local business leaders, handbooks, and advisory boards

Washington's Tech Workforce Has An Emotional Intelligence Problem, Say CEOs

"Three different CEOs mentioned that they do not like to hire computer science graduates," says John Shaw, NVTC's research and strategic initiatives manager. "They would prefer to hire a liberal arts graduate, because they will have the communication skills that tend to be more of the focus in the liberal arts."

Some employers told the council they would be willing to hire candidates who lack certain technical competencies as long as they possess soft skills like emotional intelligence. Employers reasoned they "could upskill technical competencies, but [lack] the expertise to do the same with soft skills."
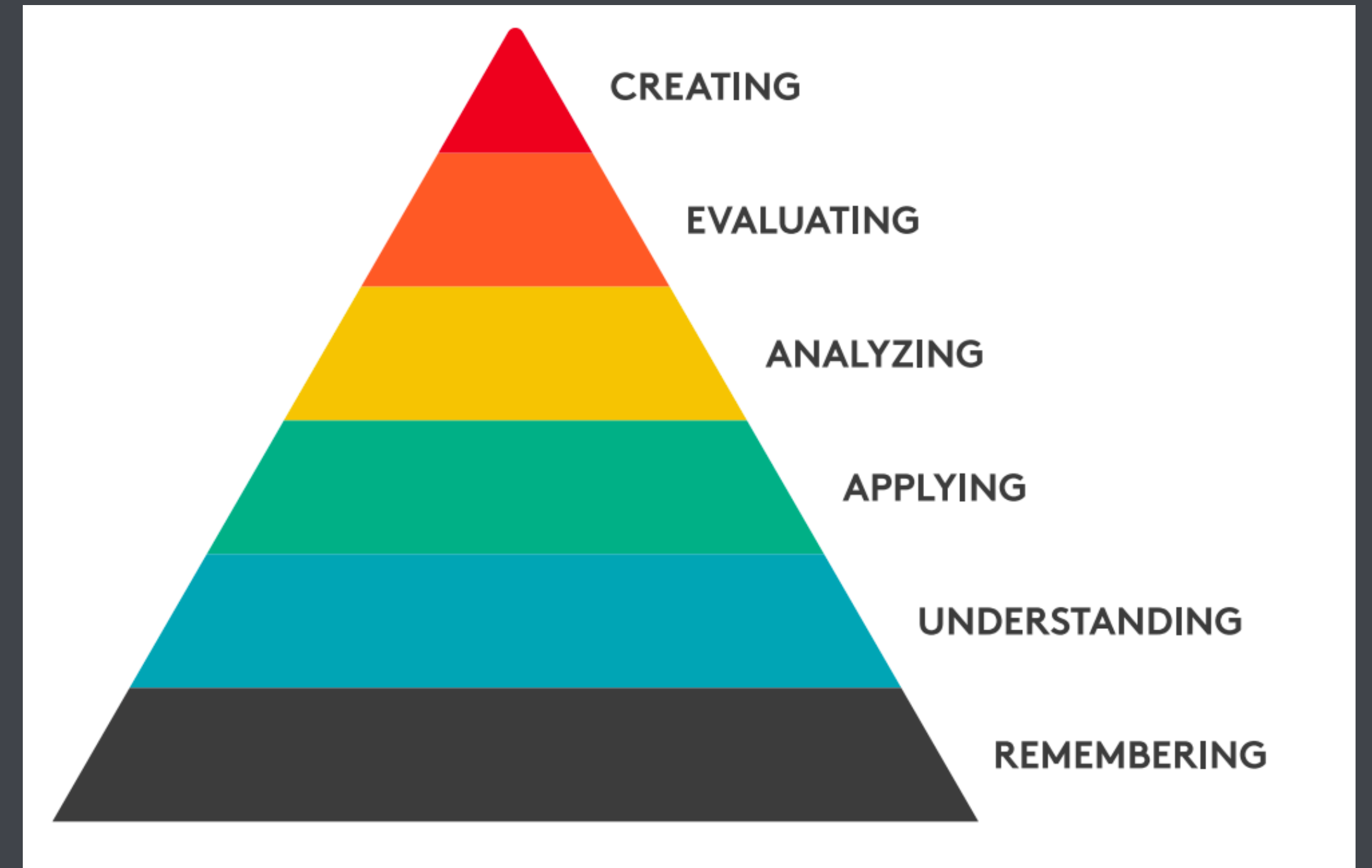
Frameworks

Look to the career field for guidelines to include

LINCS

Literacy Information and Communication System
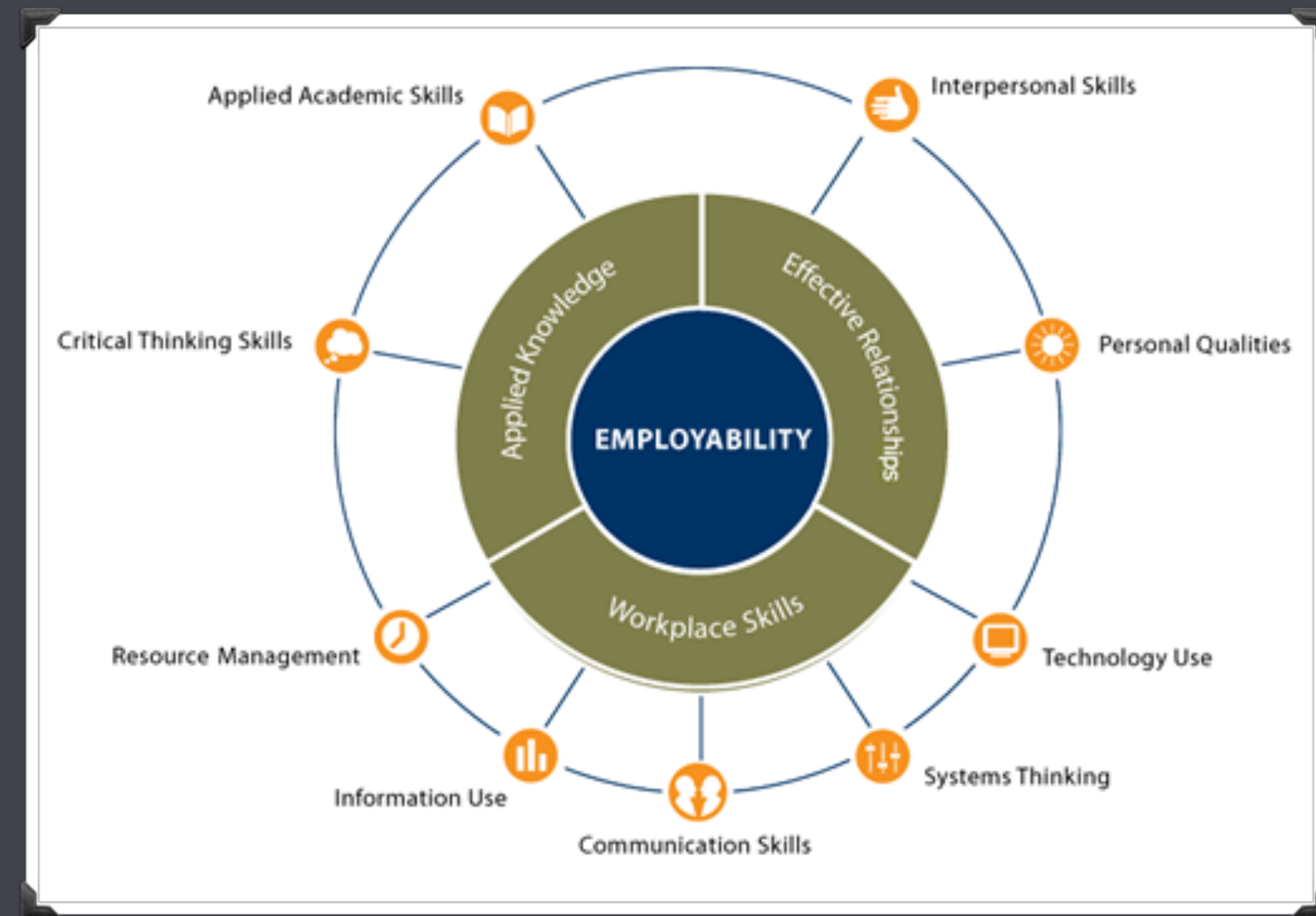
How to implement

Objectives

Specify soft skills students can demonstrate mastery of during the program

Low: The learner will list the six parts of a good employee evaluation

Higher: The learner will be able to appraise the strengths and weaknesses to determine best practices in the workplace from an employee evaluation.

Syllabi

Specify classroom rules to mimic the workplace

Included as objectives, as "rules", or an addendum

Role Play

Do not leave out soft skill attributes during demonstrations, procedures, or activities.

Assess the student on the hard and soft skills with customer service, teamwork, and communication.

All our life... is but a mass of habits—practical, emotional, and intellectual—systematically organized for our weal or woe, and bearing us irresistibly towards our destiny, whatever the latter may be.

- William James
Psychologist and philosopher

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Keep in touch.

Thursday: Beyond Knowledge: Investigating Qualities Students Prefer in Faculty

Next week: Building Teamwork and Caring Beyond the Curriculum

May 23-25: Professional Development Conference in Reston, VA

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Keep in touch.

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