

# **Empathy Map** **and** **Problem Statement**

**for the design challenge:**

**“Redesign the school-to-work transition”**

## **“Jane”:**

**HR Internship Director at a large E-Marketing firm. She runs training and mentoring programs for new hires and all interns at the firm. She’s 29 and holds an MBA.**

**Young and energetic, Jane “gets” Millennials and the issues faced by them as they enter the workforce. She remembers what it felt like to be a student, transitioning into the workplace herself. She sees a cross-section of students, coming from business schools, engineering, liberal arts and design programs.**



Image: Corbisimagaes.com

# Say

"Some students are ready for the transition, others, not so much. The ones who are ready can fit into the culture of the work environment."

"Personal responsibility and accountability are among the most important things that will help young people succeed on the job."

"I work primarily with students from business schools and engineering schools, but I see many of the same issues with students from liberal arts programs and design schools. They've concentrated on the hard skills of their programs and neglected the soft skills needed for success in the professional world."

"One of the biggest issues for students is adjusting to the pace of the professional world. Billable hours are something they have to take seriously. If the client is paying for their time, it better be worth it."

"Students need to be better prepared to work with Clients and the Public"

"One of the issues with Community College students is they tend to not do internships while they are students. Since so many of them work full time jobs while they go to school, they don't have time to pursue internships. This really harms them when they enter the job market."

"Students need more exposure to teams, they come in way too focused on individual accomplishment."

"Businesses like ours, we're connected to young people. We want to find ways to work with schools to bring in the professional voice."

"I'm always looking to find ways that interns and new hires can become more aware of their impact on others. For example, when you're late, it affects every one around you. It's an act of disrespect."

"I'll look past technical limitations if the student has strong communication skills and shows an ability to learn beyond the bounds of assigned materials."

"Give us that kid who started taking apart his mom's computer when he was 11, or the one who is taught HTML and CSS, but seeks out Ruby on his own. Kids who can teach themselves are gold."

"We give every intern and new hire a 'buddy', someone they can ask all the little questions, like 'Where's the bathroom?' You know, all the things you don't want to ask your boss."

Peer reviews, peer accountability are key to this generation.

Millennials thrive in a transparent environment.

The more we can show Millennials where they are in relation to their peers, the better. This is such a part of game culture, they are really familiar and fine with it.

Millennials need reinforcement - they need to know where they stand in relation to peers.

# Think

Students need to fit the culture even more than they need to fit the skills

Millennials are highly skeptical of what they learn in school. They tend to look to each other for advice way before they go to an authority figure. How do we give the authority figures more authority in this situation?

Competition is a good thing, when introduced well.

## Do

This company has many programs in place for success.

Interns have weekly sessions with a buddy. HR does regular check-ins with interns.

New hires have a buddy and a counselor that deals with large issues in the workplace. The buddy deals with day-to-day, the counselor looks at the larger picture of corporate culture.

Orientation for new employees and interns includes the workplace culture.

The dual support of the buddy and the counselor has helped catch any problems early on - and usually solves them.

Businesses like "R\*\*\*", where "Jane" works are doing a terrific job of integrating students into the work environment. I walked away feeling that schools need to do more.

"Jane" works with the local community college to aid in outreach to the community that can not afford private schools.

ToDo: Create opportunities to bring the professional work environment to students in addition to internships.

Find ways to create touchpoints that show students what is real about the professional training they are getting in school.

Successful school to work transition includes understanding of:  
Communication Skills  
Team Work  
Ability to Learn

People Skills are the most important thing

Schools need to step up and find new ways to integrate professional training into their programs

Schools need to step up and find new ways to integrate professional training into their programs

Ability to manage the pace of business - meeting deadlines is crucial

Transparency is key with this generation

We need to have some way to reach students with the reality of the workplace before they get hammered by it.

## Feel

Education needs to step up and create more touchpoints to stress the key soft skills needed to succeed.

# Say

**“Some students are ready for the transition, others, not so much. The ones who are ready can fit into the culture of the work environment.”**

**“Personal responsibility and accountability are among the most important things that will help young people succeed on the job.”**

**“I work primarily with students from business schools and engineering schools, but I see many of the same issues with students from liberal arts programs and design schools. They’ve concentrated on the hard skills of their programs and neglected the soft skills needed for success in the professional world.”**

**“One of the biggest issues for students is adjusting to the pace of the professional world. Billable hours are something they have to take seriously. If the client is paying for their time, it better be worth it.”**

**“Students need to be better prepared to work with Clients and the Public”**

**“One of the issues with Community College students is they tend to not do internships while they are students. Since so many of them work full time jobs while they go to school, they don’t have time to pursue internships. This really harms them when they enter the job market.”**

**“Students need more exposure to teams, they come in way too focused on individual accomplishment.”**

**“Businesses like ours, we’re connected to young people. We want to find ways to work with schools to bring in the professional voice.”**

**“I’m always looking to find ways that interns and new hires can become more aware of their impact on others. For example, when you’re late, it affects every one around you. It’s an act of disrespect.”**

**“We’re always looking to find new ways to help students prepare for the internal culture here.”**

**“I’ll look past technical limitations if the student has strong communication skills and shows an ability to learn beyond the bounds of assigned materials.”**

**“Give us that kid who started taking apart his mom’s computer when he was 11, or the one who is taught HTML and CSS, but seeks out Ruby on his own. Kids who can teach themselves are gold.”**

**“We give every intern and new hire a ‘buddy’, someone they can ask all the little questions, like ‘Where’s the bathroom?’ You know, all the things you don’t want to ask your boss.”**



**Do**

**This company has many programs in place for success.**

**Interns have weekly sessions with a buddy. HR does regular check-ins with interns.**

**“Jane” works with the local community college to aid in outreach to the community that can not afford private schools.**

**New hires have a buddy and a councilor that deals with large issues in the workplace. The buddy deals with day-to-day, the councilor looks at the larger picture of corporate culture.**

**ToDo: Create opportunities to bring the professional work environment to students in addition to internships.**

**Orientation for new employees and interns includes the workplace culture.**

**The dual support of the buddy and the councilor has helped catch any problems early on - and usually solves them.**

**Find ways to create touchpoints that show students what is real about the professional training they are getting in school.**

**Businesses like “R\*\*”, where “Jane” works are doing a terrific job of integrating students into the work environment. I walked away feeling that schools need to do more.**

# Think

**Peer reviews, peer accountability  
are key to this generation.**

**Students need to fit the culture even  
more than they need to fit the skills**

**Millennials thrive in a  
transparent environment.**

**The more we can show  
Millennials where they are in  
relation to their peers, the  
better. This is such a part of  
game culture, they are really  
familiar and fine with it.**

**Millennials are highly skeptical  
of what they learn in school.  
They tend to look to each  
other for advice way before  
they go to an authority figure.  
How do we give the authority  
figures more authority in this  
situation?**

**Millennials need reinforcement -  
they need to know where they stand  
in relation to peers.**

**Competition is a good thing,  
when introduced well.**

**Successful school to work transition  
includes understanding of:**

**Communication Skills**

**Team Work**

**Ability to Learn**

**People Skills are the most important  
thing**

**Schools need to step up and find  
new ways to integrate professional  
training into their programs**

# **Feel**

**Schools need to step up and find  
new ways to integrate professional  
training into their programs**

**Ability to manage the pace of  
business - meeting deadlines is  
crucial**

**Transparency is key with  
this generation**

**Education needs to step up and  
create more touchpoints to stress  
the key soft skills needed to  
succeed.**

**We need to have some way to  
reach students with the reality  
of the workplace before they get  
hammered by it.**

# Insights:

The soft skills of professionalism, executive functioning and general people skills are the things that either make the transition from school to work a smooth process or a rough one.

Some students are ready for the transition, others, not so much. The ones who are ready can fit into the culture of the work environment.

Personal responsibility and accountability are among the most important things that will help young people succeed on the job.

Students need to fit the culture even more than they need to fit the skills. Skills can be easily learned. Cultural shifts are much harder.

Three things always lead to a successful transition:

Communication Skills

Team Work

Ability To Learn And To  
Teach Oneself

Find ways to create touchpoints that show students what is real about the professional training they are getting in school. How do we get them to take that training seriously?

Internships are not enough - we need more and varied touchpoints that bring business and education together.

Issue:

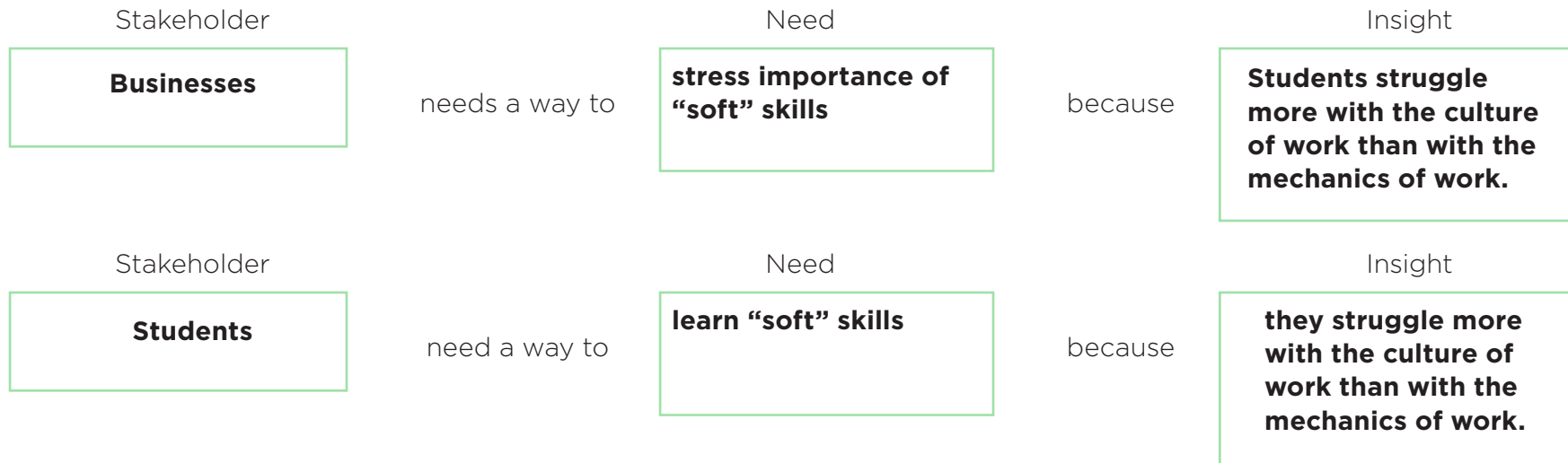
The connection and communication between business and educators (educational institutions) needs to be stronger.

Students are either not exposed to the necessary “soft” skills of professionalism and people smarts, or they are not taking such training seriously.



# Framing the Problem Statement

---



## Final Problem Statement:

**Students need a way to learn "soft" skills before they enter the workforce, because too many are held back by a lack of knowledge of and ability to work in a professional environment.**

---

## **Final Problem Statement:**

**Students need a way to learn “soft” skills before they enter the workforce, because too many are held back by a lack of knowledge of and ability to work in a professional environment.**