



LET'S SUPERSIZE ENGAGEMENT WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE.

Thanks for taking part in my presentation! In the following pages, you'll find the PowerPoint slides you requested.

As I shared in my keynote, engagement is the key to unlock everything for the younger generations: consistent attendance, positive behaviors, enhanced performance, better outcomes, and more.

If you'd like to dig deeper, here are further resources:

- [YouTube](#): More content, tools, and insights from my work
- [Competitive Advantage Track](#): Through this free video series and action guides, I'll introduce the what, why, and how of competitive advantage to the young people in your sphere of influence
- [Flexible Lesson Framework](#): Easily teach 21 professional and life skills to students in preK through college/workforce development with the Skill Tree flexible lesson framework
- [Career Tree](#): Don't just check the career exploration box—bring it to life with the Career Tree, designed specifically for today's younger generations

Finally, if you'd like to connect directly with my team to discuss your organization's needs, we'd love to talk. [Reach out today!](#)

A stylized, handwritten signature of Mark C. Perna in black ink.

MARK C. PERNA
SPEAKER | AUTHOR | CEO

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Answering Why: Unleashing Passion, Purpose, and Performance in Younger Generations



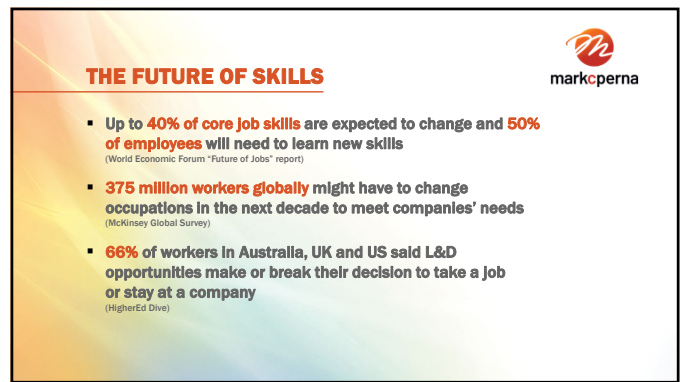
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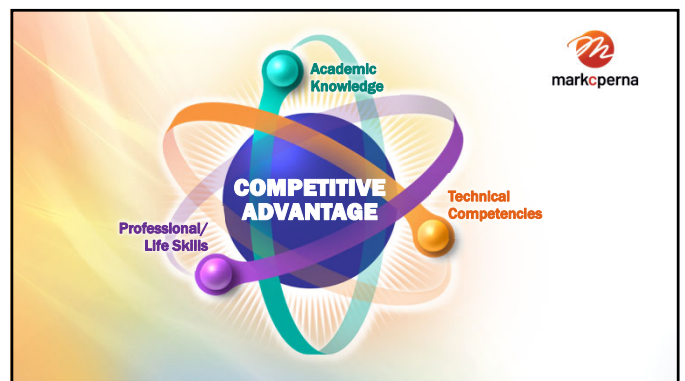
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A light blue slide with a title 'Smart Machine Age' and a list of statistics. The 'markperna' logo is in the top right corner.

Smart Machine Age

- **40%** of employers are aiming to reduce their staff by **40%**
(World Economic Forum)
- Around **60%** (possibly up to **80%**) of jobs are expected to be automated or significantly transformed by AI by 2050
(Forbes)
- Oxford predicts that **20 million** manufacturing jobs will be lost by 2030
(Oxford)
- According to the World Economic Forum, **75%** of companies globally are projected to adopt AI usage by 2027
(World Economic Forum)

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Smart Machine Age

- Gen Z unemployment rate is **8.3%** - **double** the national average
(Bamboo HR)
- Only **30%** of 2025's college graduates have landed full-time employment
(Cengage Group)
- Among HR respondents concerned about AI's impact on early-career positions, **76%** believe it will significantly reduce hiring
(SHRM)
- **68%** of Gen Z say AI has made the job search more competitive
(SHRM)

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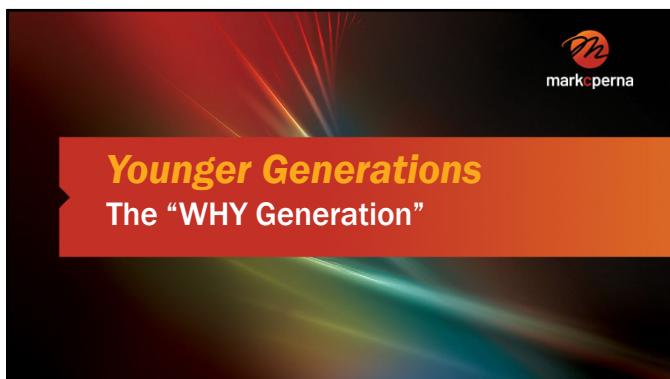
A light blue slide with a title 'Gen Z Entrepreneurs' and a large percentage. The 'markperna' logo is in the top right corner.

Gen Z Entrepreneurs

Square, Gen Z Study

84%
Want To Own Their Own Company In The Future

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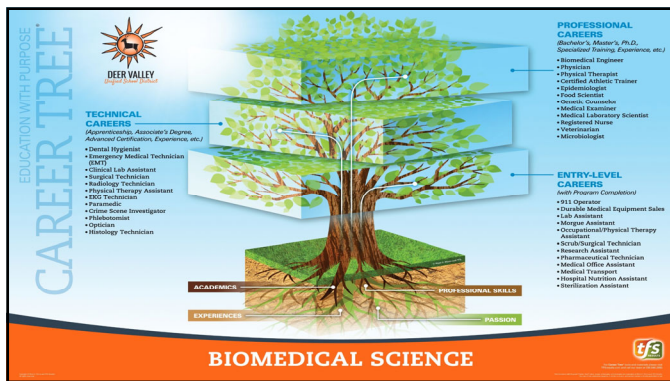
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A light blue slide with a quote. The 'markperna' logo is in the top right corner.

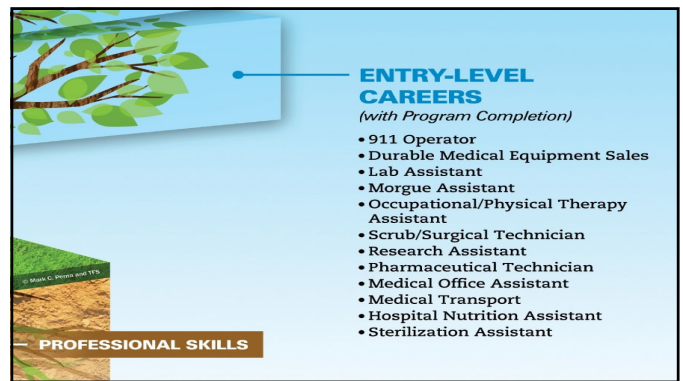
If The **"WANT TO"**
Is Strong Enough,
The **"HOW TO"**
Will Come!

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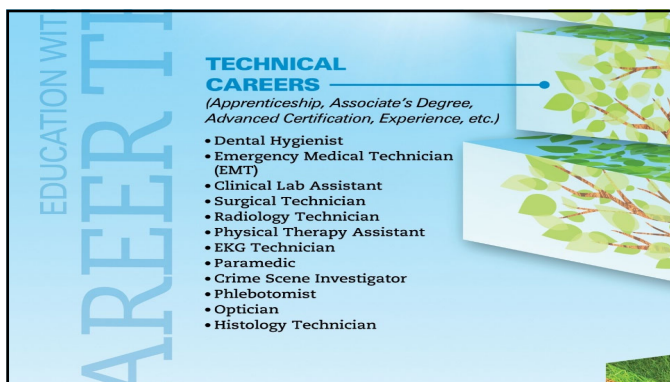
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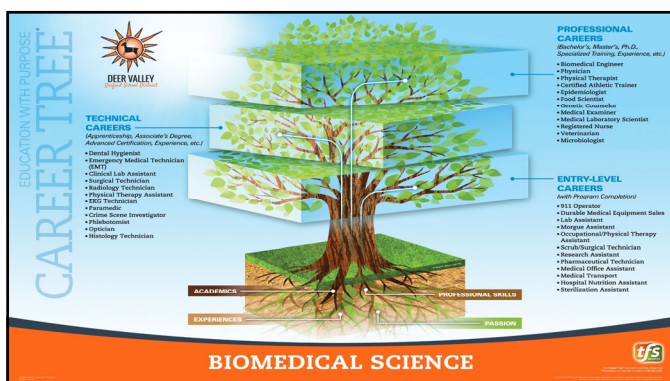
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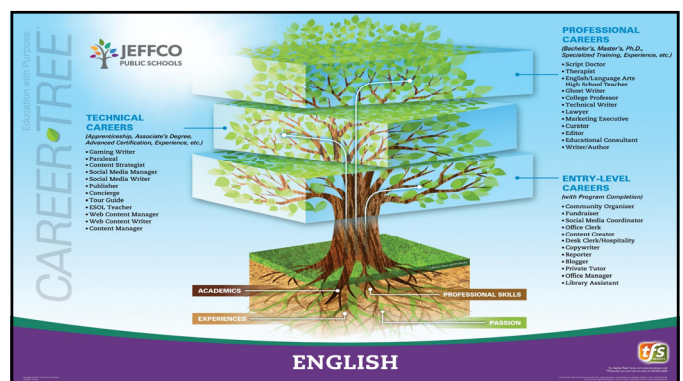
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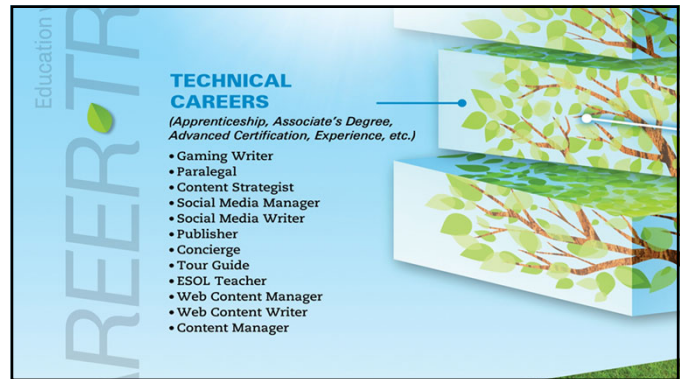


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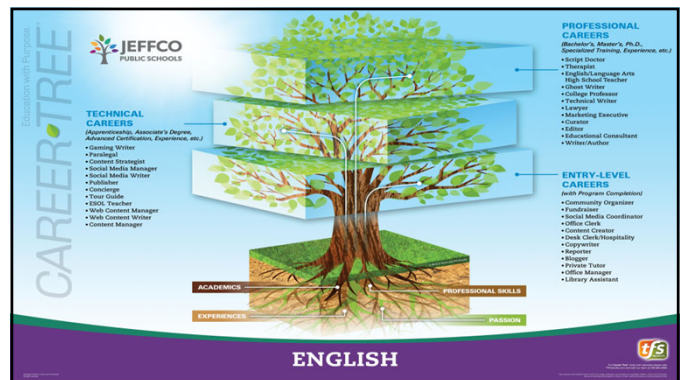
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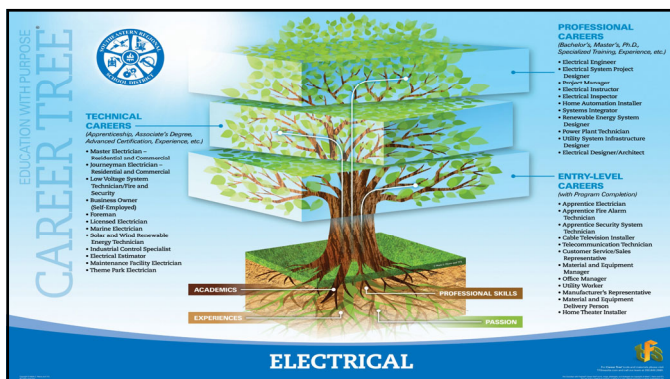
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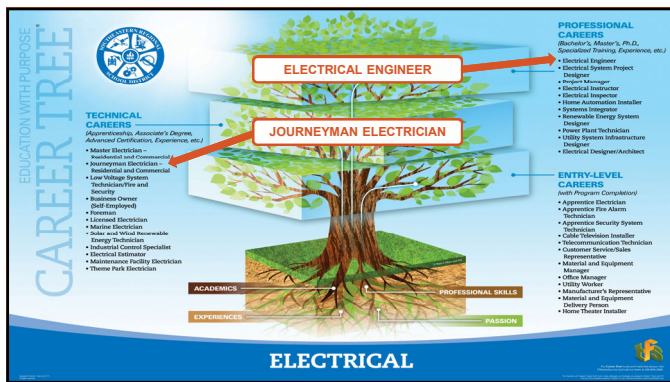
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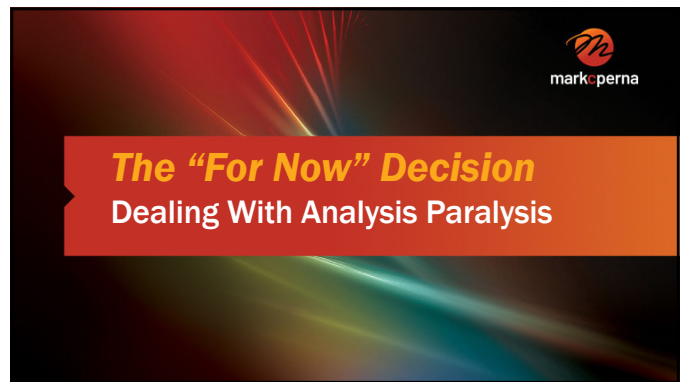
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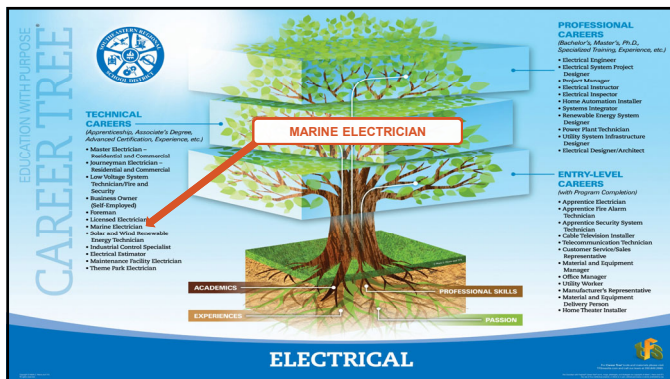
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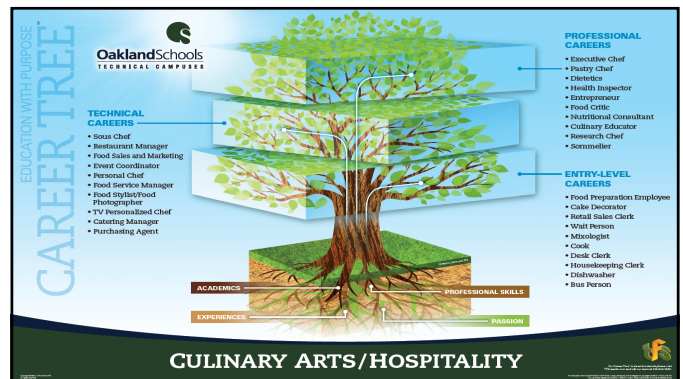
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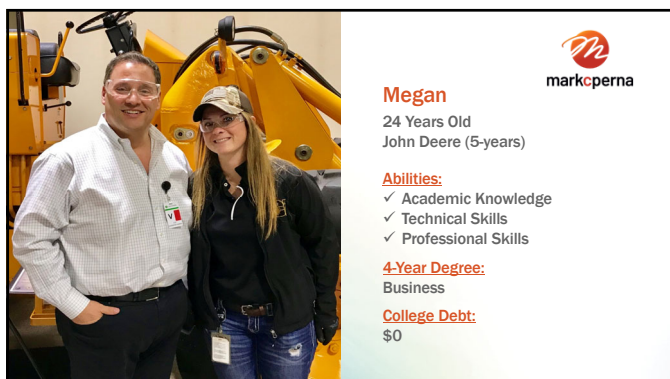
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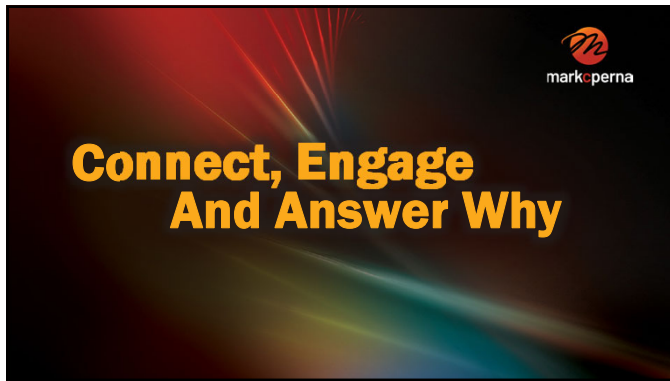


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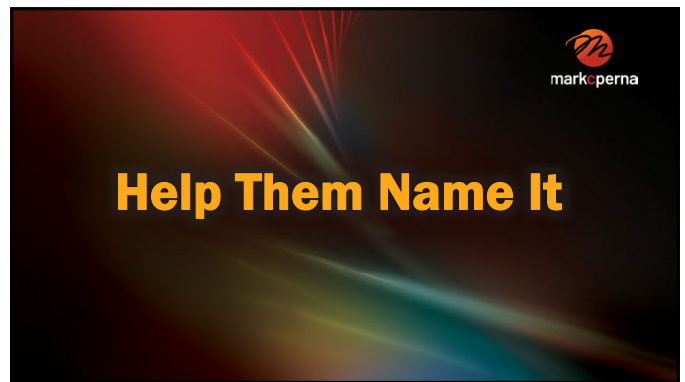
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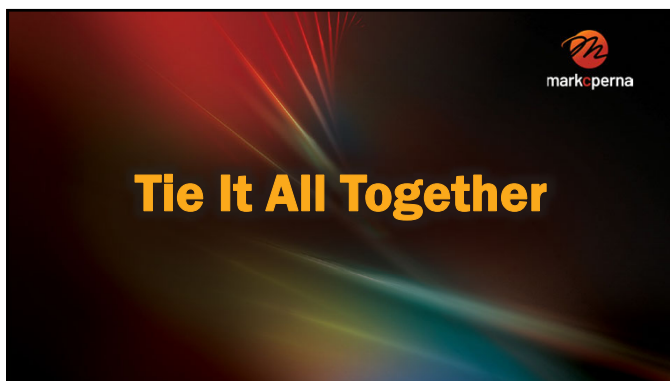
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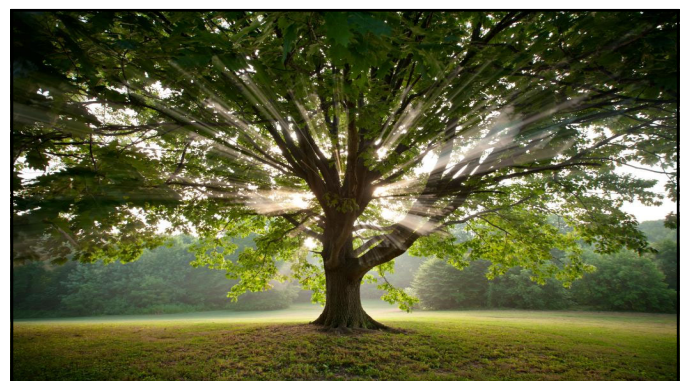
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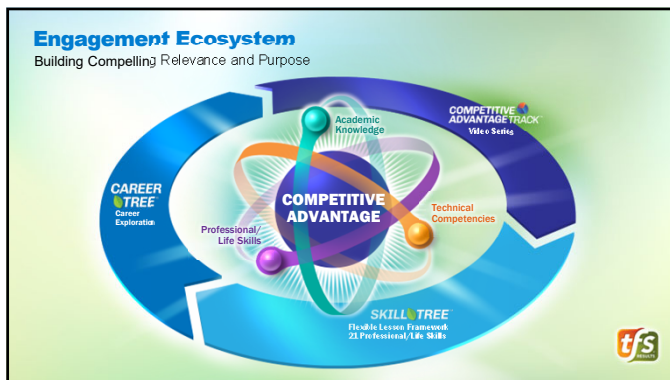
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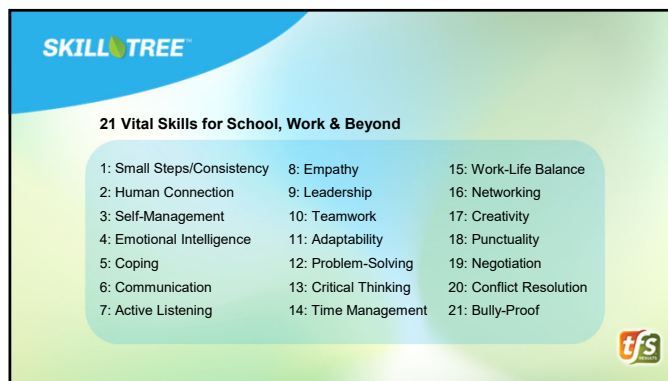
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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

-  **1. SMALL STEPS/CONSISTENCY:**
Building momentum, growing consistency, and owning your future.
-  **2. HUMAN CONNECTION:**
Building and maintaining positive relationships with others.
-  **3. SELF-MANAGEMENT:**
Effectively regulating emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in various situations.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

-  **4. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:**
Understanding and managing your own emotions and those of others.
-  **5. COPING:**
Managing stressors and challenges to maintain emotional well-being.
-  **6. COMMUNICATION:**
The ability to convey information clearly and effectively.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

-  **7. ACTIVE LISTENING:**
Fully concentrating and engaging with the speaker.
-  **8. EMPATHY:**
Understanding and sharing the feelings of others.
-  **9. LEADERSHIP:**
Guiding and inspiring others to work towards a shared vision.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

-  **10. TEAMWORK:**
Working well with others to achieve a common goal.
-  **11. ADAPTABILITY:**
Adjusting to new conditions or changes to plans.
-  **12. PROBLEM-SOLVING:**
Analyzing situations and finding solutions to challenges.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

-  **13. CRITICAL THINKING:**
Evaluating information and arguments logically.
-  **14. TIME MANAGEMENT:**
Prioritizing tasks and managing time effectively.
-  **15. WORK-LIFE BALANCE:**
Fulfilling school or work responsibilities while also prioritizing personal well-being.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

-  **16. NETWORKING:**
Building relationships and connections that help both sides.
-  **17. CREATIVITY:**
Thinking outside the box to generate new ideas.
-  **18. PUNCTUALITY:**
Respecting self and others by consistently being on time.

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COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

19. NEGOTIATION:
Reaching win-win agreements through respectful dialogue.

20. CONFLICT RESOLUTION:
Navigating and resolving disagreements constructively.

21. BULLY-PROOF:
Resisting, avoiding, or responding to bullying with resilience and confidence.

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3 TRACKS

PK-6
21 Lessons

7-12
21 Lessons

13-16
21 Lessons

Each Lesson Includes:

- Social Stories (PK-6) or Real-Life Scenarios (7-12, 13-16)
- 8 Discussion Questions with Follow Up Questions
- 8 Journal Prompts
- 10 Activities
- Student Worksheet or Action Plan

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SKILL TREE
9: The Power of Leadership

A 7-12 Lesson on Inspiring Others, Defining Responsibility, and Making a Positive Impact.

Introduction for the Facilitator

This lesson empowers students to understand and embody leadership, not as a title or popularity contest, but as a mindset of responsibility, service, and vision. Leadership is a skill that can be practiced daily through how we treat others.

In a world that values collaboration and purpose-driven action, students who lead with integrity and empathy stand out. Whether speaking up in class, supporting a teammate, or guiding others through challenges, leadership becomes a key part of a student's **personal competitive advantage**.

Strong leaders don't just chase achievement. They use their voice to shape the **lifestyle** they want while helping others grow along the way.

This lesson includes:

- A Real-World Scenario that makes leadership relatable
- 8 Group Discussion Questions with follow-ups
- 8 Journal Prompts (draw or write)
- 10 action-driven Activities to explore leadership
- A printable Worksheet to reflect on leadership values and actions

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9: THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

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9: THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

Real-Life Scenario

Your group project is falling apart. No one's doing their part. People are frustrated, and nothing is getting done.

You're not the "leader" but you speak up.

"Let's make a plan. I'll take this part. Who wants to take the next step?"

People start responding. The mood shifts. The work gets done.

You didn't wait for permission. You saw a need and stepped up.

That's leadership. It's not about being the loudest or the boss. It's about guiding people toward something better, for an outcome that is good for everyone.

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9: THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

Group Discussion Questions

1. What does leadership mean to you?
Follow-up: What does a "strong leader" look or sound like in everyday life?
2. What's the difference between leading and controlling?
Follow-up: How do leaders build trust instead of fear?
3. Can someone be a leader without having a title or role?
Follow-up: When have you seen leadership from someone unexpected?
4. What makes it hard to step up as a leader sometimes?
Follow-up: What helps us overcome fear or doubt in those moments?
5. How can leaders make others feel included, not left out?
Follow-up: What actions show people that their voice matters?
6. How do great leaders handle mistakes, whether their own or others?
Follow-up: Why is that important?
7. How does leadership build your personal competitive advantage?
Follow-up: How might it affect your future opportunities?
8. What kind of lifestyle do you want to live?
Follow-up: How can strong leadership help you build that life for yourself and others?

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9: THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

 **Journal Prompts**

(Students can write or draw their responses depending on learning style or preference.)

1. Write or draw about a time you stepped up as a leader. What did you learn?
2. Describe a leader you admire. What makes them inspiring?
3. What qualities do you think a good leader must have? Which ones do you already show?
4. Sketch or label your "Leadership Style." How do you lead best: in actions, words, support, or ideas?
5. What's a moment when you stayed quiet but now wish you had spoken up?
6. What's one fear that holds you back from leading more often? How can you face it?
7. If you were leading a team tomorrow, what would you do to build trust and motivation?
8. How does leadership help grow your personal competitive advantage?

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9: THE POWER OF LEADERSHIP

 **Activities**

1. **Leadership Role Models Gallery**
Students create a collage or slide featuring people they see as great leaders (famous or not) and explain what makes each one stand out.
2. **Lead a Mini-Team Challenge**
Small groups take on a classroom challenge (design something, solve a puzzle). Each student takes turns being the leader for their group.
3. **Situational Leadership Scenarios**
Students read brief scenarios and discuss or act out how a leader might respond. Focus on empathy, courage, and decision-making.
4. **Leadership Journaling Wall**
Create a space where students anonymously post leadership wins: "I helped someone today by..." or "I spoke up when..."
5. **Compliment and Credit Circle**
Students practice giving credit and encouragement—two major traits of strong leaders—in a group reflection activity.
6. **The Quiet Leader Challenge**
Students complete a task using leadership that doesn't rely on being the loudest or most visible. Reflect on how it felt to lead with action or kindness.
7. **Leadership Values Card Sort**
Provide leadership values (respect, courage, honesty, etc.). Students sort them into "most important," "hardest to practice," and "want to grow in."
8. **Redesign the Rules**
In small groups, students pretend they're leading a club, school, or team. They rewrite "community guidelines" based on inclusion and empathy.
9. **Public Speaking Practice**
Give students sentence starters to help them practice speaking with clarity and purpose in front of a small group or class.
10. **The Ripple Effect Map**
Students map out how one leadership action (like standing up for someone) can positively affect others around them.

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3. The Power of Self-Management | Key Points & Reflection

PART 1

Key Points/Review

1. Self-management helps us stay calm, focused, and in control.	2. It's not about being perfect—it's about being aware and making better choices.	3. Managing myself builds trust, confidence, and reliability.	4. Good self-management grows your personal competitive advantage.	5. It helps you reach your lifestyle goals by staying consistent and intentional.
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THE POWER OF SELF-MANAGEMENT:
This skill is about managing your thoughts, emotions, and actions so you can stay focused, make smart choices, and move forward, even when things get tough.

Reflect on This:

- When have you shown strong self-management, and how did it help?
- What's something that usually throws you off, and how could you better manage it?
- How does self-management help you move closer to the life you want?

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3. The Power of Self-Management | Pick a Journal Prompt

PART 2

Choose up to three prompts to respond to. Use this space to reflect on how you manage yourself and how that influences your progress.

Journal Prompts:

1. What's something that's hard for you to manage, and how could you improve?
2. When have you paused, stayed calm, or made a smart decision under pressure?
3. What helps you stay organized, focused, or on track?
4. What emotions are hardest for you to manage? Why?
5. How could better self-management help in your relationships or responsibilities?
6. What's one area of your life where self-management could really pay off?

Response #1:

Response #2:

Response #3:

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3. The Power of Self-Management | Make an Action Plan

PART 3

Take Action:

What's one area where I want to grow in self-management?

Why is this important to me—and how could it add to my personal competitive advantage?

What's one habit or strategy I can start using today?

What can I do when I feel overwhelmed or distracted?

How will I keep myself accountable without being too hard on myself?

Who can support me in this journey?

Where can I go to get the support I need?

Progress Tracker:
Each time you show strong self-management, check it off!

- ☐ Step 1
- ☐ Step 2
- ☐ Step 3
- ☐ Step 4
- ☐ Step 5
- ☐ Step 6

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3. The Power of Self-Management | Looking Back & Looking Ahead PART 3

What's Working:
What worked well when I practiced self-management this week?

What didn't work, and what can I adjust?

What do I feel proud of?

What's one way I'll strengthen my self-management next week?

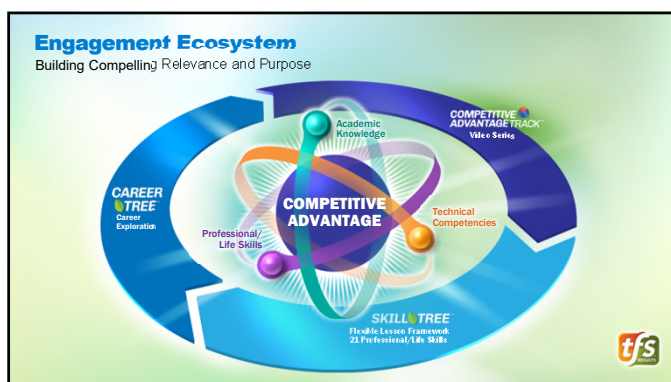
My Personal Competitive Advantage Is Growing Because...

Keep It Going:
The more we manage ourselves, the more control we have over our future. What's your next step?

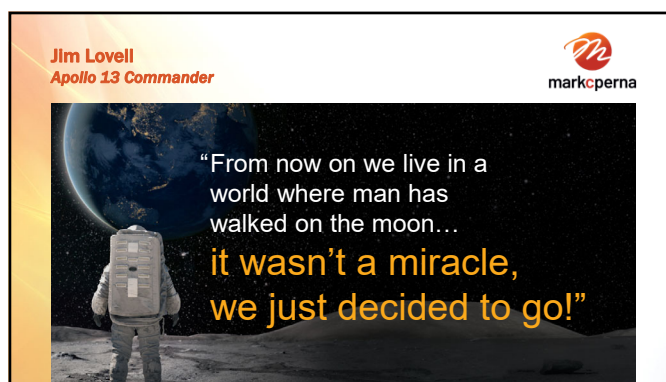
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