

Employability

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The
Education
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Foundation

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Rationale

Media

“Firms need young people that are resilient, good communicators and understand how to work as part of a team.”

Macrosystem - political climate

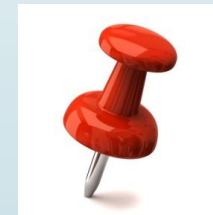
John Longworth
Britain's Chambers
of Commerce
Director General
(BBC News October 2014)



Strategic Aims



Early Years Practitioner



A duality of
professional
understandings



FE and HE Lecturer

Research Aims

- to gain greater understanding of skills for employability from the perspective of
 - The learner
 - The early years setting
 - Childcare lecturers/college practitioners
- to support the college strategic aim to
 - Inspire
 - Be ambitious
 - Respect
 - Support all learners
- To build and further strengthen relationships with the wider community
- Addition consideration given to how dispositions for how learning can be utilised to develop the learning environment including
 - Sustainability
 - Maths and English Skills
 - Reflective practice

Findings and Research of Others

Dispositions can be considered to be learning to be a good thinker through 'learning to recognise and search for opportunities to apply one's capacities' (Carr 2001 p9).

'I realise that I am only interested in being a learner, preferably learning things that matter, that have some significant influence on my own behaviour'
(Rogers 1967 p 267)

Dispositions such as resilience, persistence and curiosity are seen to be supportive of lifelong learning as they are not constrained by curriculum, subject or age; as such they are seen to be a motivator in learning (NZME 2012).

Pukelis et al (2007 cited Belt, Drake and Chapman 2010) add that there is no argument that educational institutions hold a large responsibility within the smooth integration of learners into professional life.

Employability

Belt, Drake and Chapman (2010) define employability as the ability to be in employment, seeing the use and development of skills as a continual process. Yorke (2006 cited Saunders and Zuzel 2010) suggests that employability skills are 'a set of achievements-skills, understandings, and personal attributes'. Further STEMNET (2010) add employability skills can be considered to be transferable skills needed to become employable.

Methodology

Action Research - Interpretivist

Value and respect the beliefs and feelings of all

Values, Beliefs and Principles

Participants

- 42 learners initially
- 19 learners 2nd stage
- 24 settings
- 10 lecturers from Health, Care and Early Years

Methods

- Learner and course documentation
- Questionnaires to
 - Settings
 - Lectures
- Dialogic interview
- Snapshot learner views

Multiple
methods

Multiple
perspectives

Triangulation

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

drive - The determination to get things done. Make things happen and constantly looking for better ways of doing things.

communication - The ability to get yourself, job opportunities and get noticed by potential employers. Ask to express your ideas clearly and confidently.

time management - To be able to manage your time effectively, be punctual to interviews to demonstrate that you can be on time for work.

SKILLS Needed

Confidence
Need to be able to be confident when working with others.

Communication
Need to be able to talk to people to get things done.

Teamwork
Need to work in a team to be able to achieve more things.

ORGANISED

Skills to Progression!

TEAM WORK

PATIENT

3 SKILLS NEEDED TO SUPPORT PROGRESSION

Organisation

- To ensure you have the correct equipment at the right time.
- So that every thing is ready/prepared for when you next need it.

Time keeping

- On time
- Reliable
- Don't miss out on any important information

Communication

- To share important information with need to know people.
- To share ideas.
- Multi-agency working

The top 3 skills needed to support progression:

Communication

- Able to share your ideas
- Able to listen to others
- Able to support others

Punctual

- Able to meet deadlines
- On time

Treatworthy

- Others will know they are able to rely on
- Good role model for others

Life Skills

Knowledge & understanding

Shows that you know what you are doing and makes a better chance of success.

organised

Being organised shows you are committed to work or education.

Communication

Shows that you can communicate effectively.

Initial findings

Top four skills in each area, fifth one highlighted in lecturers of initiative

Skills for research

Skill/attribute	Learners	Setting	Lecturers	Total
Communication	26	18	12	56
Teamwork	9	10	7	26
Reliability	3	12	8	23
Practical skills	5 – possible links	11	5	21
Initiative		11	6	17
Organised	6	1	2	9
Time-keeping	7	1		8

No learners highlighted initiative

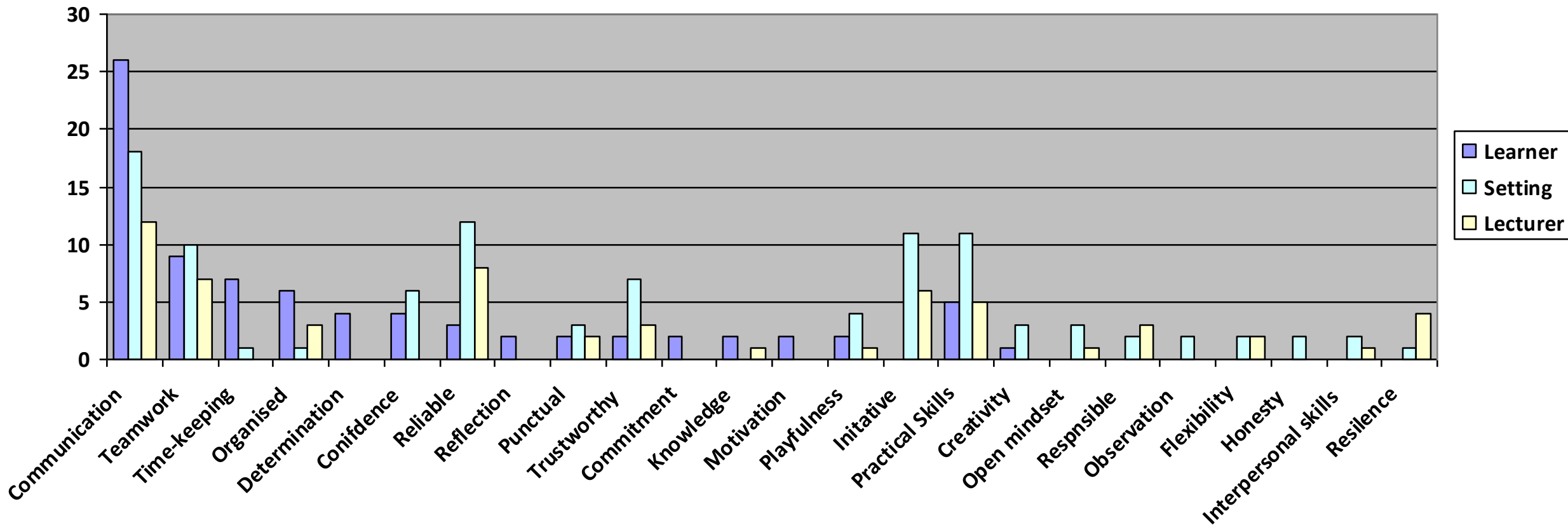


Intervention

- Stage One: Explicit learning objectives linking to employability
- Stage Two: Sessions on dispositions, mind-sets, resilience and initiative
- Stage Three: Initiative and reliability problem/prompt cards

Findings and Outcomes

Employability Skills





Findings and Outcomes

Themes

- Experiential learning
- Relationships
- Being explicit and contextualised
- Challenge



Experiential Learning

Practical Skills

- Within the top four employability skills for lecturers and settings
- Learners consistently recognise the importance of practical learning

- Rationale for a practical, experiential methodology

This can be seen to be as Ravenscroft and Luhanga (2014 p143) suggest active contextualised learning that aims to support learners deeper thinking alongside employability.

Relationships

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graph TD; Relationships --> KeyPerson[Key person approach]; Relationships --> Teamwork; Relationships --> MultiAgency[Multi-agency working]; Relationships --> Interpersonal[Interpersonal skills];
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Key person
approach

Teamwork

Multi-agency
working

Interpersonal
skills

Underpinned and interconnected by many
other skills for employability highlighted

Longworth (cited BBC 2014) and STEMNET (2010) stated that teamwork is essential and this research supports this, however further recognising the underpinning elements of teamwork. These elements can be seen to link with skills that learners require for employability both recognised by settings and the learners themselves.

Positive growth of reciprocal
relationships between setting and
college

‘a genuine collaboration’
(McLoughlin 2013 p10)



Being Explicit and Contextualised

- As Cranmer (2006 cited Saunders and Zuzel 2010) suggested being explicit about employability has on reflection supported learners understanding of the value of different learning activities.
- Explicit objectives set at start of lesson and reviewed throughout linking with employability and employability skills
- Maths and practice challenges

Increased learner motivation visibly

Challenge

► Learner sessions on:

- Mindsets
- Dispositions
- Resilience

Enabled learners to make links between themselves as learners and Early Years Provision

Determination

Change management

Open mindedness

Reflective practice

Autonomous learning

When learners are encouraged to take the challenge, within an emotionally contained learning space this disposition is encouraged.

Belt, Drake and Chapman (2010) suggest it is beneficial for learners setting boundaries and provision for their own meaning making


Conceptual Framework

- Catalyst for change in practice
- Five Domains – Communication, Relationships, Well-being, Work readiness and habits, Thinking and learning
- Open to interpretation in and through the multi layered nature of reality
 - Not to be limited to the current skills but developed to be constantly current in reality
- A framework for reflection and feedback

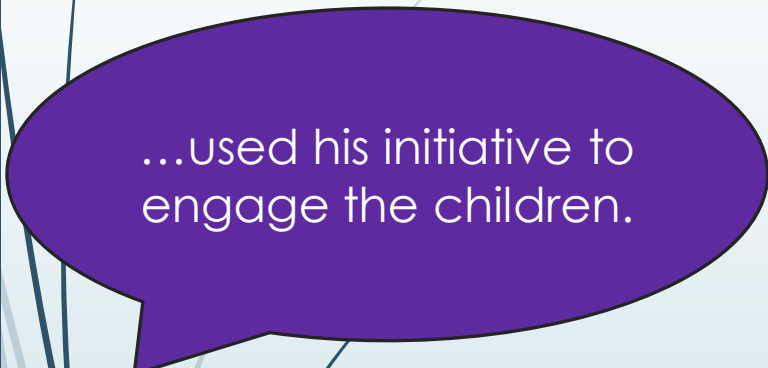
Communication	Relationships	Well-Being	Work readiness and habits	Thinking and learning
Communication Communication	Teamwork Teamwork	Confidence Confidence	Confidentiality	Determination
Observation	Ability to make relationships	Compassion	Reliability Reliability	Play Playfulness
Writing skills	Equality	Fun	Good judgement	Enabling environment
Approachable to parents and practitioners	Trustworthy	Patience	Initiative	Open mindfulness Open mindsets
Being able to smile	Interpersonal skills	Flexibility	Practical skills relating to the role	Creativity
Interact with children and adults	Sociable	Honesty	Punctuality	Problem solving
	Empathy	Resilience	Time Keeping	
		Happy	Responsible	
			Organisation	



Initiative

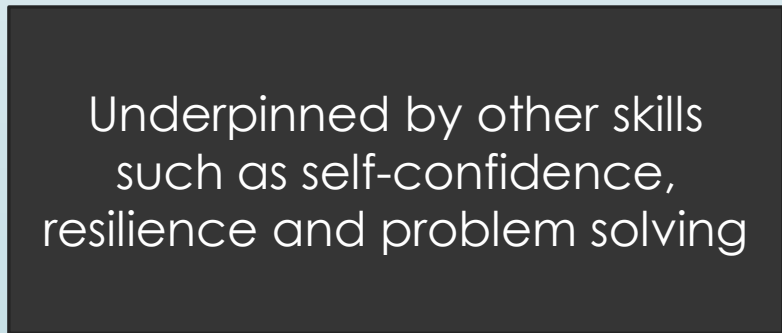


Most proactive student we've ever had



...used his initiative to engage the children.

- An unexpected skill for embedment
- Essential but can be considered to be instinctive
- Mapped under work readiness



Underpinned by other skills such as self-confidence, resilience and problem solving



Can be considered to be dispositional or habit of mind

Shows the complexity of employability



Learners say...



Employers say...






Conclusion and recommendations

- Skills for employability are essential for practice (these may have been referred to as different methodologies in the past)
- It is important to embed these through experiential, active contextualised learning
- Play is an important skill within Early Years education, learners should have the opportunity to break down the barriers and grow dispositions for learning
- Provide opportunities for experiential learning and possibility thinking
- Continue to develop the conceptual framework for reflection and feedback
- Develop a resource bank of initiative and reliability scenario cards
 - Have a progression of complexity in scenarios from paint pots to safeguarding

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