Durable Skills

ADVANTAGE

Durable Skills Advantage Framework

STARTER EDITION

CompTIA. | AMERICA SUCCEEDS

Introduction to Durable Skills

Research has proven that Durable Skills such as communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and leadership are critical components of success in careers with the potential to unlock economic mobility. Not only are these skills highly regarded by employers, but these are the skills that hold value and relevance throughout a career, regardless of how technologies, business models, or industries evolve. The challenge is that rigorous training and certification in these areas have lagged behind workforce demand.

CompTIA and America Succeeds formed a partnership to develop the Durable Skills Advantage Framework, with the goal of creating a standard; a baseline of skills that global employers recognize as valuable to practitioners of diverse backgrounds, regardless of profession, industry, or vertical sector. This is a critical first step in addressing existing education and skill validation gaps around Durable Skills in an equitable way.

DURABLE SKILLS RESEARCH

Prior to initiating the development of the Framework, America Succeeds worked with Lightcast to analyze Durable Skills. America Succeeds crosswalked 21st-century skills, human skills, essential skills, and social-emotional learning frameworks to identify 10 competency buckets, which are depicted in the form of a wheel. Each of the competency buckets represents 10 labor market keyword terms used to describe Durable Skills in job postings. Next, America Succeeds ran these 100 terms through more than 80 million job postings to unequivocally prove what we had known all along - Durable Skills are in demand regardless of industry sector, occupational type, educational attainment level, or geography.

At the highest level, it was found that:

• Durable Skills are 7 of the top 10 most requested skills in job postings.
• The top 5 Durable Skills are requested nearly 5 times as often as the top 5 hard or technical skills.
• Leadership and communication are the most in-demand Durable Skills competencies.
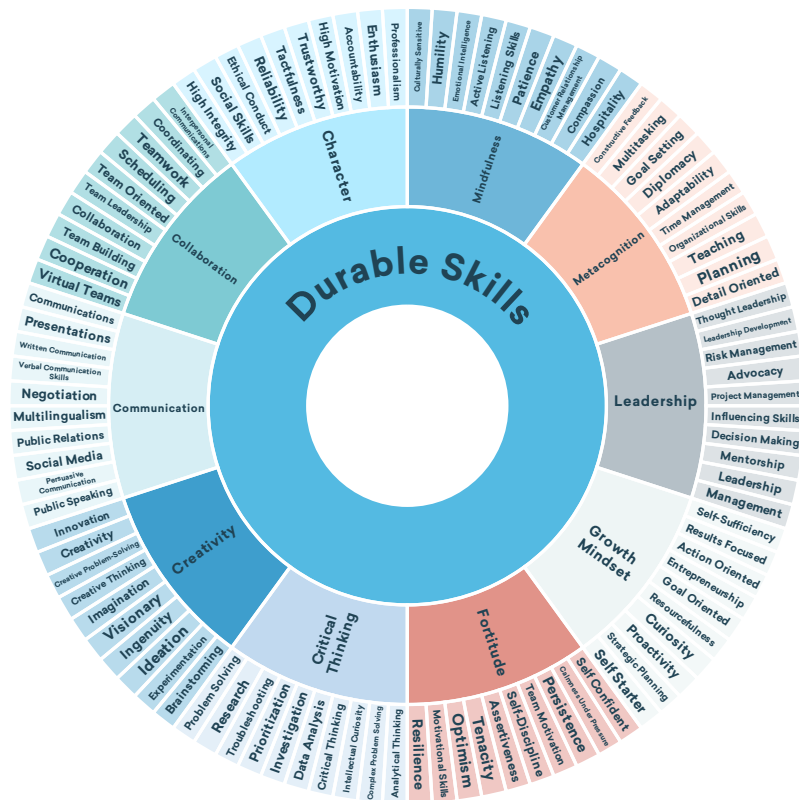
TARGET AUDIENCE DEFINITION

The Durable Skills Advantage Framework was designed to evaluate the Durable Skills of early career individuals, defined as individuals who are just starting out in the workforce whether for the first time or after an extended break in employment (1 year or less on the job). The Durable Skills Advantage Framework has four levels of performance. Each of the four levels of performance are defined below:

• Emerging
  o Just beginning to learn and/or acquire the given skill.
• Developing
  o Moving in a positive direction in a professional career.
  o Still learning with room for growth around the skill.
• Applying
  o Functional knowledge of the skill.
  o Can apply the skills properly in specific on-the-job settings.
• Exceeding
  o Can apply the skill naturally, without thinking about it.
  o Can apply the skill under stressful and/or challenging circumstances.

RUBRIC DOMAIN DEFINITIONS

1.0	Communication: Information exchange and management
2.0	Leadership: Directing efforts and delivering results
3.0	Metacognition: Self-understanding and personal management
4.0	Critical Thinking: Informed ideas and effective solutions
5.0	Collaboration: Teamwork and connection
6.0	Character: Personal and professional conduct
7.0	Creativity: New ideas and novel solutions
8.0	Growth Mindset: Improvement and aspiration
9.0	Mindfulness: Interpersonal and self-awareness
10.0	Fortitude: Constitution and inspiration

Following is a truncated version of the Durable Skills Advantage Framework that includes summarized versions of the domain definitions at the 'Applying' level and definitions for each of the subdomains.

The first draft of the Durable Skills Advantage Framework was created during a 5-day in-person workshop by a select group of 20 Subject Matter Experts. Following the workshop, the Framework then went through an extensive feedback collection process by CompTIA and America Succeeds. Feedback was gathered via a survey from over 670 global respondents and during in-person sessions from 348 participants. All feedback was thoroughly reviewed and integrated into the Framework. The development process was also supported by a social impact consulting firm, Common Group, to ensure that the product would be equity-conscious in its design.

RECOMMENDATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

To learn more about the Framework development process, use cases, and potential equity implications, please visit **DurableSkillsAdvantage.org**.
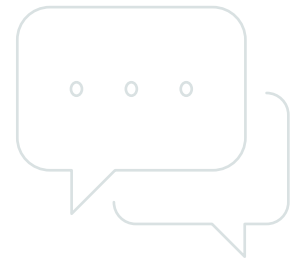
1.0 Communication

The ability to transmit and receive information, ideas, and instructions clearly, accurately, and effectively in various forms and contexts within the professional environment.

Communication at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- effectively convey information through written, verbal, and non-verbal communication
- appropriately use various communication channels or processes
- understand how different types of communication influence interactions
- use listening skills to adapt communication style when necessary
- understand the intercultural factors that impact communication

This individual can use communication techniques to reach agreements between multiple parties, persuade an audience, or effectively communicate with customers/clients.

Skill Definitions in Communication Include:

1.1 Communications (hybrid/remote)	**1.5 Negotiation**
The ability to effectively exchange information, thoughts, and ideas with others in various environments (virtual and in-person) using various channels such as verbal, written, and non-verbal.	The ability to strategically guide a discussion between two or more parties aimed at reaching an agreement or a solution.
1.2 Presentation	**1.6 Social Media**
The ability to effectively convey ideas or information to an audience.	The ability to create, manage, and leverage social media platforms to reach and engage with a target audience, promote brand awareness, and drive business objectives.
1.3 Written Communication	**1.7 Customer Service**
The ability to convey information, thoughts, or ideas in written form to others.	The ability to provide assistance and guidance to people before, during, and after they utilize the company's products or services.
1.4 Verbal Communication	**1.8 Public Speaking**
The ability to verbally convey information, thoughts, or ideas to others.	The ability to effectively deliver a message to engage, inform, and persuade an audience.

2.0 Leadership

The ability to motivate and guide a group of people toward achieving a common goal or objective.

Leadership at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- influence and/or motivate teams and individuals to achieve goals
- lead others toward a common goal
- model an acceptable work ethic
- break down basic information to establish clear communication

This individual is decisive, adaptable, demonstrates initiative, and actively engages in learning opportunities.

Skill Definitions in Leadership Include:

2.1 Management	**2.5 Project Management**
The ability to plan, organize, and coordinate resources in order to achieve specific goals and objectives.	The ability to use specific knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to achieve specific project objectives and deliver value.
2.2 Leadership	**2.6 Advocacy**
The ability to motivate and guide a group of people toward achieving a common goal or objective.	The ability to defend, promote, and support a cause or issue.
2.3 Mentorship	**2.7 Risk Management**
The ability to provide guidance and support to others in their personal and professional development.	The ability to identify, assess, prioritize, and mitigate potential risks and uncertainties that may cause harm and/or negatively impact the success of a project or organization.
2.4 Decision Making	**2.8 Thought Leadership**
The ability to analyze information, evaluate options, and make logical decisions that align with goals and objectives.	The ability to develop and communicate innovative and insightful ideas and perspectives that position an individual or organization as a trusted authority in one's industry or field.

3.0 Metacognition

The ability to reflect upon and understand one's own thinking processes, enabling one to make informed decisions, adapt strategies, and continuously enhance one's own learning and problem-solving approaches.

Metacognition at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- exhibit flexibility to changing conditions or circumstances
- create processes to ensure details are addressed, deadlines are met, and time is used effectively
- break down projects or large tasks into smaller tasks and recognizes the need for prioritizing certain tasks
- provide and take feedback to improve job, task, or project performance
- share related job information and experience to learners in order to achieve a desired learning outcome

This individual has an awareness of details impactful to a task or project deadline, can envision the end goal for planning purposes, and can measure success in the context of goals.

Skill Definitions in Metacognition Include:

3.1 Detail Oriented	3.5 Time Management
The ability to pay close attention to the small details of a task and to be aware of all details impactful to a task.	The ability to estimate how long it takes to complete a task, to assess the progress of a task against the timeline for completion.
3.2 Planning	**3.6 Adaptability**
The ability to envision the end goal and the process required to achieve the goal.	The ability to be flexible to changing circumstances and understand the impact of changes to task timelines in order to adjust plans efficiently.
3.3 Teaching	**3.7 Goal Setting**
The ability to effectively impart or convey knowledge, skills, and/or values to others.	The ability to establish clear and achievable objectives and to develop a plan to achieve them.
3.4 Organizational Skills	**3.8 Constructive Feedback**
The ability to identify the appropriate resources needed to complete a task and implement those resources effectively to facilitate the thorough completion of a task.	The ability to provide specific and actionable feedback to colleagues or employees with the aim of improving their performance and achieving organizational goals.

4.0 Critical Thinking

The ability to analyze and evaluate information in order to make objective and informed decisions.

Critical Thinking at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- process and synthesize information in a given context or on a particular topic
- apply and articulate logic and reasoning to make judgments and draw conclusions
- articulate pros and cons related to entry-level situations or a single fact

This individual can effectively explain and articulate the rationale used to make decisions or arrive at conclusions and assist in determining potential future outcomes.

Skill Definitions in Critical Thinking Include:

4.1 Problem-Solving	4.5 Critical Thinking
The ability to define a problem, determine the cause of the problem, evaluate alternatives for a solution, and implement a solution.	The ability to analyze and evaluate information in order to make objective and informed decisions.
4.2 Research	**4.6 Intellectual Curiosity**
The ability to gather and analyze information systematically to gain insights and solve problems.	The ability to show willingness and desire to seek knowledge and understand new information by asking questions, exploring ideas, and continuously learning.
4.3 Prioritization	**4.7 Analytical Thinking**
The ability to effectively organize and manage tasks according to their level of importance and urgency.	The ability to evaluate and interpret complex information to draw insights and make informed decisions.
4.4 Investigation	
The ability to gather and analyze information from various sources to identify and resolve problems or issues.	

5.0 Collaboration

The ability to work harmoniously with others, leveraging diverse strengths and ideas to achieve common goals, and contribute positively to team dynamics and outcomes.

Collaboration at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- consider the thoughts and feelings of others and use those to communicate effectively
- engage respectfully with people of diverse backgrounds and differing opinions
- willingly recognize the importance of inclusion and belonging
- align resources towards a common goal
- accept the larger purpose, setting aside their own interests to prioritize the organization's goals

This individual can categorize, apply structure to, validate, and support the analysis of information, as well as dissect large projects into manageable chunks.

Skill Definitions in Collaboration Include:

5.1 Interpersonal Relationships	5.5 Team Building
The ability to communicate effectively and build relationships with others by considering other's thoughts, emotions, and perspectives.	The ability to effectively organize a team through actions that contribute to the team's cohesiveness by enhancing relationships, celebrating strengths, acknowledging weaknesses, and actively participating in team experiences and events.
5.2 Coordinating	**5.6 Cooperation**
The ability to understand priorities and apply them to the organization of time, people, and resources to achieve a common goal.	The ability to prioritize the common goal of a group over one's personal goals for the benefit of the larger group and be flexible to complete a task being asked of you.
5.3 Teamwork/Team Oriented	**5.7 Remote/Virtual Teams**
The ability to contribute to a team by clearly communicating one's work, leveraging one's unique strengths, and being adaptable in the face of change to continue working towards the common goal.	The ability to effectively collaborate and build relationships with team members who are not in the same physical location.
5.4 Scheduling	
The ability to manage time and resource constraints in order to plan for the completion of tasks in a way that maximizes the efficiency of the plan and does not create a burden for those involved in the scheduled events.	
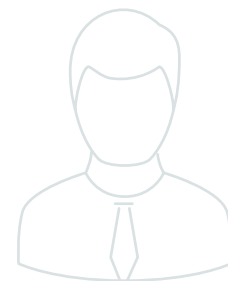
6.0 Character

The ability to demonstrate ethical and moral qualities, including integrity, accountability, and professionalism, which shape one's behavior, decision-making, and interactions in the workplace.

Character at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- take responsibility for their own work, behavior, performance, and work outcomes
- share and present information in a balanced and complete fashion
- articulate their own purpose and personal motivations within the context of organizational goals
- perform consistently well in their work
- demonstrate actions and behaviors that are aligned with strong ethical standards

This individual is positively predictable, exhibits dependability, is prompt, on time, consistently fulfills commitments, treats others with respect, and does the right thing even when no one is looking.

Skill Definitions in Character Include:

6.1 Accountability	6.4 Tactfulness
The ability to take ownership of responsibilities, meet expectations, take corrective action when needed, and accept the consequences of one's actions or decisions.	The ability to navigate situations with sensitivity; behaving and communicating in a way that is respectful and considerate of others.
6.2 Self-Motivation	**6.5 Reliability**
The ability to stay driven, focused, and committed to achieving goals and delivering results without the need for constant direction and supervision.	The ability to consistently produce high-quality work and fulfill commitments to others.
6.3 Trustworthy	**6.6 Personal Integrity**
The ability to demonstrate honesty, reliability, and ethical behavior during interactions, and consistently follow through on commitments and promises made to others.	The ability to consistently act in accordance with a set of values and principles, and be honest and transparent with others.

7.0 Creativity

The ability to generate original and innovative ideas, solutions, and approaches, fostering a dynamic and resourceful environment in professional contexts.

Creativity at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- explore non-linear, indirect, non-traditional thinking processes to approach a problem or situation
- summarize existing and new information to identify unrecognized possibilities
- understand the process of trial and error and learns from failure
- organize thoughts and ideas to generate innovative or novel suggestions that are focused and actionable

This individual has the ability to craft, create, and share new ideas while keeping desired outcomes in mind and can work with others through idea generation and brainstorming.

Skill Definitions in Creativity Include:

7.1 Innovation	7.4 Ideation
The ability to generate new ideas and creatively apply them to drive business growth and/or solve problems in a unique and effective way.	The ability to generate and develop new ideas with the aim of addressing business challenges.
7.2 Creative Thinking	**7.5 Experimentation**
The ability to approach problems or tasks in a non-traditional way, and generate new ideas and solutions that can lead to improved outcomes.	The ability to appropriately use the iterative process of testing and validating ideas, products, and services.
7.3 Visionary	**7.6 Brainstorming**
The ability to think beyond the present and envision and plan for a future state.	The ability to contribute to group problem-solving with spontaneous contribution of ideas.

8.0 Growth Mindset

The ability to demonstrate an inclination to embrace challenges, persist through setbacks, and actively seek opportunities for learning and development in order to achieve continuous personal and professional advancement.

Growth Mindset at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- take initiative to start new tasks without the help of others but at the direction of a manager or supervisor
- identify opportunities to contribute
- exhibit a desire to take action
- demonstrate a drive to learn going beyond the surface

This individual is resourceful, confident, trusts in themselves, and finds connections and new information in areas of interest to improve performance.

Skill Definitions in Growth Mindset Include:

8.1 Self-Starter	8.5 Entrepreneurship
The ability to work independently and take initiative to complete tasks without external direction or motivation.	The ability to identify and pursue business opportunities by taking calculated risks, creating innovative solutions, and effectively managing resources.
8.2 Proactivity	**8.6 Action-Oriented**
The ability to take initiative and anticipate potential issues or opportunities before they arise.	The ability to take initiative, set goals, and actively work towards achieving them.
8.3 Curiosity	**8.7 Results Focused**
The ability to be eager and open to learning new things, seeking out new information, and asking questions to better understand and solve problems.	The ability to meet or exceed specific goals and objectives, and focus on the outcomes rather than the process it takes to get there.
8.4 Resourcefulness	**8.8 Self-Sufficiency**
The ability to quickly find effective solutions to problems, even in situations where resources may be limited or unclear.	The ability to work independently, take ownership of tasks, and complete them with minimal or no supervision or guidance.

9.0 Mindfulness

The ability to practice staying fully present, attentive, and nonjudgmental in one's thoughts and actions, enhancing focus, emotional regulatlion, and overall well-being in the work environment.

Mindfulness at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- use cordial, polite greetings and introductions keeping in mind cultural competencies
- ask questions to better understand the emotional state and needs of another person
- demonstrate sensitivity to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of another person
- sustain calmness and poise
- control their actions in relation to their emotions
- recognize their own emotions and others' emotions to guide their behavior

This individual is self-aware, welcoming and respectful of others, open to hearing what others are saying in a non-defensive and non-judgmental way, and takes an authentic and genuine interest in others.

Skill Definitions in Mindfulness Include:

9.1 Hospitality	9.5 Active Listening
The ability to provide friendly, attentive, and welcoming service to customers or clients.	The ability to fully concentrate on, understand, and respond to verbal and/or nonverbal communication in order to comprehend the speaker's message, and demonstrate engagement and interest in the conversation.
9.2 Compassion	**9.6 Emotional Intelligence**
The ability to empathize and show kindness and understanding toward others.	The ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions, as well as empathize with and effectively communicate with others.
9.3 Empathy	**9.7 Humility**
The ability to understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and experiences of others.	The ability to have the self-esteem to understand that even though you are doing well, you do not have to brag about it.
9.4 Patience	**9.8 Cultural Sensitivity**
The ability to maintain a calm and composed attitude in the face of challenging situations, and to persevere through difficulties or delays while maintaining a positive and productive outlook.	The ability to show the knowledge, awareness, and acceptance of the values, norms, and beliefs of another group that is not one's own, accompanied by a willingness to adapt one's behavior accordingly.

10.0 Fortitude

The ability to demonstrate inner strength and resilience in navigating difficult situations, and display courage, determination, and composure while overcoming challenges and pursuing goals in the professional realm.

Fortitude at the Durable Skills Advantage Framework Applying Level:

This early career individual can:
- recover successfully from unexpected situations by resuming the plan
- adapt despite setbacks
- understand their team members "why" and see their perspectives
- understand team dynamics
- display self-accountability and perseverance
- focus on long-term goals

This individual encourages others to pursue a goal, celebrates team members successes, models behavior desirable in others, sets expectations, performs well under pressure, trusts in their abilities, and exhibits a belief in themselves with a balance between humility and confidence.

Skill Definitions in Fortitude Include:

10.1 Resilience	10.5 Assertiveness
The ability to respond in the face of adversity in order to successfully recover from unexpected situations and resume or revise a plan to achieve the desired outcome of the original task.	The ability to confidently and willingly advocate for oneself while engaging in constructive discourse without being aggressive.
10.2 Motivational Skills	**10.6 Self-Discipline**
The ability to use contextually appropriate strategies and tactics to elicit a desired reaction from a group that contributes to achieving the common goals of a group.	The ability to regulate one's actions and emotions in order to stay committed to achieving a goal and keep oneself accountable for their responsibilities.
10.3 Optimism	**10.7 Calmness Under Pressure**
The ability to maintain a positive attitude and focus on the best possible outcomes for events and tasks.	The ability to stay composed and level-headed when faced with challenging or high-pressure situations.
10.4 Tenacity	**10.8 Self-Confident**
The ability to stay focused on the process and have unwavering determination when completing a task. The ability to exhibit passion and persistence in the face of adversity.	The ability to trust one's abilities and present information with poise. The ability to have realistic confidence in one's judgment while knowing when to ask for assistance.

America Succeeds: Who We Are

America Succeeds is a nonprofit organization committed to engaging business leaders in modernizing education systems to drive equity and opportunity. Our organization is uniquely positioned between business and the education policy sector — acting as an "education voice to business" nationally and a "business voice for education" at the state-level. America Succeeds' work bridges these two distinct constituencies, with advocacy efforts aimed at larger culture change and policy efforts that ultimately help us achieve our vision of preparing every student to succeed in the competitive global economy and contribute to their local community.

CompTIA: Who We Are

The Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA) is a leading voice and advocate for the $5 trillion global information technology ecosystem, and the estimated 75 million industry and tech professionals who design, implement, manage and safeguard the technology that powers the world's economy. As a nonprofit, we are a vendor-neutral, independent source of information on a wide range of technology topics, including cybersecurity; education, training and certification of the global tech workforce; new and emerging technologies; legislation and policies affecting the industry and workforce data, development and trends.

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