

Professional Development Project
PowerPoint Notes
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Slide 1:

Introduction Slide: Topic of 21st Century Skills in education for students. What our economy requires of graduates.

Slide 2: Economic Evolution

In *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule The Future* (2006), Daniel Pink chronicles the shifts from the Agricultural Age, Industrial Age, Information Age, into our current Conceptual Age. A great deal of human farm work was replaced by machines then a great deal of industrial, factory work was replaced by technology, and finally, a great deal of technological work is being shipped overseas where it can be done more efficiently and affordably. Work skills are constantly being reshaped to fit the needs of the advances in the economy. Our education must reflect these advances.

Slide 3: 21st Century Needs: A Shift in Thinking

As we shift from the Technology Age to the Conceptual Age, we must prepare our students to be creative problem solvers and innovators in our constantly evolving, globalized world. Outsourcing and the automation of American jobs has forced us to reconsider our educational path towards economic success.

Pink presents the theory that Western, more specifically, American culture is moving from logical capabilities of the Information Age to the inventive, big-picture capabilities of the rising Conceptual Age. In the Information Age, the ability to understand and apply analytical knowledge and put to work what one learned in school defined success as these left-brain-directed thinkers pursued careers as lawyers, doctors, accountants, engineers,

and executives. The Information Age is responsible for the PSAT, the SAT, the GMAT, the LSAT, and the MCAT, in which “the good life depends on the ability to reason logically sequentially and speedily” (Pink, p. 29, 2006). Pink attributes the shift from a dominance of left-brain-directed thinking to an increased need for right-brain-directed thinking to abundance, Asia, and automation (2006).

Our left-brain-directed thinkers have built the social, economic, and cultural life that is defined in most of the world by abundance, when much of life throughout history was defined by scarcity. Shopping malls and mega stores such as Best Buy provide consumers with a plethora of options all in one convenient location. It can be overwhelming to decipher with product is the right buy. The consumer can now consider not only functionality and price, but also the aesthetic design of the product and its packaging. There is such abundance that Americans spend \$17 billion per year on self-storage units just to store their extra possessions (2006).

Pink points out that abundance has produced ironic results: the dominance of left-brain-directed thinking has now placed a premium on right-brain-directed thinkers. It is no longer acceptable to simply produce a product, which is adequately functional and reasonably priced. The middle class consumer now demands aesthetically captivating products. We see this phenomenon occurring at Target. World-famous designers provide disposable designer products. Children’s clothing that will inevitably be outgrown in a few months, durable paper cups with famously produced textile designs printed on the exterior which will be tossed after one use, and designer wastebaskets to hold our trash. Businesses must not only produce a left-brain functional product, but a right-brain desirable object in order to stand out in the market (2006).

Slide 4: 21st Century Skills

Daniel Pink (2006) presents the theory that American culture is moving from logical capabilities of the Information Age to the inventive, big-picture capabilities of the rising Conceptual Age. Pink calls for “the capacity to detect patterns and opportunities, to create artistic and emotional beauty, to craft a satisfying narrative, and to combine seemingly unrelated ideas into something new” (Pink, p. 2-3, 2006).

Slide 5: Economic Needs

Google has moved away from hiring students with high GPAs, from prestigious universities. Lazlo Bock, senior vice president at Google stated that GPAs and test scores are “worthless” indicators in predicting employment value (Wagner, 2008).

The social issue of providing relevant educational experiences for 21st-century learning is imperative because the greater good of our American economy, and consequently, the world economy. As we shift from the Technology Age to the Conceptual Age, we must prepare our students to be creative problem solvers and innovators in our globalized world. Outsourcing and the automation of American jobs has forced us to reconsider our educational path towards economic success.

Slide 6: 21st Century Graduate Attributes

Pink argues that creativity must be taught in America’s schools as American, middle-class, left-brain-directed thinking jobs are being shipped overseas. Pink reports that 3.3 million white-collar jobs will be outsourced to low-cost countries by 2015. Left-brain-directed thinkers will need to adapt by learning how to synthesize the big picture and build relationships rather than analyzing a single component of a routine problem (Pink, 2006).

Pink defines 'High Concept' thinking as "the capacity to detect patterns and opportunities, to create artistic and emotional beauty, to craft a satisfying narrative, and to combine seemingly unrelated ideas into something new" (Pink, p. 2-3, 2006). There is now a need for employees who can make connections between outwardly disparate information to formulate newly functioning concepts. Innovation is the capability to see all of the elements of a situation and understand what they mean together. 'High Touch' is defined by Pink as the subtleties of understanding human relationships and interactions. In the Information Age, the left-brain's sequential, logical, and analytical capabilities were sufficient. Entering the Conceptual Age, the inventiveness of the right-brain hemisphere has also become essential, involving the understanding of and the ability to build working relationships (2006).

Slide 7: The Education System's Response

In *Teaching for Creativity: Towards Sustainable and replicable Pedagogical Practice* (2008), McWilliam defined the problem in teaching creativity as a shift in the understanding and the definition of creativity in education. McWilliam's qualitative findings are five pedagogical principles, which maintain a replicable educational environment for creative outcomes.

- A) Connectivity with Diversity – students are now part of a community and also aware of larger world connections and opportunities.
- B) Co-invention/Co-creation with Separation – outcomes are authentic productions from relationships between team members.
- C) Leading & Following – collective responsibility for the group.
- D) Enhancing Constraints & Removal of Inhibitors – work environment with

minimized command and control, but provides guided opportunities.

E) Explaining Less & Welcoming Error – expect and learn from mistakes.

McWilliam's findings mirror Pink's beliefs about creativity in the Conceptual Age. For McWilliam, curriculum directs students towards becoming a part of and understanding their community, on both micro and macro levels.

Slide 8: Vocational Leadership

Veith references 1 Corinthians in terms of vocation, leadership is not about one person; it is about identifying and supporting a leadership team. The body is made from many parts. Although one body, the parts serve different purposes (Veith, 2002). Within a school, principals should identify individual teacher's areas of strength and share or delegate leadership responsibility.

Slides 9-12: Vocational Leadership

The government, families, church, and the job market each hold separate responsibilities in working together to revolutionize the American education system. As Christian citizens, we are called to participate in our culture as a whole, fulfilling our various vocations to create communities and a country that is a more loving place in which to serve our neighbors. The church is called to care for and support one another physically, emotionally, and spiritually (Veith, 2002). The Body of Christ in the church allows us to be replenished to serve in our various vocations, which in turn help to sustain our community and world. When taking on the huge task of revolutionizing our education system, churches will serve as a place to reenergize and find renewed encouragement.

Slide 13: Professional Developmental Needs

In order to begin developing a school environment and greater community that promotes

and provides opportunities to learn 21st Century skills, Lincoln Lutheran will need to consider these things: (PowerPoint list).

Slide 14: Focus Point

Today we will focus on Lincoln Lutheran's values, dispositions, and practices to see where our mission is in alignment with 21st Century skills and where we will need to consider revisions to our mission, objectives, and practices.

Slide 15: Values & Disposition

We prepare students to interact with the material world through their callings of vocation in all areas of life. Providing a strong academic background and developing a Christian worldview will prepare students to interact with an ever-changing globalized world.

Let's focus on our students' academic background. As Wagner (2014), pointed out, "there is a profound mismatch between what students learn in college versus what employers say they need" (2014, p. 293). Are we, at Lincoln Lutheran, preparing students for a future in the current economic climate or for a time that has passed?

Slide 16: Current Practices

While we focus on rigorist academics and growth in our Christian understanding, do we align our academics with current world economy needs? Do we align our students' development, understanding, and response to vocation with current world needs?

Slide 17: Updates

The areas of focus that Lincoln Lutheran has the resources and capabilities to respond to currently are the implementations of real-world economic needs, community collaboration and communication skills, and creating learning experiences in which students are able to experiment with creatively innovative solutions.

Proposal:

- 1) Collaborate with various businesses to establish educational goals for 21st Century learning. Have employers present the gaps between their needs and graduates' skills. Create objectives, standards, assessments, along with built in time for reflection and opportunities for revision.
- 2) Collaborate between Lincoln Lutheran's academic departments to ensure a cross-curricular learning environment in which students can connect concepts and ideas to produce innovative and creative solutions.
- 3) Have students work collaboratively with one another, teachers, employers, and the community to learn effective communication skills for our globalized world.
- 4) Create opportunities for students to work with future employers through special projects, internships, or community volunteer programs.

Slide 18: Conclusion

Equipping students with 21st Century skills prepares students for their “places of responsibility” in their vocations in the family, community, church, and work place. This is our calling and vocation as teachers and leaders in the education system.

Slide 19: References

References

Lincoln Lutheran: Christ-Centered Preparation for College and Life. Retrieved from

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McWilliam, E., & Dawson, S. (2008). Teaching for creativity: Towards sustainable and replicable pedagogical practice. *Higher Education*, 56, 633-643. doi:10.1007/s10734-008-9115-7

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