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# Insights



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## **FBM INSIGHTS**

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## **21ST CENTURY SKILL – THE NEEDED SKILL NOW**

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### **THEN AND NOW**

At present, the world has changed at a turbo speed. The same thing which was done 20 years ago, has definitely been done differently now. The era of globalization, technological innovation, change in climate and demographic have given a great impact on how things were before.

For example, the introduction of Facebook by Mark Zuckerberg and Dustin Moskovitz in 2004 has changed the way people socialize and whom they socialized with. The socialization network is now wider and the communication is now way faster than before. Besides that, globalization and technological innovation has resulted in the transformation of work nature itself which leads to new demands and opportunities. With latest hit of COVID 19 in year 2020, the world and its daily activities are definitely not the same any longer.

Therefore, to stay competitive in the job market and to remain relevant, the set of skills which a person acquired needs to be upgraded and changed as well. The new set of skills needed are known as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill (Bruno [n.d]).

### **21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILL – THE ESSENTIAL SKILL NEEDED NOW**

So, what are 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills?

According to Chu et al. (2017), the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are a set of abilities that needs to be developed and obtained in order to succeed in the information age. The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are not primarily based on content knowledge, but it is on “deeper learning” skills like critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork. These set of skills are not new skills, nevertheless, these skills are now important in the digital era (Bruno [n.d]).

21<sup>st</sup> century skills are a combination of “soft skills” and “hard skills” where the hard skill components focus on digital literacy, which is now highly in demand due to the information age. Whereas, soft skills are the people skills which include how a person interacts, how a person involves in collaboration and also managing skill. It also includes teamwork, motivation, problem solving, enthusiasm and trust. Technical skills or hard skills alone is no longer enough for workers to compete in this highly competitive global work environment (Dean & East, 2019).

According to Chu et al. (2017) and Stauffer (2020), 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills consist of three categories with twelve abilities. The three main categories are Learning skills, Literacy Skills and Life Skills.

The first category is learning skills which focus on critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication skills. Learning skills are also known as the four C's and these skills assist people on the mental processes which allow for easy adaptation and improvement to the modern work environment.

The second category is the literacy skills which include the information literacy skills, the media literacy and the technology literacy. Having the ability or the literacy skills would allow a person to understand facts and how to separate fact from fiction. Literacy skills are also a crucial capital for someone to develop himself, to live satisfactorily, and to participate actively in society (Shelow, 2016). Strong literacy skills also play a major role in non-verbal communication as communication these days are constantly held through digital device.

Life skills is the final set of skills needed. It is also known as FLIPS which represents flexibility, leadership, initiative, productivity and social skills. Life skills look at intangible elements of a person in their everyday life (Chu et al. 2017). And the term 'Life Skills' refers to the skills which a person needs to make the most out of life. These skills allow a person to manage and lead a better quality of life.

Having the skills of the 21st Century is now a need, in order to remain running and relevant in the modern and current workplace. Based on the above, even though there are various scholars and academic who write and research on needed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, most of the outcome are the same where it focuses on communication, problem solving as well as information literacy skills.

## **SO, WHAT'S NEXT?**

Will these 21 Century Skills remain relevant forever? The skills will definitely change with the demand and changes in the job market. The workplace and nature of jobs will change drastically as all organizations no matter how big or small they are, will always be competitive as they need to be the best in the market or industry. Therefore, the key drivers to these are employees who have skills which match the job market. Are you one of them?

If you are not, let us learn and relearn on what is needed and important now. Let us be flexible, keen to adapt to changes, open to feedback and able to collaborate more. And let us enjoy the workplace and contribute more to the workplace.

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