![educational service center of Central Ohio logo]

Business Advisory Council Notes
February 19, 2020

Welcome and Introductions

Christine Galvin, Director of College and Career Success, ESC of Central Ohio

Overview

Mark Kovacevich, President North American Enterprise, Improving

Business/Partner Panel Discussion

Kelly Fuller, Workforce Director, Columbus Chamber (Moderator)
Mark Kovacevich, President North American Enterprise, Improving
Josh Harrison, President, Improving
Uthra Ramanujam, Strategic Research Director, State Auto
Monty Ragland, Vice-President of Client Delivery, Proteam Solutions Inc

Does a student need to be a science or math wiz to get into the IT field?
- No. We need to meet them where they are and find their interests (Ex. Explore an app that the student enjoys using and how it is created).
- Kids are great at storytelling so focus on their passion. They only need some math and science.

- No. Need to find the intersection of right and left brains weaving together process and experience. They only need enough math and science to handle the logical components of development.
- No. Keep kids interested in learning. The technology will find them and they will embrace it.
- No. Software development is more like writing music and problem solving is very important.

What other skills are important in the IT field?
- Continuous learning and being able to work in teams. Students should not be asked to solve problems alone. Participating in school clubs or teams is important.
- Students need project-based or problem-based learning experience, not necessarily STEM experience.
- There is a scarcity in the IT field in communication and collaboration.
- It's less about the What and more about the Why. Students need to have a flexible mindset.

Are you offering any work-based learning opportunities for students at your company?
- Internship.
- Related to this question, technology is changing so fast we feel that a boot camp approach to learning IT after high school is more effective than most 4-year college programs. The technology change is simply too fast. This speed of change also makes education central to the business model.
- High school student interns would be a no-brainer depending on their interests.

How do you deploy in K-12?
- At Improving, we provide a software program that hopefully creates a "spark" regarding programming. We also suggest students attend local meetups found through TechLife Columbus or technology events on meetup.com. Some of which are hosted at Improving.
- Virtual classrooms such as one being used through COSI. Students can experience what is happening in the workplace.

- Robotics teams and coding team competitions.

How are you partnering with schools?
- Cannot give students the theory first or they will get bored. Must make it practical and give them the ability to produce something quickly.
- Meeting to create more work-based learning experiences at lower levels of education.
- Businesses/employers, educators and families/parents must all be a part of this effort.
- I've never been asked but would welcome an aggressive high school student that we could creatively put to use in flexible ways.

Where will technology be in five years?
- Everything will be touched by technology. Everything.
- Data and making sense of data will be important.
- All software will be developed through the cloud. What is the cloud? How does it work?
- Mobile development.
- All businesses will be tech companies whether they see that now or not.
- Security.
- Side note: the finances in the tech field are really good and a fast way for individuals to make a high wage.

What about students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged students, racial/ethnic minorities? They don't see themselves in these jobs. How do we help them?
- Find and network with professionals that look like them.
- Let them know they are already on the tech spectrum of work as expert users. We can show them how to create.
- Mentorship is critical. Columbus Score is a great nonprofit that can help.
- Participate in the Get Women in Technology Conference and GirlCon.
- Clients are looking to identify technology kids as future employees now while they are still in high school.

What role do employers play in the legislative process? Educators need help here as they are overburdened trying to meet legislative requirements.

- We can provide letters of support, have conversations.
- The next evolution of the Central Ohio Compact is to examine how we coalesce around policy. There are many headwinds on the K-12 side.
- The real challenge is scale.