

Why General Education and Humanities Courses [like HI 216] Matter: They Equip You with What Employers Want

Employers want T-shaped graduates EAB Daily Briefing 7, 2016 /

T-shaped students” have a deep understanding of one subject matter paired with the knowledge necessary to apply that information across multiple other subjects. They have "balance and the agility to pick and choose from a set of knowledge and skills as they are needed," he says.

Focusing on liberal arts can help students develop these skills, David Kalt argues in the *Wall Street Journal*. Kalt founded Reverb.com and co-founded optionsXpress. **Liberal arts teaches critical thinking. "Critical thinkers can accomplish anything ... A critical thinker is a self-learning machine that is not constrained by memorizing commands or syntax,"** Kalt writes.

<https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2016/06/07/what-employers-want-from-recent-graduates>



Horizontal axis provided by GEP
Vertical axis provided in one's major

Traits Employers Want

when it comes to the most important résumé traits, the survey found that employers seek skills that are consistent with a liberal arts education. Four of the top five traits **were teamwork, clear writing, problem-solving aptitude, and strong oral communications. Technical skills were ranked as the 10th most important trait.** "I love hiring liberal arts graduates," says Dave Elkington, founder and chief executive of InsideSales.com. **"They think broadly and communicate effectively. They aren't stuck in a rut. They can challenge ideas"** (Anders, Wall Street Journal, 9/11).

<https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2016/09/14/the-liberal-arts-can-be-lucrative-too>

Employers desperately seeking soft skills EAB Daily Briefing September 7, 2016 /

Companies are putting time and money into recruiting well-rounded candidates Employers are growing frustrated with what they say is a dearth of applicants who possess soft **skills such as critical thinking and empathy,** Kate Davidson reports for the Wall Street Journal. A 2015 Wall Street Journal survey found that out of nearly 900 executives, **92% said soft skills were just as important or even more important than technical skills.**

<https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2016/09/07/desperately-seeking-soft-skills>

Survey: The skills gap is real May 24, 2016

44% of managers named **writing proficiency** as the hard skill graduates lack most; and 60% of managers said **critical thinking and problem solving** is the soft skill graduates lack most.

Among hard skills, the other elements managers identified were:

- **Public speaking, with 39%;**
- Data analysis, with 36%;
- Industry-specific software, with 34%; and
- Math, with 19%.

Among soft skills, managers identified:

- **Attention to detail, with 56%;**
- **Communication, with 46%;**
- Ownership, with 44%; and
- Leadership, with 44%.

(Starnier, HRDive, 5/19/2016; PayScale report, accessed 5/23/2016).

<https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2016/05/24/survey-skills-gap-is-real>

Business exec says he was 'wrong' about the value of liberal arts *Students with liberal arts degrees have the soft skills to thrive at tech companies* EAB Daily Briefing July 6, 2016 /

As the founder of digital marketplace Reverb.com and co-founder and former CEO of online broker optionsXpress, David Kalt has long believed that more students need to major in computer science and engineering to meet increased demand in the technology industry. But looking back at the technology teams he created at his companies, Kalt says he realized that the best employees often held degrees in the liberal arts, not STEM. According to Kalt, the liberal arts instill in students excellent critical thinking skills that help them navigate challenges in the technology world. "A critical thinker is a self-learning machine that is not constrained by memorizing commands or syntax," he says.

<https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2016/07/06/business-exec-says-he-was-wrong-about-the-value-of-liberal-arts>