

Exhibit Leadership Skills Can Learn to Learn **Are Competent**
in Reading, Writing, and Computation Listen Communication
Use Creative and Critical Thinking Skills to Solve Problems
Are Effective Team Members *Accept and Meet Challenges*

Career Activity File

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Employability Skills

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Career Development Month

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Exhibit Leadership Skills Can Learn to Learn **Are Competent**

The Guidance Division of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education is pleased to provide the **2003 Career Activity File** to teachers and counselors. This booklet will provide some practical ideas and suggestions on employability skills, with an emphasis on problem solving and critical thinking.

The issue of basic skills required in the workplace was addressed in a national study conducted jointly by the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) called “Workplace Basics: The Essential Skills Employers Want.”

According to the ASTD/DOL research, American employers have discovered that their workforces need a variety of skills that include, but are not limited to, reading, writing, and computation. Employers now are also looking for skills in areas such as learning to learn, **problem solving** and **critical thinking**, oral communication and listening skills, interpersonal and teamwork skills, and the social and personal management skills that demonstrate responsibility in job performance.

Problem solving is a daily, lifetime skill. Helping students develop strategies in order to become independent problem solvers is the goal of this publication. It’s hard to solve a problem, however, unless we understand the problem.

An emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving is not new. In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education, in their widely publicized report entitled *A Nation At Risk: . . .*, emphasized that “formal instruction in critical-thinking skills [must] be mainstreamed across the curriculum at all levels. Such curricular integration is especially important in middle schools . . . because students there are beginning the significant transition from concrete to formal cognitive operations.”

This, indeed, makes sense. It seems unrealistic to attempt to fill students with facts without showing them how to think about the facts — that is, to fully comprehend, and be able to compare and evaluate ideas and information.

Educators might consider these questions when they are developing activities for their students:

1. How do teachers provide opportunities for students to learn and apply skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, and teamwork? How are these skills taught and used in classes through the curriculum?
2. What other activities or programs are offered that focus on these skills? (e.g., Future Problem Solving Program, Destination ImagiNation, Invention Conventions, etc.)
3. How do you help students consider future career possibilities?

Please duplicate and share the enclosed materials with parents, teachers, administrators, and others concerned with career development. You may view our Web site at www.okcareertech.org/guidance to download a copy of this booklet along with its past issues.

Career Activity File — Employability Skills

Career Activity File — Employability Skills

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