



HOW WILL WE INVEST IN PEOPLE TO FOCUS ON "WHAT MATTERS MOST?"

Igniter: Craig E. Polejes, Junior Achievement of Central Florida, Inc.
Marci Brilley, Brevard Workforce
Kathy Clary, LYNX, Orlando Regional REALTOR Association
Leilani Rae Graham, University of Central Florida
Charles Lacey, City of Winter Springs
Margaret S. Linnane, Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Center
Charles Matthews, G&T Conveyor Company, Inc./Five Star Airport Alliance
Stephen R. Miller, P.E., VHB MillerSellen
Judith A. Pariseau, Goodwill Industries of Central Florida, Inc
David E. Riley, Charles Perry Partners, Inc.
Martin Rubin, Smart City
Taryn Schweitzer, University of Central Florida

Key Discussion:

In our region, post secondary education is working to effectively close the "skills gap." However, from kindergarten to twelfth grade, it is not. Schools are not organized for application or contextualized instruction. In order for students to acquire knowledge and skills to be competitive in the workforce, they need to learn how they apply their knowledge to real world issues. Employers and educators must work together to train and fill skills gap.

What's working?

- Post-secondary is better aligned with employers (U.S. K-12)

What's not?

- K-12 schools are not organized for application or contextualized instruction. For students to acquire skills (knowledge) to be competitive (employed), they must be taught how to apply their knowledge to real-world issues (skills that employers want).

Where is this issue in the "Six Steps to Civic Innovation"?

This group of Civic Innovators concluded that we are between Step 1: *Identify & Define the Civic Issue* and Step 2: *Research*. Stakeholders are defined broadly, e.g., business, educators, parents, but some disagree.



HOW WILL WE INVEST IN PEOPLE TO FOCUS ON "WHAT MATTERS MOST?"

What's next?

1. Policy makers/employers/educators must work together to address skills gap. Educators (K-12) need to be part of the conversation and solutions.
2. Demand for skilled employees is fluid. National research is stagnate (e.g. demand for nursing is based on outdated data).

Innovation:

1. The emphasis on innovation should be made in schools from kindergarten to twelfth grade. We must encourage and celebrate student engagement through practical learning, critical thinking, work ethic, attitude and problem solving.
2. Set expectations and address challenges. Reward rigor through appropriate grading system.
3. Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (S.T.E.M.) need to be emphasized – related academic applications.
4. Since the K-12 curriculum is statutory in nature, the State of Florida policy makers must engage and work together with employers, educators and community organizations to address the "Skills Gap."
5. There is a great need for "localized" Skills Gap research to compliment national research available.
6. Emphasize mentorships with business community/employers, retired citizens/baby boomers.

Who owns the next step?

The Junior Achievement of Central Florida Academy.