

Cognitive Skills are Not Enough

***Address to Policy and Business Leaders
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**Professor James Heckman
Nobel Laureate in Economics
The University of Chicago:**

There's an emerging body of evidence that shows that, as is intuitively obvious and commonsensical, much more than smarts are needed for success in life.

Cognitive skills matter but so do things like motivation, sociability, the ability to work with others, Attention, Self Regulation, Self Esteem, Ability to defer gratification – these things matter a great deal. “Soft” skills matter—they can be shaped, and they are strongly predictive. And along with cognitive skills, they determine success in school, in the labor force, and in life itself.

**Diana Sands
Vice President of Financial Planning and Investor Relations
The Boeing Company:**

People don't work in an individual framework in business today. Business today is all about working collectively, collaboratively with team members within the company, with partners outside the company and that's how we get our results and get things done. So that kind of character, in terms of team building and teamwork, is also very important.

**Bridget Gainer
Director of Government Affairs
Aon Corporation:**

When it comes down to it, cognitive skills alone are really commodity skills. We've seen it happen. Radiology, paralegal services, other medical services, IT, accounting, all of those things, if you just have cognitive skills, lots of people can do them and we don't need to do them here. But when you blend those skills with the social and emotional skills, then you really get a well-rounded individual whose ability to add value to a firm or to a business or to an enterprise or to an entrepreneurial venture, is magnified because they take that intelligence, they work with others and then the end result is that much greater.

**David Pope
President
Village of Oak Park:**

The beneficiaries include the public sector, which won't have to spend as much in the future on police and won't have to spend as much on special education costs and won't have to spend as much on youth intervention. But the benefits will also come from the private sector, which won't have to spend as much on job training, won't have to spend as much on lost productivity and lost efficiency. And there are significant benefits collectively across the entire system that come from investments in these early ages of development for these children. We would expect and really



need all parties to come to the table for a rational conversation about how we are going to jointly and collectively fund these sorts of investments so that we can have a better future as a society.