

Liberal Education Outcomes and Economic Success: Exploring The Connections

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Isn't liberal education about more than just work?

- Liberal education prepares students for work, life, and citizenship.
- Students and their parents' first concern, however, is professional preparation.
- We owe it to them—especially to first-generation college students—to address these concerns directly, even as we expand their vision of college learning.

The World is Demanding More

There is a demand for more **numbers** of college educated workers.

There is also a demand that those educated workers have **higher levels of learning and knowledge.**

Why Is There a Need for Higher Levels of Learning?

- In a globalized knowledge economy, the capacity to drive innovation is the key strategic economic advantage
- Rapid scientific and technological innovations are changing the workplace and demanding more of all employees
- Global interdependence and complex cross-cultural interactions increasingly define modern society and the workplace and call for new levels of knowledge and capability

Employers Are Raising the Bar

- 91% of employers say that they are “asking employees to **take on more responsibilities** and to **use a broader set of skills** than in the past”
- 90% of employers say that their “employees are expected to **work harder to coordinate with other departments** than in the past.”
- 88% of employers say that “the **challenges their employees face are more complex** than they were in the past.”
- 88% of employers agree that “to succeed in their companies, employees need **higher levels of learning and knowledge** than they did in the past”

Source: “Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn” (AAC&U and Hart Research Associates, 2010)

US Economy Defined by Greater Workplace Challenges and Dynamism

- Every year, more than 1/3 of the entire US labor force changes jobs.
- Today's Students Will Have 10-14 Jobs by the Time They Are 38.
- 50% of Workers Have Been With Their Company Less Than 5 Years.
- Every year, more than 30 million Americans are working in jobs that did not exist in the previous quarter.

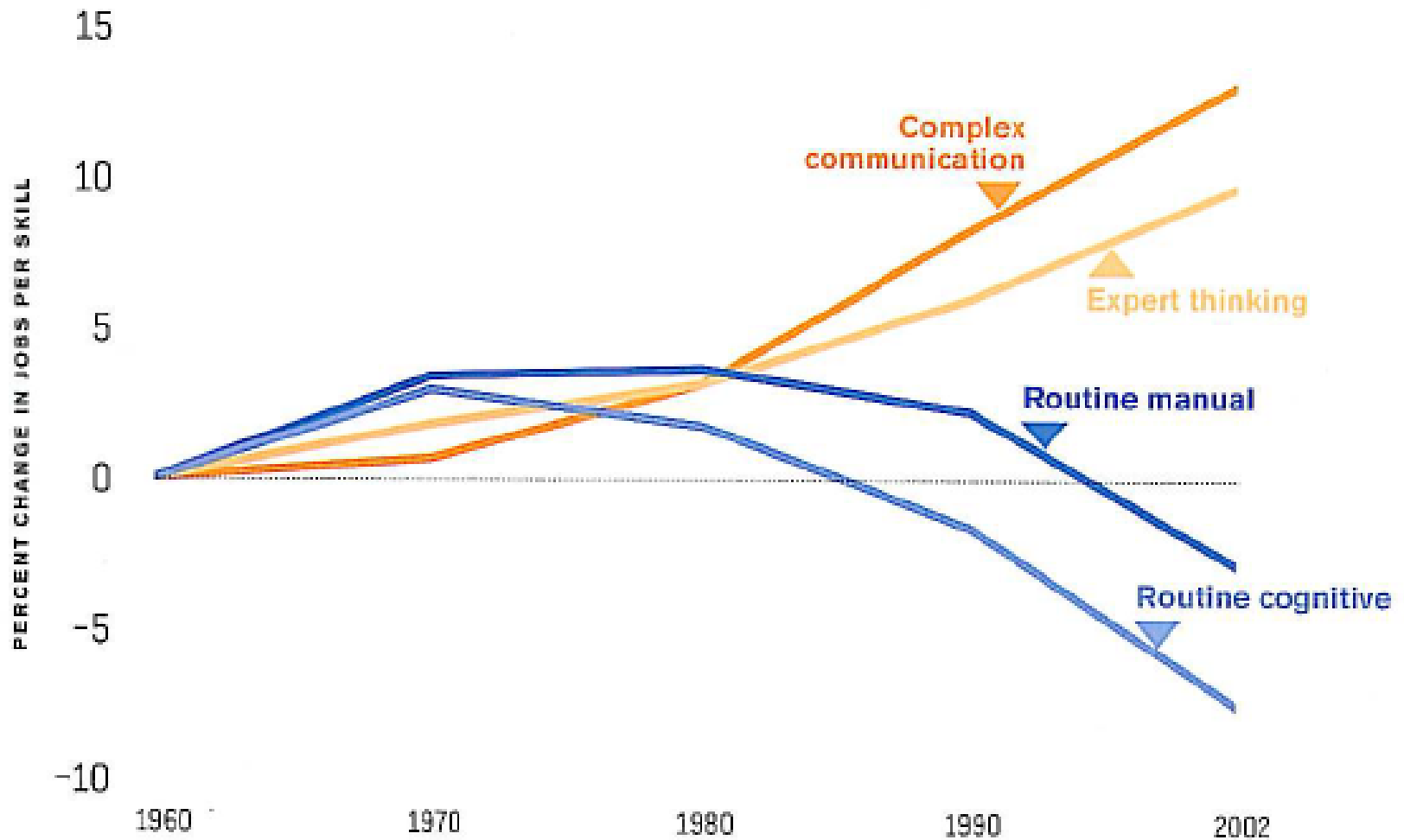
Key Capabilities Open the Door for Career Success and Earnings

“Irrespective of college major or institutional selectivity, what matters to career success is students’ development of a **broad set of cross-cutting capacities...**”

*Anthony Carnevale, Georgetown University
Center on Education and the Workforce*

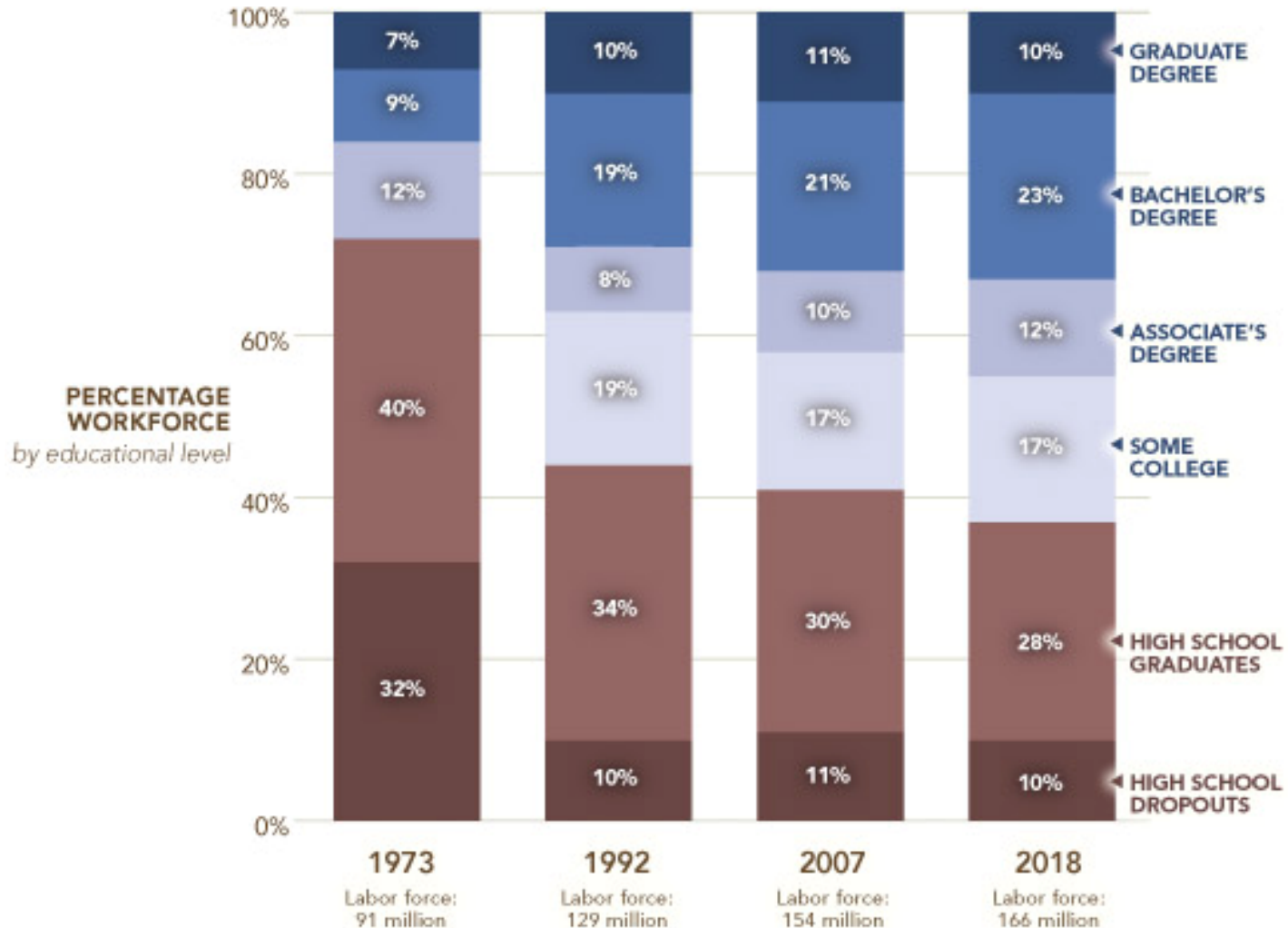
The Growing Demand for Higher Order Skills

Source: Council on Competitiveness, *Competitiveness Index*



Increasing Demand for Educated Workforce

BY 2018, 30 MILLION NEW AND REPLACEMENT JOBS WILL REQUIRE SOME COLLEGE OR ABOVE



Note: Brown indicates jobs requiring high school or less and Blue indicates jobs requiring some college or more.
Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce

Narrow Learning is Not Enough!

The LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes

- ***Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World***
Focused on engagement with big questions, enduring and contemporary
- ***Intellectual and Practical Skills***
Practiced extensively across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance
- ***Personal and Social Responsibility***
Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges
- ***Integrative Learning***
Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

***Employers Strongly Endorse the LEAP
“Essential Learning Outcomes” –
And They Urge New Effort to Help All
Students Achieve Them***

National Surveys of Employers on College Learning and Graduates' Work Readiness

AAC&U commissioned Hart Research Associates (in 2006, 2007, and in late 2009) to interview employers (C-level suite executives and, in 2009 additional human resource professionals) whose companies report that hiring relatively large numbers of college graduates

Findings are summarized in the following reports:

How Should Colleges Prepare Students to Succeed in Today's Global Economy? (AAC&U, 2007)

***How Should Colleges Assess and Improve Student Learning?
Employers' Views on the Accountability Challenge*** (AAC&U, 2008)

***Raising the Bar: Employers' Views on College Learning in the Wake of
the Economic Downturn*** (AAC&U, 2010)

See: www.aacu.org/leap/public_opinion_research



Employers Evaluate College Graduates' Preparedness In Key Areas

	Mean rating*	Very well prepared (8-10 ratings)*	Not well prepared (1-5 ratings)*
Teamwork	7.0	39%	17%
Ethical judgment	6.9	38%	19%
Intercultural skills	6.9	38%	19%
Social responsibility	6.7	35%	21%
Quantitative reasoning	6.7	32%	23%
Oral communication	6.6	30%	23%
Self-knowledge	6.5	28%	26%
Adaptability	6.3	24%	30%
Critical thinking	6.3	22%	31%
Writing	6.1	26%	37%
Self-direction	5.9	23%	42%
Global knowledge	5.7	18%	46%

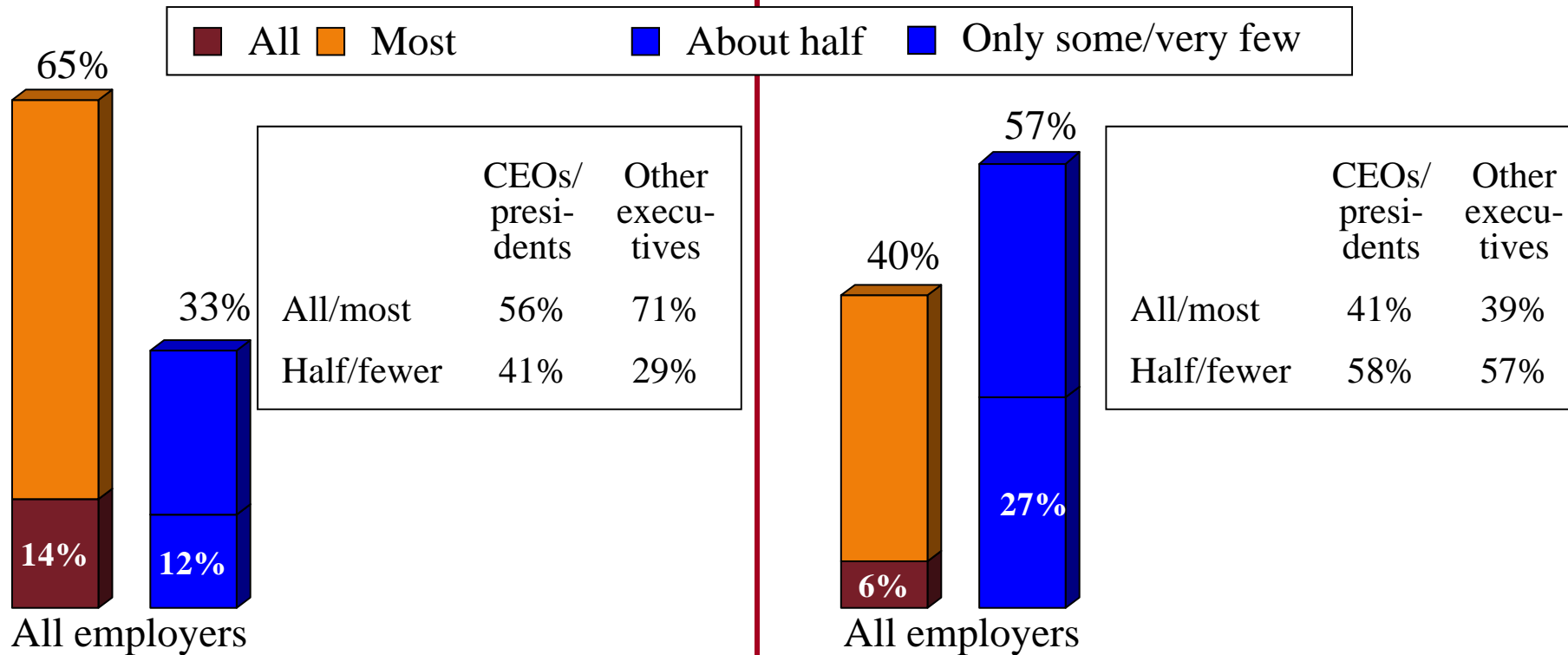
*ratings on 10-point scale: 10 = recent college graduates are extremely well prepared on each quality to succeed in entry level positions or be promoted/advance within the company

Employers See Room To Improve Many College Graduates' Skills/Knowledge

How many recent college graduates who have applied for positions at your company have possessed the skills and knowledge needed to achieve the following within your company?

Succeed in Entry-Level Positions

Advance or Be Promoted



Balance of Broad Knowledge and Specific Skills Preferred

Which is more important for recent college graduates who want to pursue advancement and long-term career success at your company?

Broad range of skills and knowledge that apply to a range of fields or positions



In-depth knowledge and skills that apply to a specific field or position

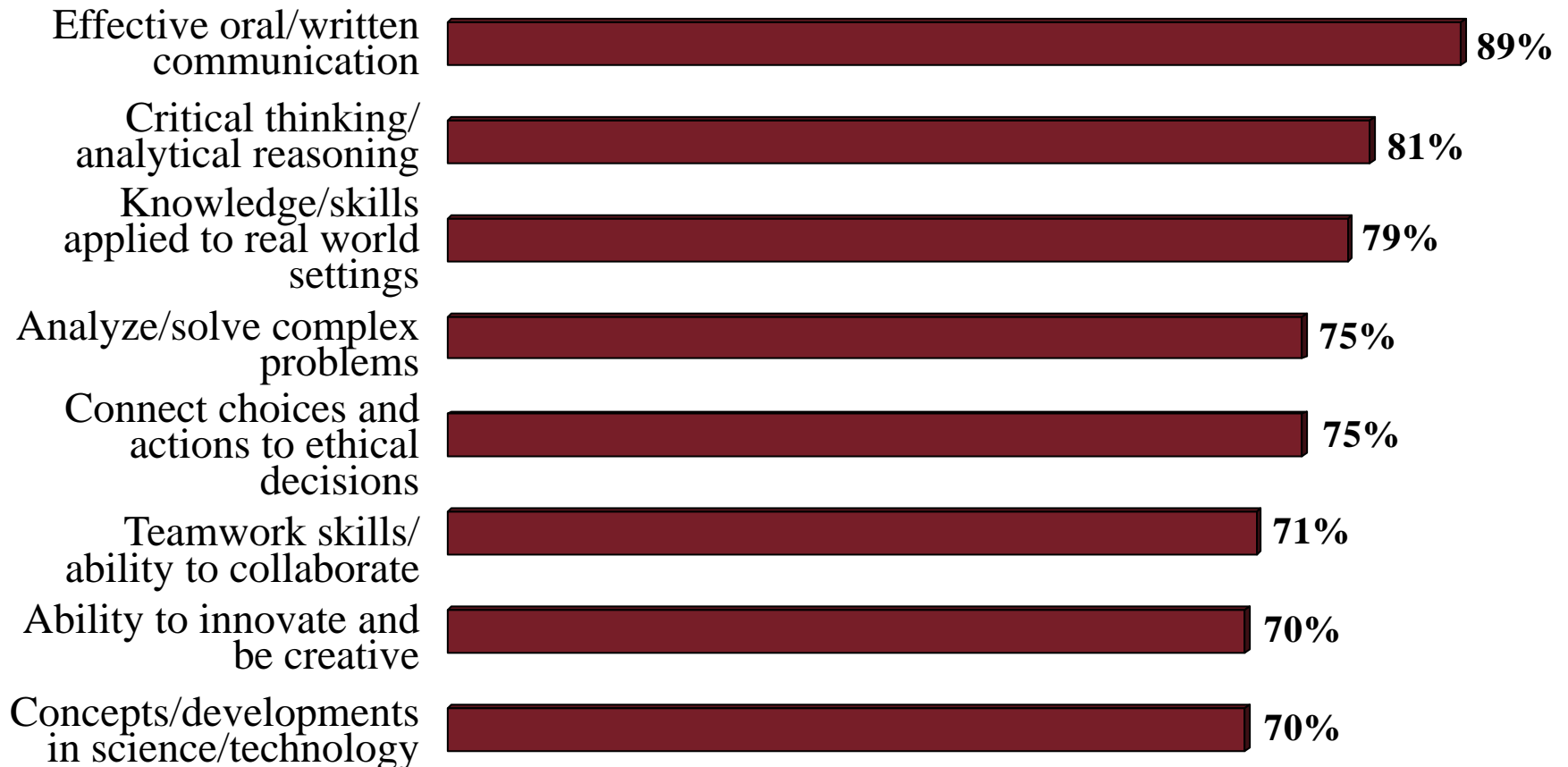


BOTH in-depth AND broad range of skills and knowledge



Employers' Top Priorities for Student Learning Outcomes in College

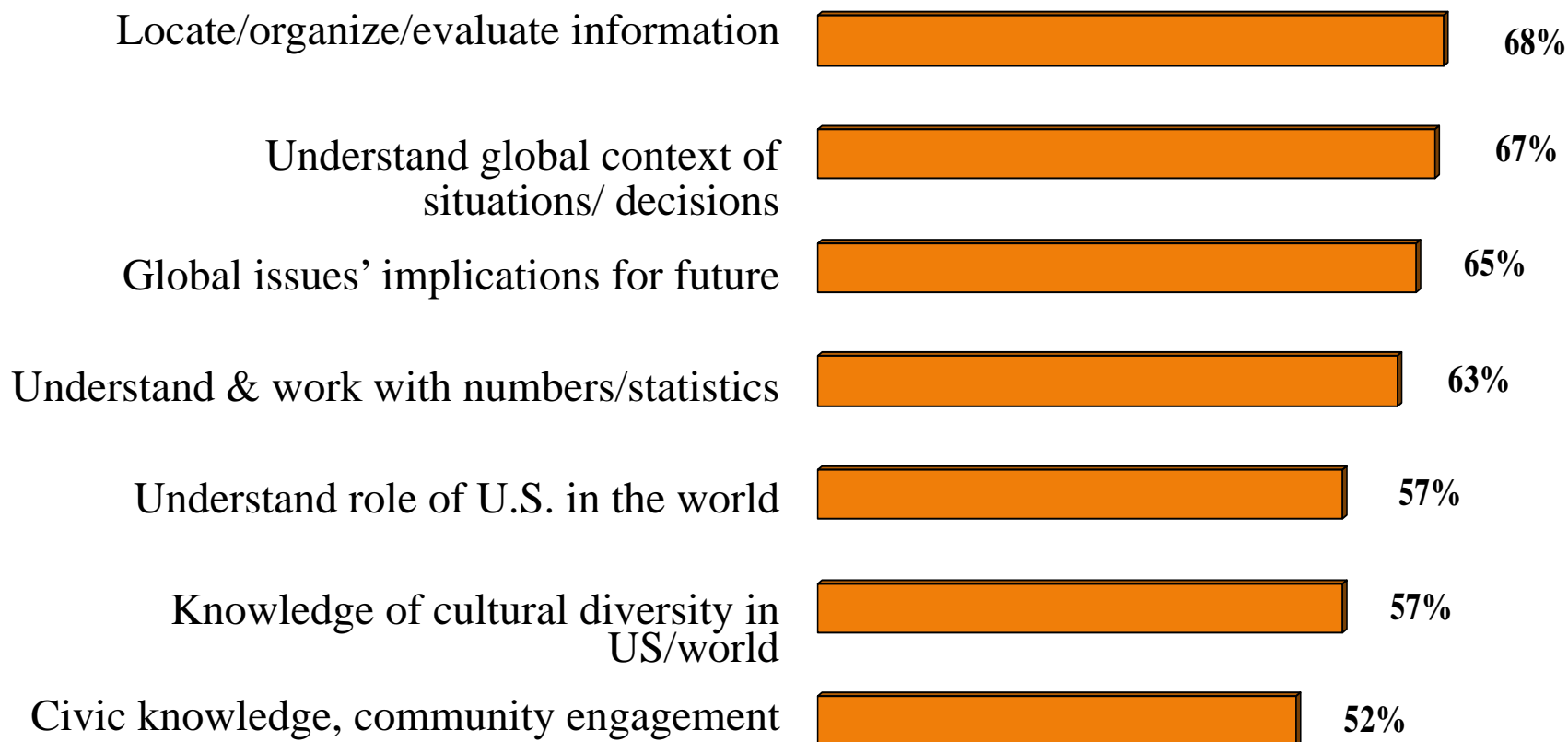
% saying two- and four-year colleges should place MORE emphasis on helping students develop these skills, qualities, capabilities, knowledge



“Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn”
(AAC&U and Hart Research Assoc. 2010)

Other Areas of Learning Needing Increased Emphasis

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“Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn”
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“[Employers] generally are...frustrated with their inability to find ‘360 degree people’ who have both the specific job/technical skills and the broader skills (communication and problem-solving skills, work ethic, and ability to work with others) necessary to promise greater success for both the individual and the employer.”

From Peter D. Hart Research Associates, *Report of Findings Based on Focus Groups Among Business Executives* (AAC&U, 2006)

Higher Level Liberal Education Skills and Abilities = Higher Wages

Data from Georgetown University
Center for Education and the Workforce



Center on Education and the Workforce

The Salary Premium for Liberal Education Outcomes

From a federal database analyzing qualifications for 1,100 different jobs, there is consistent evidence that the highest salaries apply to positions that call for intensive use of liberal education capabilities, including (random order):

- Writing
- Inductive and Deductive Reasoning
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Social/Interpersonal Skills
- Mathematics
- Originality

“In an economy fueled by innovation, the capabilities developed through a liberal education have become America’s most valuable economic asset.”

*College Learning for the New Global Century
(AAC&U, 2007)*

For full *LEAP Report* and the surveys on employers and recent graduates:

www.aacu.org/leap

For information from Georgetown University on Education and the Economy:

www.cew.georgetown.edu



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