

Lesson 2.20: Employability: Soft Skills Superpower

Unit: Unit 2, Me, My Goals, My Money (Individual Growth and Life Readiness) **Topic:** 2.5 Work and Careers **Grade:** 6 to 8 (written at grade 7; see Differentiation for the grade 6 support and grade 8 stretch) **Days:** 1 class period of 40 minutes (10 minutes of it is the ClassroomStreet trading window that continues from Topic 2.4) **Room:** Either (classroom or FACS lab; devices needed for the trading window)

Standards

- NYS module line: NYS IGLR 3. Employability a) Explore employability skills
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 3. Employability Skills c) List and describe employability skills and ways they benefit individuals in community and work situations
- CTE theme line: CTE CCO 3. Employability Skills d) Demonstrate personal development of employability skills through practice of these skills in a variety of classroom applications
- NYS FACS Learning Standard 3 (Intermediate), Key Idea: Students will understand and be able to manage personal resources of talent, time, energy, and money and make effective decisions in order to balance their obligations to work, family, and self.; Performance Indicator: Students understand how working contributes to a quality living environment.
- CDOS Standard 3a Universal Foundation Skills: Personal Qualities (Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between individuals and society and interact with others in a positive manner.)
- National FCS 3.0: 1.2.8 Show the work habits, ethics, and professional conduct employers expect.

Enduring understanding and essential question

Big idea: Hard skills get you the interview. Soft skills get you the job and keep it. You are already practicing both in this room every time you take a lab role. **Essential question:** If two people can both do the job, why does one get hired and the other get sent home?

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. (Low) Given the list of six employability skills employers name most (reliability, communication, teamwork, problem solving, adaptability, honesty), define each in their own words and give one example of what it looks like at work.
2. (Mid) Using this year's lab roles, the Silent Measurement Challenge, and the Investor Challenge as evidence, rate themselves 1 to 4 on each of the six skills and support at least four ratings with a specific example.

3. (High) Choose one skill to grow, write a three-part growth plan (where I will practice it this year, what I will do differently, how I will know it worked), and defend the choice in one sentence.

Vocabulary

Tier 2 (general academic): reliable, adapt, evidence, rating Tier 3 (FACS): employability, hard skill, soft skill, work ethic, professionalism. See the unit vocabulary list for Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Materials and setup

- Devices for the trading window (one per student or one per pair, as Topic 2.4 has been running it); the ClassroomStreet dispatches for today's Round 2 window block loaded, windows 41 to 47 [*Sal: Round 2 is the same board, same account, same rules, after the reveal; set the dispatch and the timer before class*]
- Each student's Investor Journal (Handout 02.14 - Investor Journal.md), open to the Round 2 lines
- Handout, one per student: Handout 02.20 - Soft Skills Self-Rating and Growth Plan.md
- Slides: Slides 02.20 - Employability Soft Skills Superpower
- The lab role cards from Unit 1 (Handout 01.08 - Role Cards Lab 1.md) on the document camera or one printed set on the board, so students can point at the role they held
- Timer visible to the class
- Setup notes: write the do now on the board before students walk in. Have the six-skill slide up and covered. Pull two or three real job ads from a local employer's site the night before and highlight the soft skill words (for example "reliable," "team player," "communicates clearly"); the ads are the proof that this is what employers actually write. [*Sal: pick employers your students recognize: a supermarket, a hospital, a restaurant group, the town.*]

Pre-assessment

The do now is the pre-assessment. Most students name a hard skill first ("she is a good cook," "he knows computers"). Count how many name a soft skill without being asked. That number tells you how long Step 2 needs. Also look back at the Investor Report reflections from Lesson 2.19: students who wrote about a partner problem already have evidence for the teamwork row.

Do now and hook (Time: 3 min)

On the board: "Think of the best worker you know. A relative, a coach, someone at a store or a restaurant. Write two things they do that make them good at their job. One sentence each."

Debrief: cold call four students; write the answers in two columns without labeling them (one column for things about the task, one for things about how they treat people and

handle problems). Then the hook: “Everything in the second column, employers say they cannot teach. And it is the reason people get hired, promoted, or fired. Today you find out how much of it you already have.”

Procedure

Step	Teacher will	Students will	Time
1. ClassroomStreet trading window (Round 2, windows 41 to 47)	Open the window block. Post today's dispatch. Say nothing about the market for the first five minutes; answer questions only about how to place a trade. Close the block at 10 minutes with the reset cue. Note one trade decision to bring up in Step 3 as teamwork or problem solving evidence.	Log in, read the dispatch, decide whether to buy, sell, or hold now that they know what every venture really is, and write the Round 2, Day 1 line in the Investor Journal (what I did, why, and the fortune).	10 min
2. Direct instruction: hard skills, soft skills, and the six	Label the two columns from the do now: hard skills (the job's task) and soft skills (how you work). Show the six-skill slide: reliability, communication, teamwork, problem solving, adaptability, honesty. Give the one-line definition and one work example for each (a reliable dishwasher shows up every shift; an adaptable cook handles a menu change without complaining). Show	Copy the six skills and a two-word definition of each into the handout header. Count the soft skill words in the job ads (usually four or five per ad).	6 min

	two highlighted job ads: “Here is what the employer wrote. Count the soft skills.” Say the line: “Companies hire for hard skills and fire for soft skills.”		
3. Learning activity: self-rating with evidence	Hand out the self-rating. Explain the rule: a rating without evidence does not count. Evidence has to be something you actually did this year: a lab role (name it), the Silent Measurement Challenge, the \$40 project, the Investor Challenge, a class job. Model one row aloud with a made-up student: “Teamwork, 3, because as Prep Cook in Lab 2 I had the toppings ready before the Head Cook asked.” Circulate with the clipboard checklist.	Rate themselves 1 to 4 on each of the six skills. Write one sentence of evidence for at least four rows. Leave a row blank rather than invent evidence.	8 min
4. One skill to grow	Show the growth plan frame: the skill, where I will practice it this year (the next lab, the Unit 3 babysitting project, the Unit 5 sewing team), what I will do differently, how I will know. Point out that the next lab rotates roles, so a	Choose one skill (not their highest). Fill the three-part plan. Write one sentence: “I chose this one because ____.”	6 min

	student who was Prep Cook can ask for Station Manager.		
5. Pair share	Pair students. Each partner reads the plan aloud; the listener asks one question: “How will you know it worked?” Pairs that finish early act out one of the six skills in a 30-second scene for their table, and the table names the skill.	Read, listen, ask, answer. Adjust the “how I will know” line if the partner’s question exposed a gap. If there is time, act out one skill in 30 seconds.	3 min

Questions to ask

Monitor understanding:

- Is “knows how to use a knife” a hard skill or a soft skill? What about “cleans as they go without being asked”?
- Which of the six skills did the Silent Measurement Challenge test hardest? Why that one?
- What is the difference between a rating and evidence?

Deepen learning:

- Why would an employer say they can teach hard skills but not soft skills? Do you agree?
- Which of the six skills is hardest to show in one interview? How would you prove it anyway?
- You were Head Cook and your Prep Cook stopped working. Which skill were you using when you handled it, and did it work?

Check for understanding

Clipboard checklist during Step 3: for each student, a yes or no on “rating has evidence,” “evidence is a real event from this year,” and “evidence matches the skill it is under.” A student with three yeses on two rows is ready for the growth plan. A student whose evidence is “I am good at it” gets the model sentence read aloud again at their desk.

Closure (Time: 4 min)

Exit card, three lines: the skill I rated highest and my evidence; the skill I am growing and where I will practice it; one soft skill I saw a classmate use today. Three students read the

third line aloud (naming the skill, not the classmate). Sort the cards into “got it” and “needs more”; a “needs more” card has a rating with no event behind it, and that student gets a one-minute check at the start of Lesson 2.21.

Differentiation and supports

- ELL: the six skills on the slide have a picture each (a clock for reliability, two speech bubbles for communication, a huddle for teamwork, a puzzle piece for problem solving, a road with a detour for adaptability, a handshake for honesty); the handout carries the six words in Turkish, Portuguese, and Spanish (see Vocabulary 02.md); sentence starter for evidence: "In ___ (lab or game), I ___." Pair with a partner who can point to the role card.
- IEP and 504 (general): four evidence rows required, not six; the rating scale printed as four faces as well as four numbers; extended time by finishing the growth plan as the do now tomorrow; a student may dictate evidence to a partner who writes it.
- Grade 6 support: rate four skills (reliability, communication, teamwork, honesty), with evidence for two; the growth plan is two parts (where and what I will do).
- Grade 8 stretch: add a seventh row for a skill the student names from the job ads (for example “attention to detail”) and rate it; the growth plan names a measurable sign (“the Station Manager checks my station once, not three times”); one paragraph on which of the six skills matters most in the career from their top three (previews Lesson 2.21).
- UDL checkpoint used: multiple means of representation (the six skills as words, pictures, and real job ads) and multiple means of action and expression (evidence can be written, dictated, or pointed to on a role card).
- No-device alternative for the trading window: run the window block on paper, the same way Topic 2.4 does on a Wi-Fi-down day. Read the dispatch aloud, put the window’s prices on the board from the paper price table (Days 10 to 12 for Round 2), and students record trades on Handout 02.19 - Paper Ledger.md; the trading partner checks the math and the Station Manager of each table hands the sheets in. The Round 2 journal line is written either way.

Assessment

Objective	Standards met	Learning task	Assessment (formative or summative; tool)
1. Define the six skills with an example	IGLR 3. a); CCO 3. c)	Step 2 header notes; job ad count	Formative; handout header checked complete, partial, or missing for daily work; summative on Unit 2 Test items 17 and 18
2. Rate six skills with evidence from	IGLR 3. a); CCO 3. d); Std 3 PI D; National	Self-rating, Step 3	Formative; clipboard checklist

this year	FCS 1.2.8		(three yeses on two rows); handout collected and scored complete, partial, or missing
3. Choose a skill and write a growth plan	CCO 3. d); CDOS 3a Personal Qualities	Growth plan, Step 4, and pair share, Step 5	Formative; exit card; the plan goes in the FACS folder and is reread before the next lab's role choice (Unit 3)

The topic's formal check is the career research card in Lesson 2.22. The Unit 2 Test in Lesson 2.22 checks the six skills (items 17 and 18).

Homework

None. Optional: ask an adult who works, "What gets people fired where you work?" Bring the answer in one sentence. It is almost always a soft skill.

Connections

Inside the building: the guidance counselor, who sees the same six skills on the working papers application and on every recommendation form; FACS gives guidance a class that can name its own skills with evidence, and guidance gives FACS the working papers process for Lesson 2.22. Community: a local employer who hires teenagers (a supermarket manager, a camp director) for a five-minute visit or a two-line quote on what they look for.

Sources

- NYS Middle Level CTE FACS Content Module 01, Individual Growth and Life Readiness (nycotecenter.org, June 2018), line 3. a). Copy in 02 Standards/NYS Module PDFs/.
- NYS Middle Level CTE Theme Module 01, Career and Community Opportunities, lines 3. c) and 3. d). Same folder.
- NYS Learning Standards for Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences (1996), Standard 3, Intermediate, FACS strand. Wording per 02 Standards/STANDARDS SOURCES - web research.md, section 2.
- NYS CDOS Standard 3a, Intermediate, Personal Qualities. Same file.
- National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education 3.0 (LEAD FCS Education, 2018), competency 1.2.8.
- Sal's own materials: the Brentwood packet "Soft Skills Superpower: The Skills Every Job Needs" (Unit 2 Career Exploration, April 2026). The self-rating table and the "companies hire for hard skills and fire for soft skills" line come from it. The twelve-skill list is cut to the six employers name most; the word search is dropped.

Teacher notes

- If the trading window runs long (it will if the dispatch is a crisis follow-up), cut Step 5 and take the pair question as the first line of tomorrow's do now. Never cut Step 3; the evidence rule is the whole lesson.
- Common mistake: students rate every skill a 4. The fix is not a lecture; it is "show me the event." A 4 with no event becomes a 2 on the sheet.
- Common mistake two: students choose their weakest skill to grow and pick a place to practice it that is months away. Push them to the next lab or the next group task, not "high school."
- The job ads matter more than the slide. Students believe an employer's own words.
[Sal: your Brentwood packet said 75 percent of career success depends on soft skills; that figure is repeated widely without a solid source, so this lesson uses the job ads as the proof instead of the number.]
- Keep the self-ratings. They come back in Unit 7 (Lesson 7.1) when the same students write the three-part resume bullet; the evidence sentences from today are the bullets.