TECH TIME TRIBUNE—APRIL 2009

THE TOP 10 TECH SKILLS YOUR TEEN NEEDS NOW

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by Cindy Donaldson

It's no longer enough for students to get an education if they want a great job; they also need the technology know-how that employers have come to expect.

But the question remains: which skills do they really need? Is it important for your student to be able to negotiate Facebook? Does she really need to be sending all of those e-mails? It's hard to know which computer applications are important to her future, and which ones are distracting her from her math homework.

In order to determine the most essential computer skills for today's job market, we polled a group of professionals from leading Silicon Valley corporations like Genentech, Hewlett Packard, Cisco, and Oracle. By choosing people from a wide variety of careers, we expected to get a wide variety of answers. Instead, the group was almost unanimous in recommending the following group of skills.

1. **Typing** The keyboard is the tool that drives all other technology. There is no more important skill than being able to type well.
2. **Word processing** Every student should be able to produce work using a program like Microsoft Word. Everyone I polled stressed the importance of being able to properly format a document. Computer scientist Cathy Pearl cited specific skills: "Table of Contents, page numbering, and footnotes." Also, learn not to depend on spell-check or grammar-check, since "e-mail" and "e-male" both look fine to a computer.
3. **Spreadsheets** "If you can't do at least basic Excel, then don't bother applying," said Jon Kondo, CEO of Host Analytics. Your student should understand how to keep track of data in a spreadsheet, and be able to use basic formula and graphing functions. One way to get your student started would be to have him keep track of his earnings and expenditures in a spreadsheet.

HAVE YOU EVER VISITED SCHOOLNET.COM?

Schoolnet.com is a website created for and edited by a community of educators who list resources for teachers similar to Wikipedia. A member can sign on for free to access the K-12 Edupedia and look up information on thousands of subjects. There is also a place where groups can share posts and ideas similar to wikis or blogs.

Another interesting section on Schoolnet.com is the community viewpoint pages. Here you can find educators debating hot topics that affect all areas of education.

I created a group on Schoolnet. Com called the Diocese of Metuchen. Feel free to sign up for this group.

We can start to share lessons that have worked for us and ask questions to help make our classroom lessons even more successful.

THE TOP 10 TECH SKILLS YOUR TEEN NEEDS NOW— CONTINUED

4. PowerPoint PowerPoint presentations have become a standard tool for group meetings. As Mr. Kondo said, "Slides should be visual aids, not just documents that you've copied and pasted." He also stressed the importance of knowing proper grammar, because no technology can replace good writing skills.

5. E-Mail "netiquette" E-mail has become essential to communication. Your student should know the etiquette for writing a proper business note. This includes brevity, proper use of "reply all," and knowing that *all* e-mail has the potential to be forwarded. Also, said Mr. Kondo, "Know when it's time to pick up the phone and actually speak to someone."

6. Electronic calendar Most businesses now revolve around online calendars. "Learn how to manage time on an electronic calendar, and be accommodating of other's schedules," says Manager Katie Petrie.

7. Social networking sites- Marketing Programs Manager Michelle Myers stressed that online communities have become an important method of communication. Your student should be familiar with how to navigate these sites; in the future, she may use one to find a job or create an ad campaign. Most importantly, your student should also be aware that companies use these sites to check on prospective employees. Your child's best defense is to put her own information out there the way she wants to be presented.

8. Basic computer upkeep According to Senior Project Manager Clyde Kennedy, not enough people are familiar with basic computer function. "Know the terms for the major parts, like the monitor and USB ports. Understand how the computer communicates with the world around it whether, it's plugged into a network or using a wireless network." Your student should be able to take care of her computer by knowing how to update software, check for viruses, and replace the printer cartridge.

9. Using Internet searches properly for research Teach your child to be a careful consumer of web information. It's important to be able to use a search engine like Yahoo or Google to find information, but it's even more important to learn which sites to trust. Your student should be discerning about what information he cites to support a claim. For instance, if he uses Wikipedia, he should go one step farther and check the reference articles.

10. Database use Most companies now use a variety of databases for things like H.R. information, sales, and finances. Your child should understand the importance of database security. Teach her how to create and keep track of passwords, and how to change them occasionally for optimal safety. She should also understand the impact of her own actions on a database, like the difference between looking at data and making a change to data that will affect everyone involved.

As long as your student is able to master the ten skills above, she'll not only be ready for the next step in her education, but for the career opportunities that are sure to follow.

"Your student's best defense is to put her own information out there the way she wants to be presented."

Webpages

Https://powerschool.diometuchen.org/teachers

Http://domps.blogspot.com

Http://dompstech.blogspot.com

Www.diometuchen.org/schools
Www.schoolnet.com—group: Diocese of Metuchen
Www.teachersdomain.org - Diocese of Metuchen
User name- diometuchen password—Catholic

What else would you like to see in the Monthly Tech Tribune?

Do you have anything you'd like to contribute?

Send ideas or contributions to aellis@diometuchen.org

Tech Tips—
PC Keyboard shortcuts

For those of us who are PC users, many of the functions that we choose from the menu at the top of the page are easy keyboard shortcuts. Listed below are ones that I use frequently and are the most common. They can be used in Word, Excel, Power-Point, and Publisher.

TO COPY TEXT OR IMAGES:
Highlight the item to be copied and hold down the Control key while clicking on the letter C. This is usually represented as Control-C.

TO PASTE TEXT OR IMAGES:
Place your cursor in the area where you want the above copied item to go. Hold down the Control key and click on the letter V. The copied items will appear. This is usually represented as Control-V.

Here are some commands that help you find your way around a document on a page.

TO MOVE TO ANOTHER PAGE:
If you are reading page 3 of a 46 page document and you want to go to page 40 without holding down the page down button to get there, use this command: hold down the Control Key and click on the letter G. A dialog box will open up and give you the opportunity to type in the page number. Click on "Ok" and you will be taken to the page you wish to view quickly.

TO FIND A SPECIFIC WORD ON A PAGE:
If you are looking for some-thing specific and don't want to read the whole document, simply hold down the Control key and click on the letter F. A "Find" box will open up and you can type in the word or phrase you are looking for on the page. If the word is there the word will be highlighted in the document. If it appears more than once, click on the "Find Next" button and the program will take you to the next highlighted page.

TO BOLD, *ITALICIZE,* OR UNDERLINE WORDS?
Instead of highlighting the words and clicking on the tools in the toolbar on the top of the page or in the Tools menu, you can simply use the same Control key options discussed in the previous paragraphs, the options are:

Control –B = bold
Control—U = underline
Control—I = italicize