12 Career Ready Practices

1. Act as a Responsible and Contributing Citizen and Employee

Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community and demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them, think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions, and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community, and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.

2. Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills

Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications and make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.

3. Attend to Personal Health and Financial Well-Being

Career-ready individuals understand the relationship between personal health, workplace performance, and personal well-being; they act on that understanding to regularly practice health diet, exercise and mental health activities. Career-ready individuals also take regular action to contribute to their personal financial well-being, understanding that personal financial security provides the peace of mind required to contribute more fully to their own career success.

4. Communicate Clearly, Effectively, and with Reason

Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice and organization and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.

5. Consider the Environmental, Social, and Economic Impacts of Decisions

Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organizations and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and profitability of the organization.

6. Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation

Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.

7. Employ Valid and Reliable Research Strategies

Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices, or inform strategies. They use a reliable research process to search for new information and evaluate the validity of sources when considering the use and adoption of external information or practices. They use an informed process to test new ideas, information, and practices in their workplace situation.

8. Utilize Critical Thinking to Make Sense of Problems and Persevere in Solving Them

Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem. They are aware of problems when they occur, quickly take action to address the problem, thoughtfully investigate the root cause of the problem prior to introducing solutions, and carefully consider the options to solve the problem. Once a solution is agreed upon, they follow through to ensure the problem is solved, whether through their own actions or the actions of others.

9. Model Integrity, Ethical Leadership, and Effective Management

Career-ready individuals consistently act in ways that align to personal and community-held ideals and principles while employing strategies to positively influence others in the workplace. They have a clear understanding of integrity and act on this understanding in every decision. They use a variety of means to positively impact the direction and actions of a team or organization, and they apply insights into human behavior to change others' actions, attitudes, and/or beliefs. They recognize the near-term and long-term effects that management's actions and attitudes can have on productivity, morale, and organizational culture.

10. Plan Education and Career Path Aligned to Personal Goals

Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and they regularly act on a plan to attain these goals. They understand their own career interests, preferences, goals, and requirements. They have perspective regarding the pathways available to them and the time, effort, experience, and other requirements to pursue each, including a path of entrepreneurship. They recognize the value of each step in the educational and experiential process, and they recognize that nearly all career paths require ongoing education and experience. They seek counselors, mentors, and other experts to assist in the planning and execution of career and personal goals.

11. Use Technology to Enhance Productivity

Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems. They are flexible and adaptive in acquiring and using new technology, being proficient with ubiquitous technology applications. They understand the inherent risks, personal and organizational, of technology applications, and they take actions to prevent or mitigate these risks.

12. Work Productively in Teams While Using Cultural/Global Competence

Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural differences to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.