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Experiential Learning Resources for Students with Disabilities

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What brought you here?



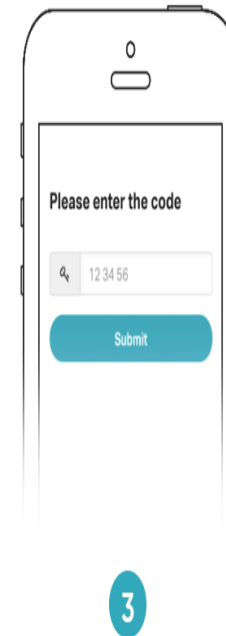
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Enter the code 80 95 25 and vote!

AGENDA

- ACCESS, a UTSC experiential learning program for students with disabilities
- Discussion: best practices for inclusive experiential learning programming
- UTSC E-learning modules and resources for students with disabilities.

School to Work Transition Challenge

When employers want you to have 10 years of work experience before the age of 22



The Other Side of Challenge

Employers are increasingly demanding human skills (i.e., social and emotional intelligence) but finding them to be in short supply among new hires

-----McKean, Matthew. Are Canada's Business Schools Teaching Social and Emotional Skills? Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2018

Context

“Ontario should...commit to ensure that every student has at least one experiential learning (EL) opportunity by the time they graduate from post secondary education.”

-----Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel report
recommendation 3-2(2016)

MAESD EL CRITERIA



The student is in a workplace or simulated workplace.



The student is exposed to authentic demands that improve their employability, interpersonal skills, and transition to the workforce.



The experience is structured with purposeful and meaningful activities.



The student applies university or college program knowledge and/ or essential employability skills.



The experience includes student self-assessment and evaluation of the student's performance and learning outcomes by the employer and/or university/college.



The experience counts towards course credit or credential completion OR is formally recognized by the college or university as meeting the five criteria above.

Target Group

Many barriers to employment for students and recent graduates with disabilities link to career transition supports and the co-curricular program environment within the post-secondary system.

Students with disabilities need greater opportunities to build their skills and career-related experience, whether through co-op placements, mentorship or volunteering.

NEADS (2018)

ACCESS

A pilot program that provides supported experiential learning to students who have a disability to “Acquire Career Connections, Employability Skills and Support” (ACCESS)

- **3 partnerships through out the academic year (2018-2019)**
- **Each session:**
 - 2-3 in class sessions for setting learning goals, exploring career options and reflecting learning experiences
 - 2-3 employer on-site visits engaging in purposeful activities
 - Self-chosen projects meeting employers’ needs
 - Evaluated and assessed by employers and AA&CC staff

Program Objectives for Students

Students will

- Improve self-efficacy
- Develop employability skills
- Make informed decisions about future careers

by

- Gaining exposure to workplace environment
- Participating in authentic experience
- Experiencing evaluation of learning

Students' Testimonies

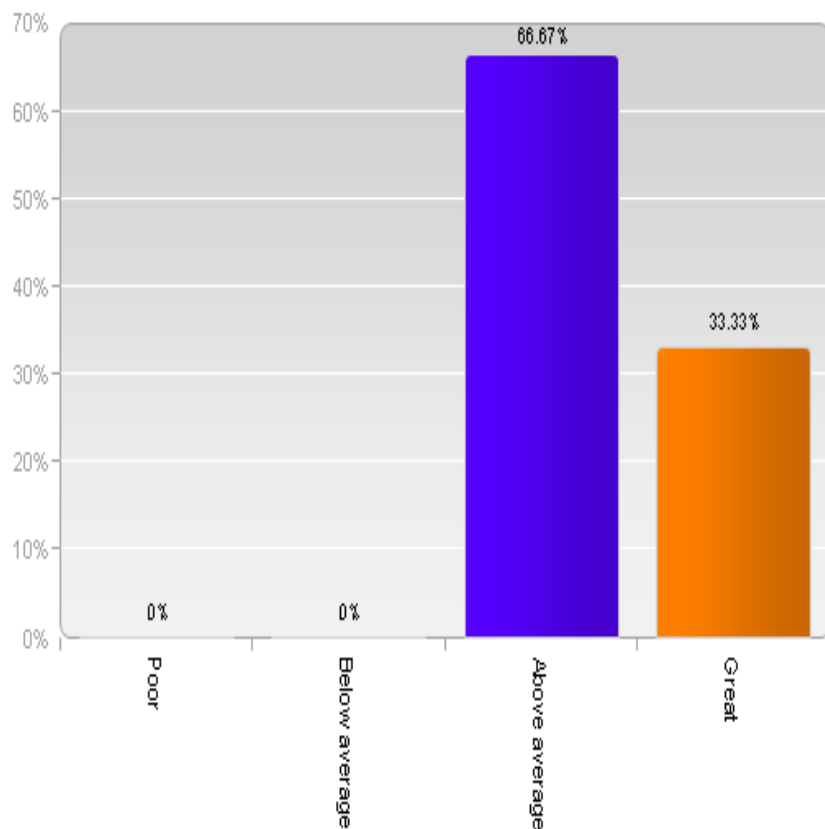
“The fact that there was an **out of class experience** where I got to actually learn and **practice skills** outside of the seminars.”

“The **in-class presentations/workshop** sessions held the most value. It really helped me build the understanding and skills needed in preparation for the final presentation.”

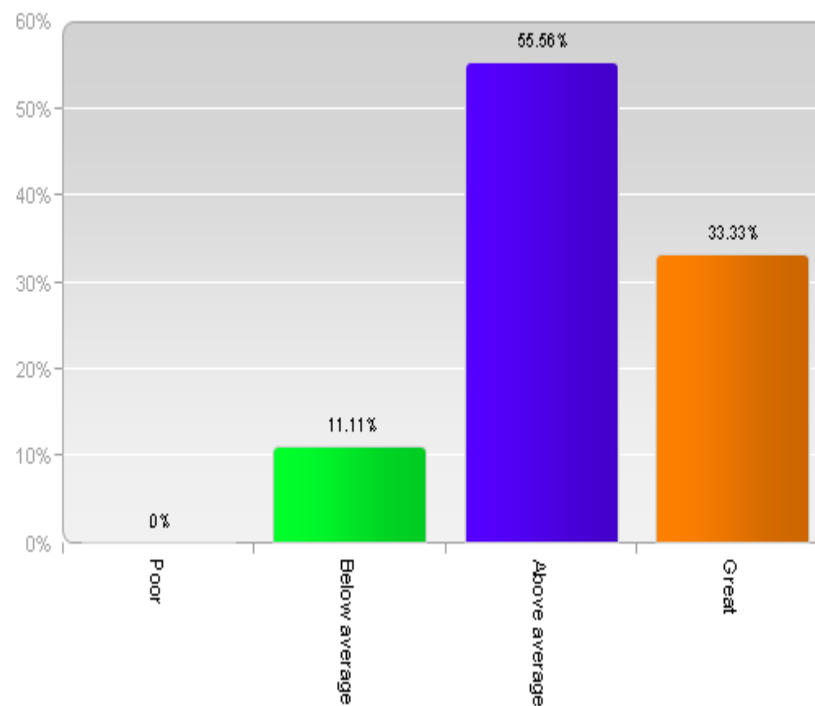
“**Interacting with fellow students** who had both visible and invisible disabilities, and the understanding and compassion that came with it.”

Program Evaluation

Q3. Please rate the quality of the following: - The extent to which you will be confident in recognizing and using employability skills in the workplace.



Q2. Please rate the quality of the following: - The extent to which you will be confident in your career planning and exploration.



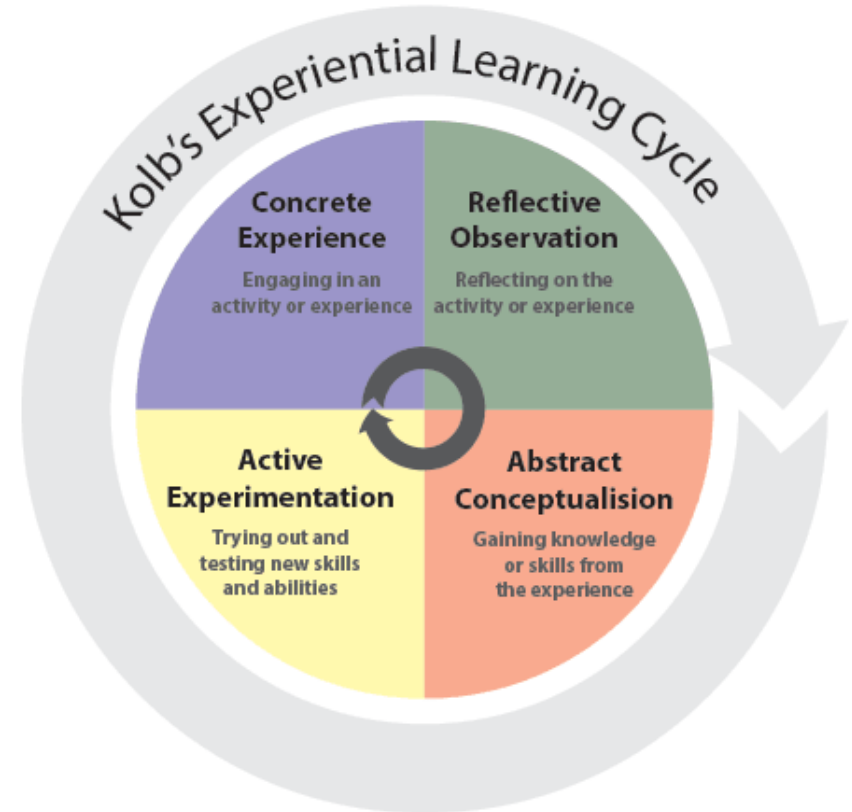
Highlights of the Program

- Supported experiential learning opportunity
- Resume builder
- Partnership with Accessibility Office
- Win-win with employers

Experiential Learning

“Learning is not an automatic result of experience. Instead, deliberate engagement with an experience is required for effective Experiential Learning.”

A Practical Guide to Work-integrated Learning, HEQCO (2016)



© 2014 SkillsYouNeed.com

Kolb D.A. (1984) 'Experiential Learning experience as a source of learning and development', New Jersey: Prentice Hall

Supported Experiential Learning

Week 1 (in-class)

Learning goals and project selection



Goal-oriented, personal relevant, prepare for the experience

Week 2 (On-site)

Guided tour and career panel



Getting exposure to different departments and roles, as well as diverse career journeys

Week 3 (In-class)

Reflection on career panel and career exploration approaches



Connect the experiences to theories and self-awareness

Supported Experiential Learning

Week 4 (On-site)

Observing and participating in activities



Learn and practice the skills

Week 5 (In-class)

Group or individual work on projects and prepare for presentation



Practice the skills and prepare for the next step

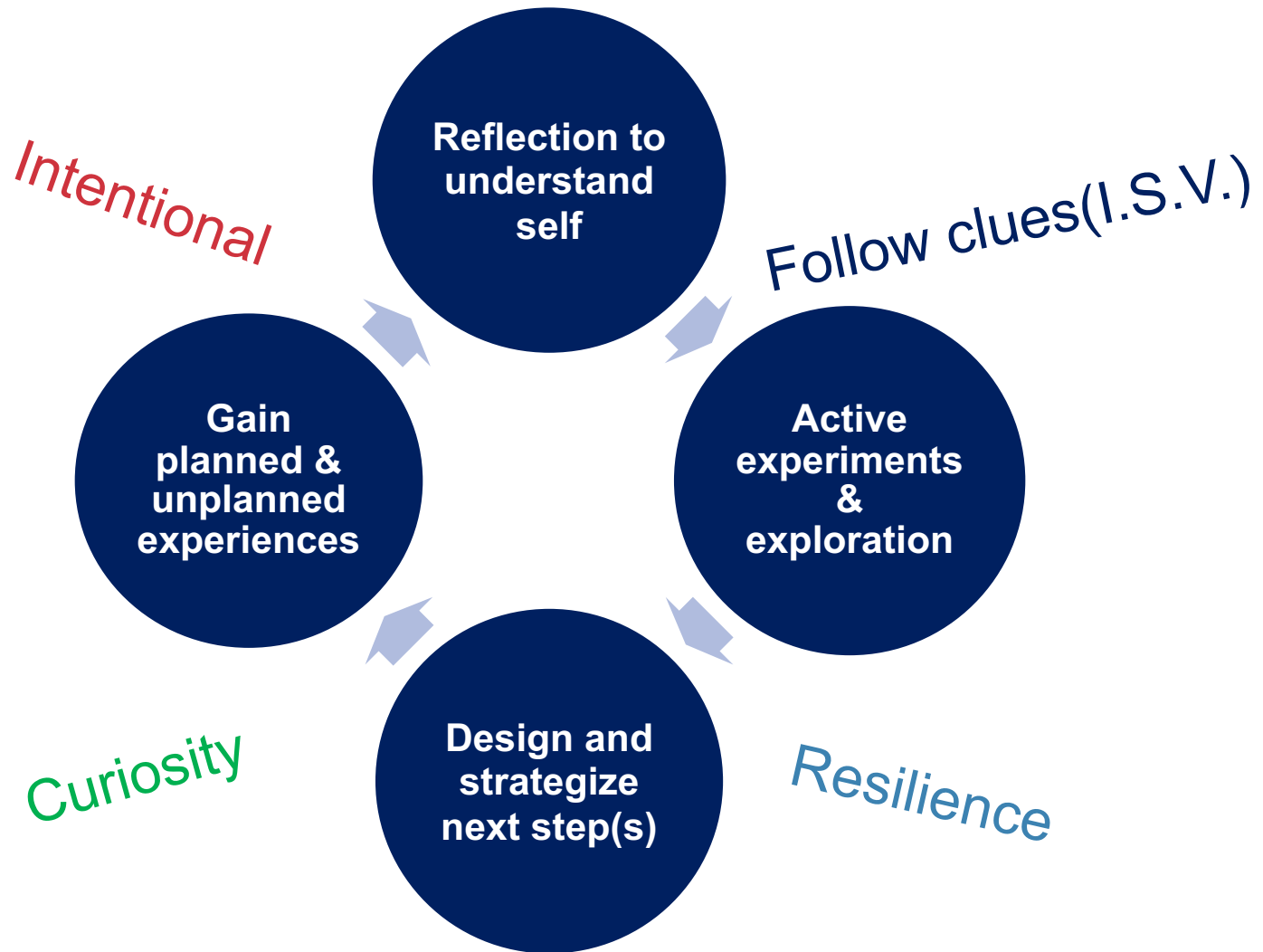
Week 6 (On-site)

Project presentation and evaluation

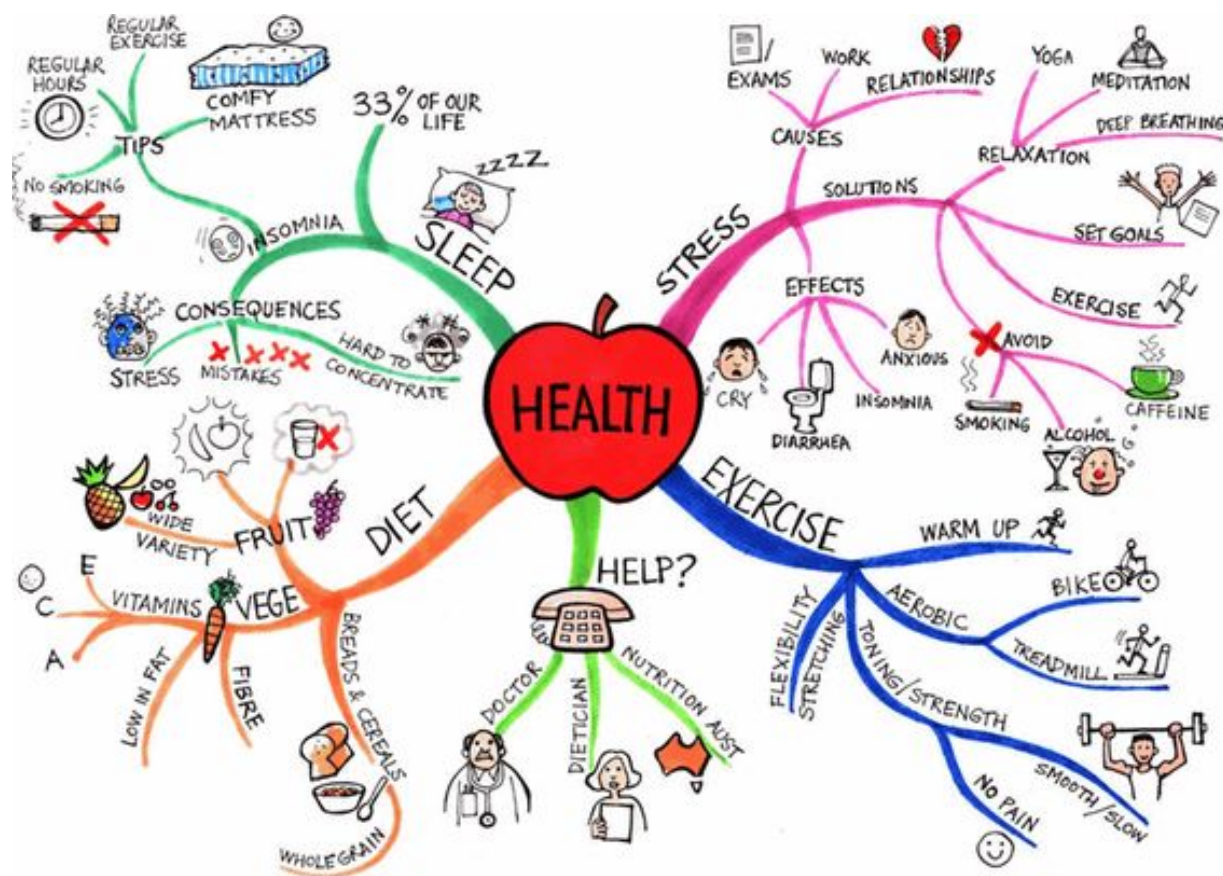


Reflection and evaluation of learning

Adapted Planned Happenstance



Start from one idea



<https://www.mindmapart.com/health-mind-map-jane-genovese/>

Project Examples

- Organizing a fundraising event
- Participating in event planning
- Research a healthcare service issue
- Participating in online mentorship program
- Observing and participating in a community program and make program suggestions

Presentation Format Examples

- Data-informed slide presentation
- Performance (skit, song, poem, newscast)
- Visual art, graphic, brochure or poster
- Testimonial, informed by both experience and research

Project Sample



Help Chizy

Goal \$1,500

13 Days Remain!

Progress: \$505

- \$995 remaining
- 33% to goal
- 5 donors

Donate Today!

Seven year old Chizy has Autism and is non-verbal. She needs an iPad and the "Let me talk" app so that she can communicate with her family.

DONATE TODAY

<https://abilitygives.org/story/chizy/>



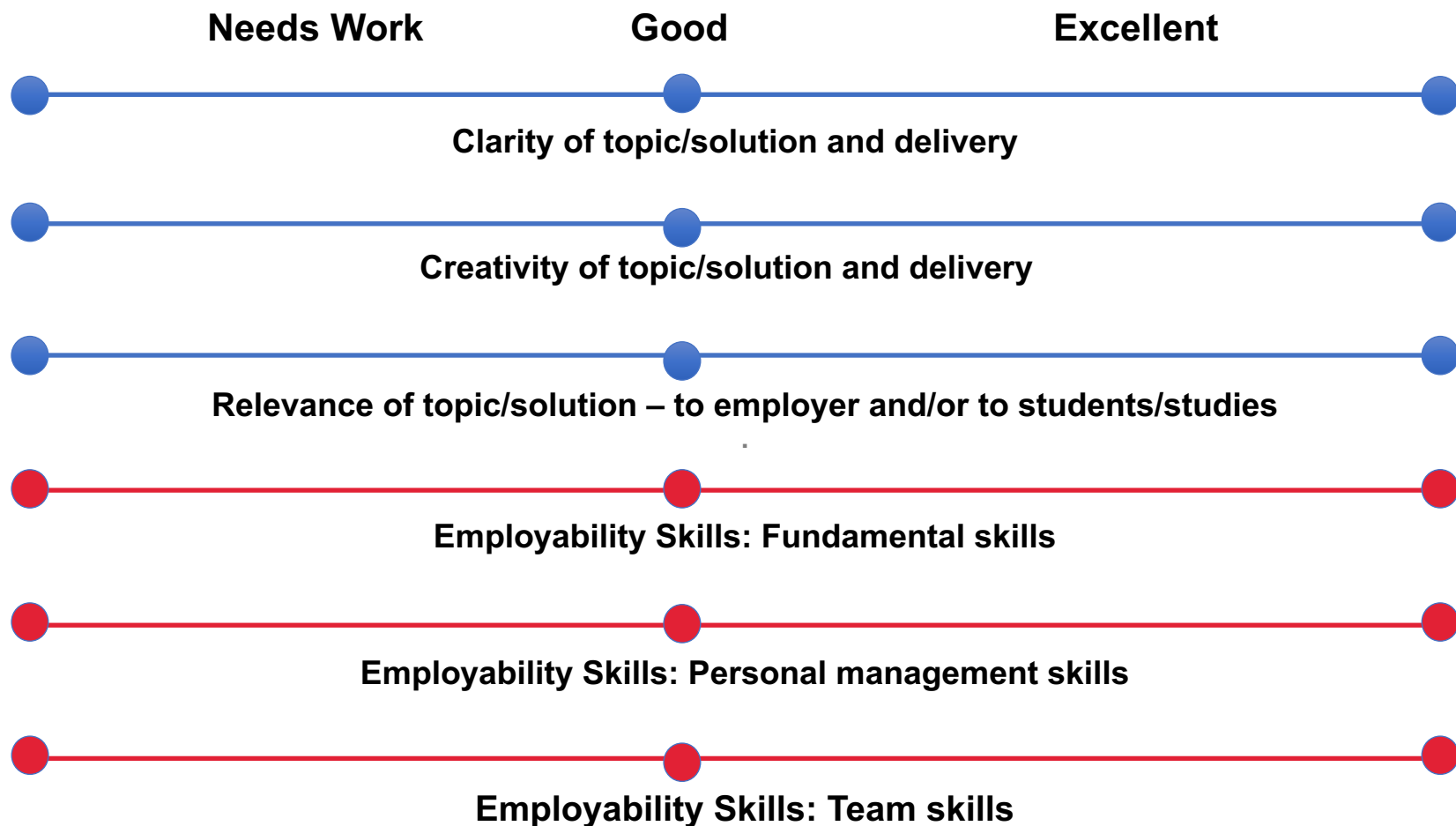
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ACCESS Project Feedback



Partnership with Accessibility Office

- Outreach to students with disabilities
- Gain strategies for more inclusive programming throughout our department
- AODA/legal rights introductory workshop
- Guest speaker sharing career journey with disability
- Connect with employers valuing diverse workforce

Partnership with Host Employers

- Develop experience in partnership with AA&CC
- Meet prospective hires for their organization
- Participate in conversation about diverse workforce
- Learn from and evaluate student presentations

Finding Right Host Employers

Factors to consider:

- Student's interest, variety of staff roles, interest in building diverse workforce

In the process:

- Many employers interested in the program
- Interest, policy, HR did not always lead to partnership
- What counts-----Relationships

ACCESS Employer Partners

Fall

- Rouge Valley Health Care System – Scarborough Rouge Hospital

Winter

- Ability Online
- Malvern Family Resource Centre

Next Steps

Expand the program to reach other underrepresented groups, including racialized and international students

Discussion

Share your best practices on making
experiential learning more inclusive



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AccessAbility Services

Managing Your Career:

Strategies for Graduates with DisAbilities

Career Planning and Self-Assessment

E-Learning for Individuals w Disabilities

uoft.me/careeranddisability

- E-learning modules and additional resources for individuals with disabilities
- Topics include:
 - Career exploration and planning strategies
 - Planning for disclosure conversations and self-advocacy
 - Workplace accommodations

Goals

- Offer 24/7 public-facing resources usable by students (and the community)
- Support individuals navigating disability as they move into and through the workforce
- AODA compliance

What is AODA?

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Launched 2005, 1 new standard every 2 years or so, with full force in 2015
 - Customer Service Standard
 - Information and Communications Standard
 - Transportation Standard
 - Employment Standard
 - Design of Public Spaces Standard
 - *Coming:* Education Standard

Challenges

- AODA phased in over years (we waited)
- Strategizing on how best to make it engaging to watch while also AODA-compliant (waited for technology to catch up)
- Human resources limitations (time)
- Recording effectively (choice of actors, space, expertise)

Successes

- Figured all those things out over a year-and-a-half!
- Note: We can show you a draft video that is still in development, and I can talk about what's coming next
 - It's quite a process to coordinate!
 - Drafts have been VERY valuable even though they take time

References

- McKean (2018) Are Canada's Business Schools Teaching Social and Emotional Skills? The Conference Board of Canada Retrieved from https://www.conferenceboard.ca/docs/default-source/education/9999_bschools-rpt.pdf?sfvrsn=d84d4313_2
- NEADS (2018) Landscape of Accessibility and Accommodation in Post-Secondary Education for Students with Disabilities Retrieved from <https://www.neads.ca/en/about/media/AccessibilityandAccommodation%202018-5landscapereport.pdf>



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