



# NEBRASKA CAREER READINESS STANDARDS

*Learning  
Progressions  
& Indicators*



**N**ebaska Career Readiness Standards are employability skills identified by Nebraska businesses and industry as the most essential skills sought after by employers in our state and nationwide. Career Development is intentional about teaching these skills through opportunities offered in PreK-12 with increasing complexity and relevance as students progress in career maturity.

**The Learning Progressions & Indicators** are based on the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards to provide educators with a framework of skill indicators for PreK-12. They are designed to inform educators throughout elementary, middle, and high school of the developmental nature of a student becoming career ready. The Learning Progressions & Indicators are to guide program-planning, curriculum, learning experiences, and activities for student achievement of the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards.

These skills also support students for transitions in life. They are transferable to any career, any workplace, and many other environments in the community. Every Nebraska student, regardless of background, interest, or intent after graduation need these skills.



This guidance document is advisory in nature but is binding on an agency until amended by such agency. A guidance document does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal operations of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules and regulations made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this guidance document imposes additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may request a review of the document. For comments regarding this document contact [nde.guidance@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.guidance@nebraska.gov).

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# 1. APPLIES APPROPRIATE ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Academic skills and technical skills complement one another. A career ready individual applies these skills in a strategic manner to accomplish tasks.

		INDICATORS BY GRADE LEVEL					
		EARLY ELEMENTARY PREK-2	LATE ELEMENTARY 3-5	MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8	EARLY HIGH SCHOOL 9-10	LATE HIGH SCHOOL 11-12	POSTSECONDARY ADULT
CAREER READINESS SKILLS	ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT	Understand the important relationship between education and career readiness.	Acquire learning strategies, study skills, and positive attitudes toward learning.	Identify how education achievements affect future choices regarding courses, programs, college, and career options.	Apply knowledge and regulate attitudes to achieve education and training requirements of high school and postsecondary goals.	Analyze how academic achievements and attitudes toward learning are affecting career opportunities. Obtain a high school diploma.	Apply academic proficiency in the workplace.
	TECHNICAL SKILL ATTAINMENT	Discover how different kinds of work require different combinations of skill and knowledge.	Identify technical career skills and the need for different kinds of skills in the workplace.	Learn and practice technical skills in CTE courses, CTSOs, and workplace learning experiences.	Develop technical career skills in CTE program of study, CTSO competitions and workplace learning aligned to career goals.	Demonstrate technical skills through a CTE program of study, CTSO competitions, and work-based learning to achieve career readiness.	Attain career skill training, certification, licensure, and/or degrees and keep them up-to-date as required.
	STRATEGIC THINKING	Consider advantages and disadvantages of each alternative when deciding.	Predict results of choices to find the best solutions when making decisions.	Apply reason and logic to thinking process to arrive at solutions to problems.	Refine solutions to problems by predicting outcomes based on data and evidence.	Analyze potential solutions with a set of criteria including: the goal, previous knowledge and experience, diverse perspectives, and technical data.	Analyze situations with academic and technical skill and use reasoning with a systems perspective to develop solutions.







## 2. COMMUNICATES EFFECTIVELY AND APPROPRIATELY

Expressing ideas, providing instruction, informing others, sharing knowledge and providing customer service are critical in a career.

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		EARLY ELEMENTARY PREK-2	LATE ELEMENTARY 3-5	MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8	EARLY HIGH SCHOOL 9-10	LATE HIGH SCHOOL 11-12	POSTSECONDARY ADULT
CAREER READINESS SKILLS	WRITING	Share ideas in writing.	Communicate using different types of writing.	Communicate information to audiences in a variety of writing formats.	Write documents for a variety of purposes and audiences using varied media formats.	Write a well organized document to clarify complex ideas, raise relevant questions, or solve problems using varied media formats.	Construct a well reasoned position in writing to support ideas or validate a point of view.
	SPEAKING	Learn and use speaking skills in different settings.	Communicate with others by applying a variety of speaking skills.	Speak to and have conversations with peers and adults to express ideas while respecting differing opinions.	Use speaking strategies to appropriately communicate ideas in a variety of situations.	Apply effective speaking and conversation skills to foster positive relationships and communicate key concepts to a variety of audiences.	Foster positive relationships by listening attentively and communicating in a wide variety of situations in the workplace.
	PRESENTATIONS	Use technology to communicate with others.	Communicate ideas using a variety of formats including technology.	Communicate information with technology using slides organized to present research or data gathered from outside sources.	Create presentation media using appropriate transitions and animation to add interest for a variety of audiences.	Deliver presentations using technology with public speaking and professional etiquette to be effective with a variety of audiences.	Prepare informative presentations with effective use of technology to keep audience interest.





## INDICATORS BY GRADE LEVEL

		EARLY ELEMENTARY PREK-2	LATE ELEMENTARY 3-5	MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8	EARLY HIGH SCHOOL 9-10	LATE HIGH SCHOOL 11-12	POSTSECONDARY ADULT
CAREER READINESS SKILLS	PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE	Use socially acceptable manners in a variety of environments.	Enhance social manners with acceptable communication styles, cell phone use, and personal appearance in a variety of environments.	Understand the differences of acceptable manners, personal appearance, communication styles, and cell phone use at school and workplaces compared to personal leisure time.	Consistently demonstrate socially acceptable manners, personal appearance, communication styles, and cell phone use in school, workplaces, and community activities.	Anticipate and adapt to social protocols for a variety of situations in school, workplaces, and in the community.	Display excellent workplace etiquette; meet all social protocols, avoid personal social media on work time, and communicate appropriately with coworkers, superiors, customers, or clients.
	CUSTOMER SERVICE	Assist when asked to help others with a task.	Respond politely and in a timely manner when asked to help others.	Engage politely to help and work with others in a variety of situations.	Consistently display positive attitudes and behaviors of helpfulness to others.	Model attitudes and behaviors of being of service to others to accomplish tasks and goals.	Establish positive relationships with all customers, anticipate and respond to their wants and needs, and make recommendations for appropriate products and services.





### 3. CONTRIBUTES TO EMPLOYER AND COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Career ready means more than attending to self-interest. It also means the ability to see the bigger picture of playing a role in the success of the employer and community through personal, civic and community actions.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY	Understand and demonstrate school expectations.	Show self-motivated positive student behaviors.	Anticipate consequences of being responsible and not being responsible for self at home, at school, and in workplace situations.	Be on time and well prepared for individual and group assignments at school and activities.	Demonstrate integrity and dependable leadership qualities for individual or group tasks at school and workplace experiences.	Model dependability while contributing to individual or group projects with personal energy and drive committed to the work organization.
	MEETS WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS	Identify why attendance, dependability, and promptness is important at school.	Display a variety of skills needed for both success in school and success in workplaces.	Evaluate self for strengths and weaknesses of skills which are expected both at school and at workplaces.	Provide evidence of meeting school expectations which are similar to success in workplaces, i.e. attendance, tardiness, homework completion, following policies, etc.	Research and demonstrate employment and workplace expectations aligned to career goal.	Show professionalism by meeting expectations of promptness, attendance, being prepared, completing tasks, following policies, rules and regulations, and taking responsibility for creating a safe, positive work environment.
	CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY AND SERVICE	Identify helpful ways students can contribute to the success of the school.	Act in helpful ways to contribute to school and community success by myself and with others.	Describe the community benefits and individual benefits of participating with other citizens to accomplish goals in the community.	Identify careers that could meet personal career goals and contribute to the community as well.	Illustrate the relationship between employee success, business/industry success and community success.	Model active engagement in professional or community groups to encourage and improve citizenship involvement.







## 4. MAKES SENSE OF PROBLEMS AND PERSEVERES IN SOLVING THEM

Recognizing and solving problems is a daily requirement of nearly every American worker and entrepreneur. From small technical issues, to group dynamics, to design of overall systems, opportunities abound for the career ready individual to solve problems in the workplace.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	PERCEPTIVE-NESS	Recognize problems and think of ideas to solve them.	Observe for problems and try different remedies.	Recognize that negative issues can be opportunities to design new solutions.	Diagnose origin of problems to be fixed and devise a plan to prevent the problem in the future.	Anticipate potential problems and develop specific strategies to improve results of products or processes.	Accurately identify a need or problem, recognize issues connected to problems and seeks to understand the causes.
	PROBLEM SOLVING	Brainstorm solutions while keeping focused on the goal.	Create original ideas and research possibilities to find the best solution.	Combine creative thinking and critical thinking to generate options, then prioritize possible solutions to try.	Use creativity to expand options then critically evaluate to determine best solutions focused on the goal.	Improve solutions with feedback from diverse perspectives to determine best alternatives.	Present multiple solutions based on data and evaluate for the best selection utilizing independent and team critical thinking.
	PERSEVERANCE/ WORK ETHIC	Focus on tasks and be willing to risk making mistakes when learning new things.	Demonstrate a desire to focus and learn even when it gets difficult.	Realize setbacks can be a normal part of learning and not to give up.	Tolerate difficulties or start over if necessary and persist to complete the goal.	Minimize obstacles and stay focused on project completion.	Demonstrate determination to complete tasks on schedule even when difficult and faced with setbacks.







## 5. USES CRITICAL THINKING

Nearly all careers now require interaction with complex systems of technical components, complex dynamics of people or both. Many decisions are not simple and straightforward; rather, they require the ability to intelligently reason through and make complex decisions.

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		EARLY ELEMENTARY PREK-2	LATE ELEMENTARY 3-5	MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8	EARLY HIGH SCHOOL 9-10	LATE HIGH SCHOOL 11-12	POSTSECONDARY ADULT
CAREER READINESS SKILLS	CRITICAL THINKING	Display curiosity while thinking.	Demonstrate effective questioning skills during the thinking process.	Demonstrate thinking skills of prediction and evaluation in order to make informed decisions.	Approach problems with reasoning and logic to hypothesize results for further evaluation to make informed decisions.	Approach complex problems with new perspectives; generate solutions critiqued with reason, logic, and inferences about alternatives.	Approach a complex issue with reason, logic, and critical thinking to generate and evaluate viable solutions.
	DECISION MAKING	Make decisions and reflect on the outcomes of choices.	Evaluate choices and consider consequences to self and others before making decisions.	Explain why good decision making is important to school and workplace success.	Evaluate how current decision making practices are affecting college and career choices.	Refine decision making ability by always gathering information, generate alternatives, and anticipate consequences of each alternative before deciding.	Make decisions by using a process of gathering data, generating solutions, and evaluating alternatives before implementing.
	ADAPTABILITY	Recognize change commonly faced by students and identify ways to adjust to change.	Use coping strategies to deal with expected and unexpected change.	Use knowledge, skills and attitudes required to adjust to change while continuing to achieve in school and activities.	Exercise flexibility to respond effectively to change and describe how change will continuously impact life at home, school, and work.	Apply coping strategies to mitigate stressful change while continuing to meet expectations at home, school, and workplace.	Manage change with focus, prioritization, and a willingness to learn new things.







## 6. DEMONSTRATES INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

The 21st century workplace requires innovation through creative thinking. Successful individuals will be expected to generate and share new ideas.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	CREATIVITY	Show curiosity in new things and develop new interests.	Develop creative thinking by using brainstorming and flexible thinking skills.	Develop creative thinking by using imagination.	Enhance creative thinking by combining concepts in different ways to create new ideas.	Enhance creative thinking by integrating personal thinking with ideas from others to introduce new unique ideas and solutions.	Combine new or past experiences and brainstorm new ideas with others to develop novel ideas to use at work.
	INNOVATION	Attempt new ways of completing tasks.	Experiment with new ideas while understanding risking failure is an opportunity to learn more.	Generate and apply a new idea while being aware that failure is an opportunity to make the idea better.	Accept constructive criticism from others to improve results.	Initiate a new project with the use of data from similar projects to calculate risks and improve results.	Be comfortable with taking data informed risks to introduce new ideas, products or processes for work.







# 7. MODELS ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

The ability to influence others relies on leadership. Today's workplace provides greater transparency and accountability where the ability to ethically lead and manage is essential.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	LEADERSHIP	Use positive relationship skills with self and others.	Practice empathy by understanding how language and actions influence the feelings and behaviors of others.	Develop interpersonal skills to work with and motivate a group to achieve goals.	Encourage and organize group members to use their individual talents to work together effectively in school and activities.	Apply integrity, respect, and empathy skills to develop positive attitudes and motivate successful work performance of self and others in groups.	Develop positive working relationships to accomplish goals. Model leadership attributes of self awareness, self regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.
	ETHICS	Demonstrate ability to empathize with others.	Consider consequences of actions on well-being of self and others when faced with problems.	Employ strategies for resisting pressures to engage in unsafe or unethical activities.	Apply ethical decision-making skills to establish responsible social and work relationships.	Analyze how responsible and ethical decision making affects interpersonal and group relationships.	Utilize ethical consideration in all decisions to enhance workplace behaviors and relationships and comply with code of conduct for the organization.
	MANAGEMENT	Complete work as directed and on time.	Regulate attitudes, behaviors, and time management to be a successful student.	Demonstrate confidence to set priorities, stay on task, and complete assignments on time.	Demonstrate organizational skills to implement goals in school and activities.	Clarify goals, develop a time line, and determine most effective strategies in order to complete goals on time.	Determine objectives, parameters, and deadlines prior to the start of a project so work activities will be efficient and effective through completion.





## 8. WORKS PRODUCTIVELY IN TEAMS AND DEMONSTRATES CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Nearly all careers now require interaction with complex systems of technical components, complex dynamics of people or both. Many decisions are not simple and straightforward; rather, they require the ability to intelligently reason through and make complex decisions.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	TEAMWORK	Display appropriate social and classroom behavior with classmates.	Contribute in helpful ways to work effectively in groups.	Seek opportunities to be part of teams during school and in after school activities.	Contribute effectively in groups as a member and offer leadership to accomplish goals.	Motivate self and other team members to lead different roles to achieve group goals.	Encourage team consensus; engage others to use their talents/skills to accomplish successful team results.
	CONFLICT RESOLUTION	Act with helpful approaches to resolving conflicts.	Use constructive strategies to resolve conflicts.	Apply conflict resolution skills to deescalate situations and resolve differences.	Anticipate common conflicts in groups and analyze how conflict resolution strategies can improve group work.	Demonstrate negotiation skills to enable individuals or groups to compromise.	Anticipate potential conflicts, use conflict resolution skills to defuse disagreements and negotiate mutually acceptable solutions.
	SOCIAL & CULTURAL COMPETENCE	Recognize that others may experience situations differently from oneself.	Be respectful of all cultures and people in the community.	Show respect, tolerance, and positive relationship skills with different social and cultural groups.	Demonstrate cultural competence while interacting with others from different backgrounds.	Build consensus with a team of diverse individuals to accomplish results.	Give/earn respect with awareness of world cultures. Interact positively with coworkers and customers who have different backgrounds, experiences and beliefs.







## 9. UTILIZES TECHNOLOGY

The career ready individual has an understanding of how to use technology and apply it successfully in the workplace. Advances in technology require individuals to quickly learn and use many tools and applications.

### INDICATORS BY GRADE LEVEL

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	DATA GATHERING, ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT	Performs basic searches on a database to locate information.	Use internet browser, search engines, and online directories; compare the differences to explain how the information is disseminated.	Use internet browser, search engines, and online directories; compare the differences to explain how results are ranked.	Use spreadsheets to calculate, graph, organize, present, and display data in a variety of real world settings.	Use and modify spreadsheets to analyze data and propose solutions.	Evaluate valid and reliable online data sources to complete workplace tasks and develop consistent data management approaches.
	TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS	Use technology to learn and achieve tasks.	Select, use, and troubleshoot technology tools and applications most appropriate to different tasks.	Provide examples of how business/industry leverage the power of using technology to solve problems, create solutions, and to develop products.	Demonstrate workplace technology tools aligned to a career cluster of interest.	Improve a product or process by applying technology tools and demonstrating the skills to use them appropriately.	Use appropriate technology tools for career to convey information, solve problems, and expedite workplace processes.
	TECHNOLOGY ETHICS	Describe responsible uses of technology and consequences of inappropriate use.	Recognize and describe the potential risks and dangers associated with online communication.	Analyze and explain how media and data can be used to distort, exaggerate, and misinterpret information.	Explain potential risks associated with the use of networked digital environments (internet, cell phones, wireless networks) and sharing personal information.	Manage personal data to maintain digital privacy and security with an awareness of how data collection technology is used to track online navigation.	Abide by workplace policies related to acceptable uses of technology, privacy, intellectual property, cyber security, and confidentiality of private information.







# 10. MANAGES PERSONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Managing a personal career includes exploration, preparation and participation. Each person is responsible for creating and maintaining their own career. Career management includes understanding and meeting the expectations for behavior and skills in the workplace.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	PLANNING	Understand how to make education achievement goals.	Develop career and education achievement goals.	Develop Personal Learning Plan (PLP) for academics, CTE courses, workplace learning, CTSOs, and activities aligned to interests and skills.	Update PLP for academics, CTE program of study, workplace learning, CTSOs, and activities aligned to career and postsecondary goals.	Select and apply to best fit college and career options; update PLP for high school graduation, postsecondary requirements, CTE program of study, and work-based learning.	Use self-assessment in order to select most appropriate goals and plan for personal career success.
	JOB SEEKING	Gather ideas from adults on how they find out about job opportunities.	Identify several different ways people search and discover employment opportunities.	Research a variety of methods to discover employment opportunities.	Use a variety of resources and technology platforms to learn how to search, contact employers and apply for career opportunities.	Network with professionals and employers to gain insight to career opportunities; and to help develop a positive personal career brand image.	Use networks to locate jobs/ employers, create personal brand to market self effectively and present a professional image for interviews.
	RESUME, PORTFOLIOS, & INTERVIEWS	Create a list of favorite activities and describe why you like them to someone else.	Create a simple resume with favorite school subjects, activities, workplace experiences, or hobbies. Describe how these might influence career choices.	Create a career portfolio to include a resume, examples of college and career readiness, and a PLP. Conduct informational interviews.	Update resume, document career skills in a career portfolio and demonstrate interview skills.	Maintain resume, save artifacts to document career skills in a career portfolio and interview with professionals related to career goal.	Create a portfolio with work and volunteer accomplishments, resume with education, credentials, and relevant skills.



## INDICATORS BY GRADE LEVEL

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Welcome opportunities to learn new things.	Apply self-motivation to learn and achieve goals.	Initiate self-directed learning to achieve college and career goals.	Seek and participate in challenging learning activities related to career goals during school and after school time.	Engage in a continuous learning process related to career goals.	Identify opportunities for career advancement; find lifelong learning resources available in the workplace, community, college, and career pathways.
	ENTREPRENEURSHIP	Explain that business ownership is a career option.	Identify entrepreneurs in the community and the career skills they need to be successful.	Generate ideas and community needs for business ownership in each of the career clusters to explore potential career options.	Pursue entrepreneurship workplace experiences, skills assessments, and feedback from business owners to consider entrepreneurship as a career choice.	Self-reflect on personal knowledge, skills, and workplace experiences to determine if entrepreneurship is a good fit for a career goal.	Evaluate opportunities, benefits, and risks of business ownership verses employment in a career to make informed decisions.





# 11. ATTENDS TO PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

The career ready individual recognizes the benefits of physical, mental, social and financial well-being to be successful in a career.

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CAREER READINESS SKILLS	PERSONAL WELL-BEING	Identify healthy social, emotional, and physical activity for wellness.	Explore a variety of healthy social, emotional, and physical strategies for a lifetime of wellness.	Practice healthy social, emotional, and physical habits to reduce stress and maintain wellness.	Set goals and track progress on healthy social, emotional, and physical habits to maintain wellness.	Identify resources and strategies to prepare for changing needs of social, emotional, and physical health into adulthood.	Engage in a variety of activities, interests, healthy habits, and positive relationships to increase wellness.
	FINANCIAL WELL-BEING	Describe how and why people work to earn income/wages.	Identify the costs and benefits of saving, interest, and borrowing to achieve life and career goals.	Estimate income for lifestyle desired; then assess the incentives for investing in personal education, skills, and talents.	Apply effective money management concepts to make career decisions by considering options with the use of cost benefit analysis.	Organize personal finances and use a budget to estimate income and expenses for the first year after high school.	Manage finances by budgeting for goals of saving, spending, investing, and insurance needs while maintaining a good credit score and responsibly file and pay taxes.