



MV CONNECT

Your Connecting Activities Newsletter - April 2020

Career Planning Outside the Box During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 public health emergency reminds us that we live in an ever-changing world, and we have to prepare our students for a future we cannot even imagine. Did you know the half-life of a learned skill is now less than 5-years? This means that much of what students learned 10 years ago will obsolete and half of what you learned 5 years ago is irrelevant.

And the world of work has changed dramatically since WWII and every year the rate of change increases exponentially. The inheritance of large, complex global issues such as climate change, immigration, instability in the Middle East, shifts in world power overlaid with local disruptive events such as the Columbia gas explosion can leave anyone feeling overwhelmed. And now the lived experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. No wonder, the mental health of youth is reported to be worsening.

How can we help students explore new possibilities and envision a different future?

Encourage students to follow their curiosity.

COVID-19 has impacted every industry and profession. Engage students in what they are hearing and seeing from a career perspective. What is capturing their attention? What aspect of the issues are intriguing? Where would they like to be involved? What would they like to learn more about?

- Schedule an open discussion on careers possibilities. Here are a few pandemic inspired paths: emergency management, public health preparedness, laboratory techs, worldwide strategies (legal, compliance, risk management, ethics), communications (translators, editors, graphics), research, medical defense. Check out organizations such as the CDC, World Health Organization (WHO) and the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID).

Career sites and additional resources:

[Public Health Careers in Epidemiology](#)

[Career paths in Infectious Diseases](#)

[Explore Health Careers](#)

- Invite a (zoom) guest speaker to talk about how their work (and the way they are working) has changed.
- Have your school's instructors (economics, history, world affairs, math, etc.) lead a discussion on the short and long-term impact on society and the role of government, corporations, small businesses, and nonprofits.

Accept that you don't have the answers. Ask better questions.

Embrace the unknown and accept you don't have the answers. No one does. The world of work you grew up in is not the one your students will be entering. Your role is to ask better questions to help guide choices and encourage experimentation. Help students reflect on experiences. Help them make choices aligned with their interests and talents.

Hold students accountable for developing good habits today for future success.

Learning agility and effective communication are critical life skills. Basic employer expectations and habits for success haven't changed. Employers and work teams expect reliability, ability to deliver quantity and quality of work, resourcefulness, attentiveness and respect for customers, initiative, working well with others, productive work habits, openness to continuous learning, and willingness to follow policies and rules of the culture.

Help students envision new possibilities.

- Explore moments in history, or our lives, that changed the future. How would reality be different if a different choice was made? Jane McGonigal, Ph.D., IFTF Director of Game Research and Development teaches three counterfactual thinking techniques in this video - [The Future is Dark, and That's a Good Thing](#).
- Have students explore the unimaginable in the game "[100 Ways Anything Could be Different in the Future](#)."

What ideas and resources would you like to share?

Send your ideas and suggestions to [Cristy Gomez](#).