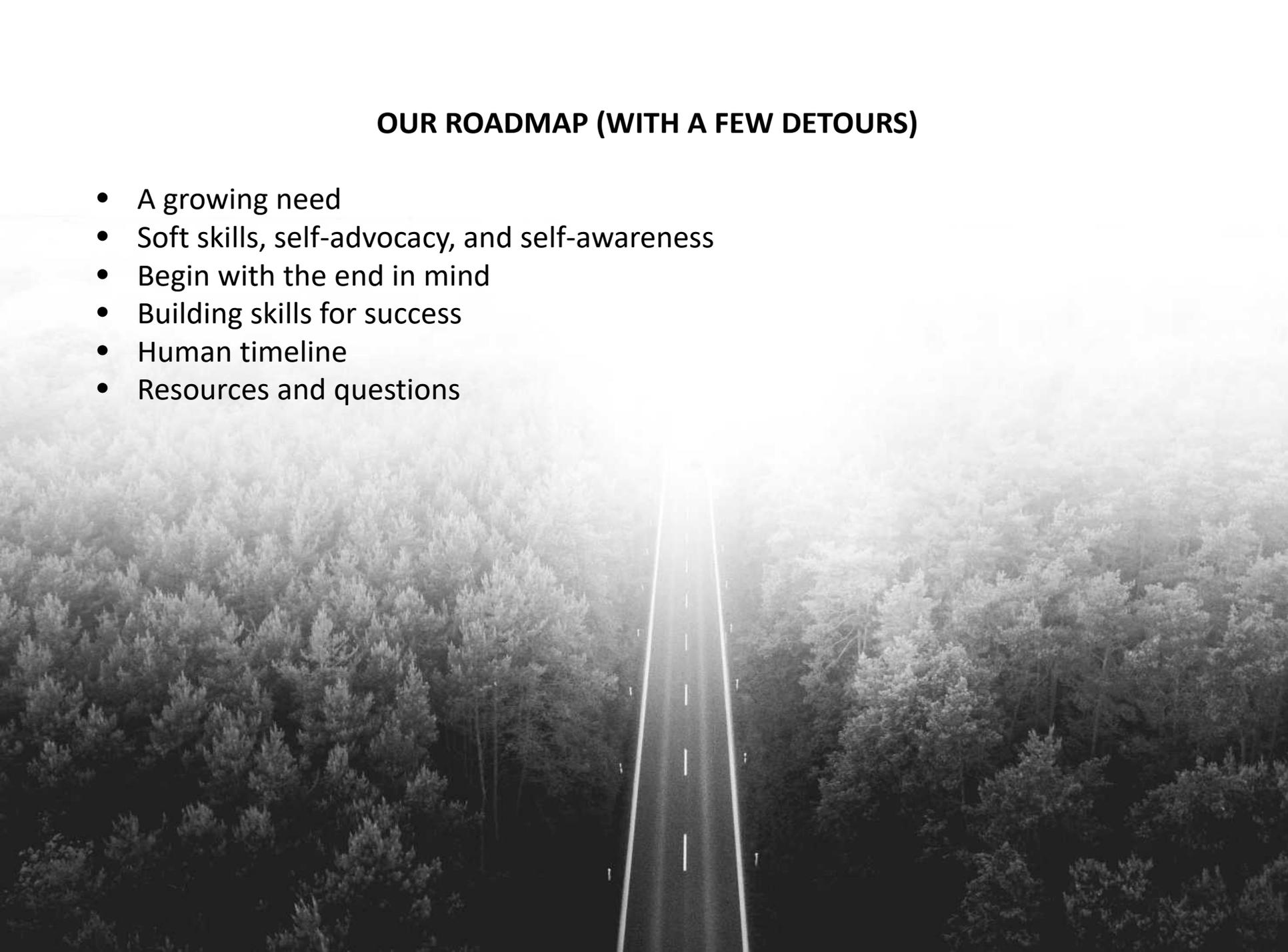# TRANSITIONS IN TRANSLATION

Disability. College. Success.

OUR ROADMAP (WITH A FEW DETOURS)

- A growing need
- Soft skills, self-advocacy, and self-awareness
- Begin with the end in mind
- Building skills for success
- Human timeline
- Resources and questions

A Growing Need

"Importantly, many of the student-level skills and dispositions identified as essential for success are currently not systematically taught nor measured in secondary schools. Among students with disabilities (SWD), the course failure and dropout rates are nearly twice as high as students in the general education population (United States Department of Education, 2012)...Given these disparities it is especially important to prioritize CCR for students with disabilities to ensure expectations are just as high as their peers without disabilities."

CCR= College and Career Readiness

Morningstar, M. E., Lombardi, A., Fowler, C. H., Test, D. (2015). A College and Career Readiness Framework for Secondary Students With Disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals.* Vol 40, Issue 2, pp. 79 - 91
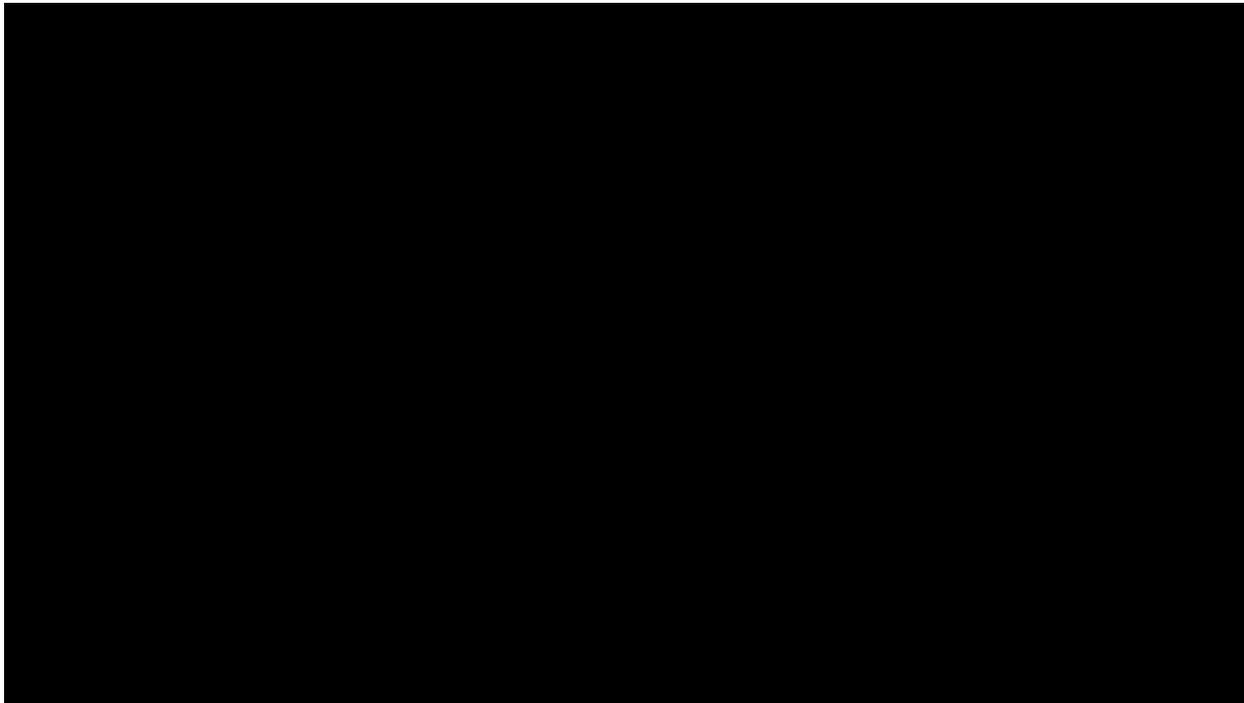
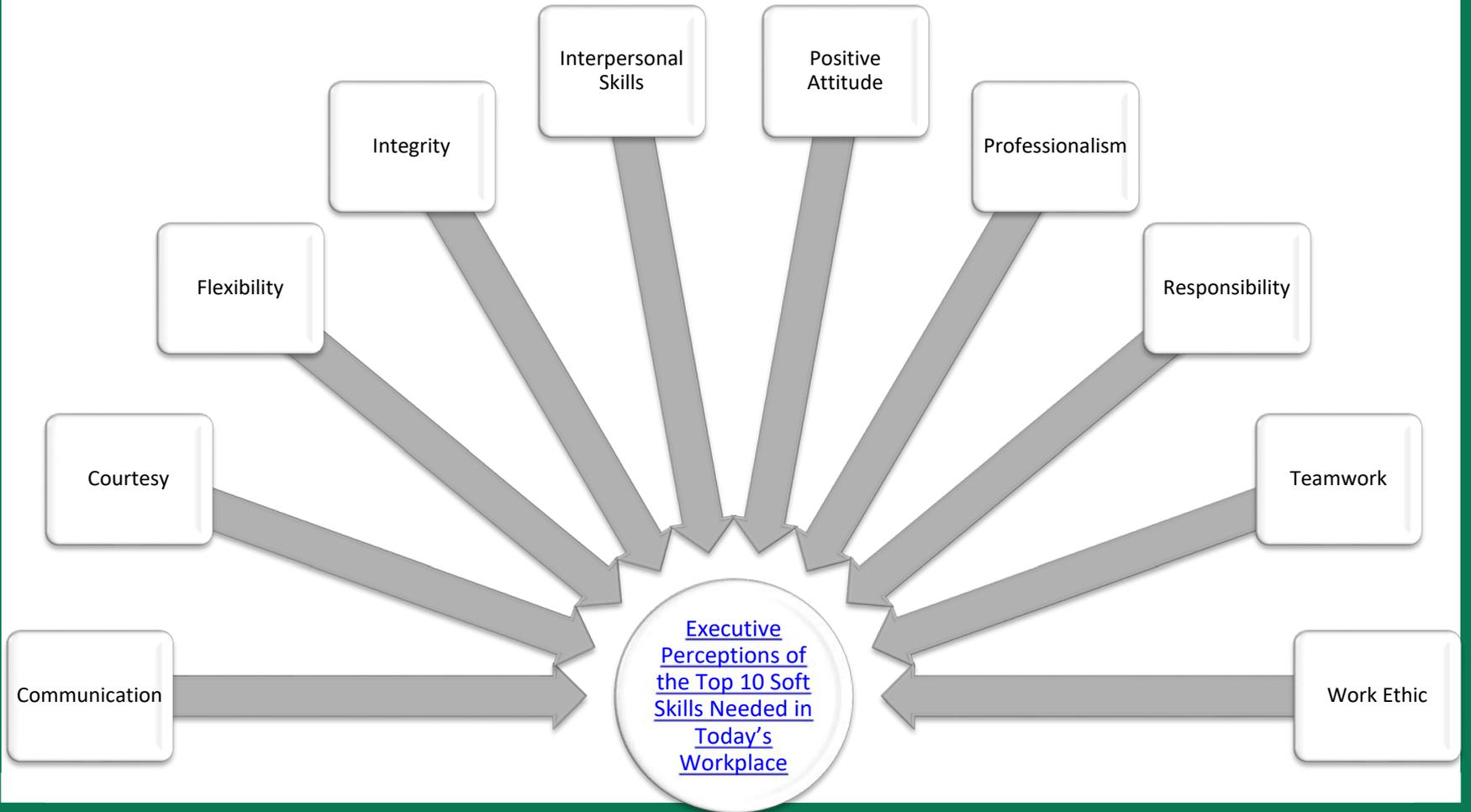**The Need: Why self-advocacy, soft skills, and transition?**

- Contextually, there are three distinct phases of association with other members of an institution.

    Separation from communities of the past, **transition** between high school and college, and **incorporation** into the society of the college (and that's just transition *into* college!).

- **Student engagement** is a critical component to retention.
- Becoming **actively engaged** in campus life in a variety of ways helps with the transition between high school and college.
- **Early intervention** is critical

Wessel, Roger D., James A. Jones, Larry Markle, and Curt Westfall. "Retention and Graduation of Students with Disabilities: Facilitating Student Success." Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability 21.3 (2009): 116-125. 13

What Are Soft Skills?

Interpersonal Skills

Positive Attitude

Integrity

Professionalism

Flexibility

Responsibility

Courtesy

Teamwork

Communication

Executive Perceptions of the Top 10 Soft Skills Needed in Today's Workplace

Work Ethic

What is self-advocacy?

- How is self-advocacy linked to soft skills? How are they related?

- How does it fit within or alongside the context of soft skills?

- And, what do both lead to?

What does self-advocacy look like…
AND, equally important, what DOESN'T it look like?

The Critical Importance of Self-Awareness

Begin with the End in Mind- An Employer's Perspective

What is it like when someone shows up without soft skills intact?

- Teaching soft skills once young employees arrive can be difficult, and time-demanding.
- There is an element of being vs. doing, here- you have to have an employer who is willing to engage who the student is *being* as much as what they're *doing*, which gets hard for both parties unless both have very good training, openness, and understanding of what is at play.
- Even if I'm not fully aware of it, I'm almost always going to hire individuals for their apparent soft skills, as I can teach the finer elements of hard skills, or refine technical skills.

Begin with the End in Mind- An Employer's Perspective

- How do you help develop or teach these skills in employment settings?
- Good thing- soft skills can be contextually taught as skills, rather than relying on the idea that "some people are good communicators, or self-confident. But, not all new employees know how to use these skills, and not all employers or supervisors know how to bring them out. It takes time".

Begin with the End in Mind- An Employer's Perspective
Let's not settle for setting students up for success, let's give them the opportunity to be game changers. [Self-confidence as a skill](#)
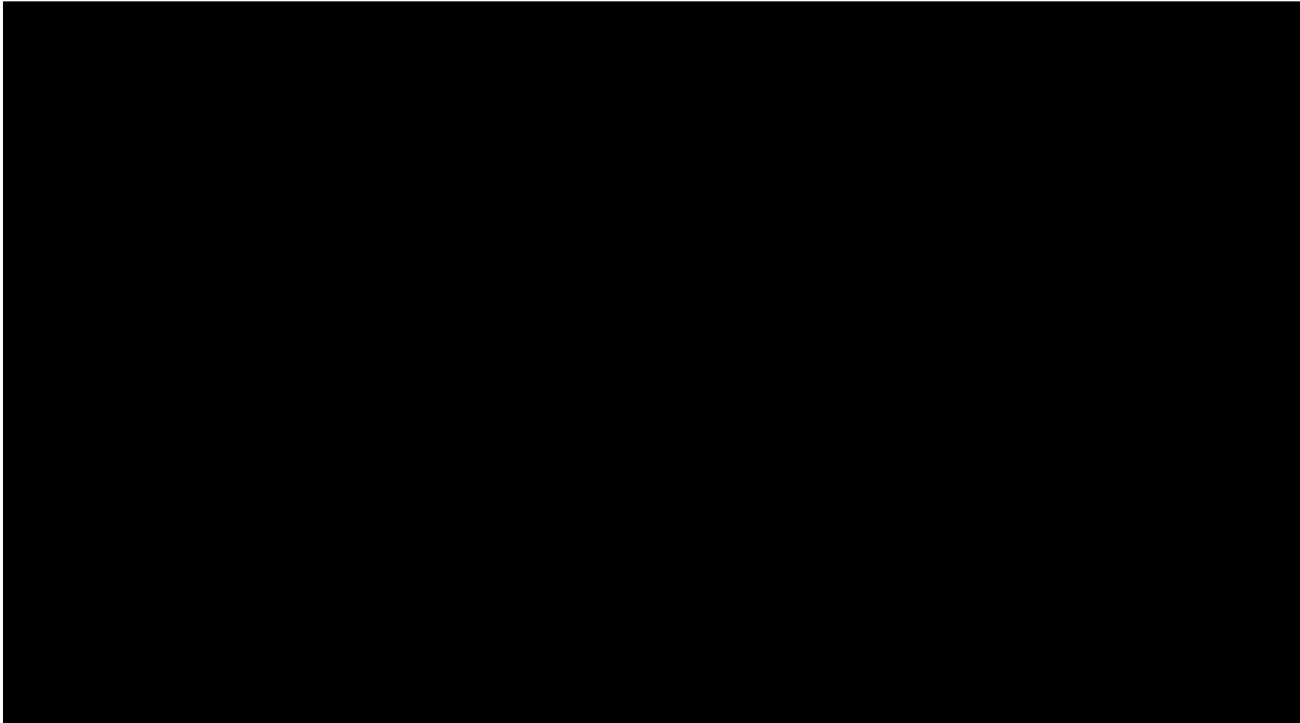
An Organizing Framework for Readiness

Six domains (offered by Morningstar, et.al):
- Academic Engagement (cognitive and behavioral)
- Academic Mindset (belonging, growth mindset, self-determination)
- Learning Processes (note-taking, test-taking, organization, time management)
- Critical Thinking (problem formulation, research, interpretation, communication)
- Social Skills (communication, empathy, social awareness, respect for others, responsibility)
- Transition Knowledge (understanding processes underlying successful transitions into higher ed and into career- job processes, applications, expectations, professionalism, etc.)

Morningstar, M. E., Lombardi, A., Fowler, C. H., Test, D. (2015). A College and Career Readiness Framework for Secondary Students With Disabilities. Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals. Vol 40, Issue 2, pp. 79 - 91.

Soft Skills for Success

Soft skills can be included into the curriculum easily by spreading the content throughout the semester (Evenson, 1999):

- Introduce students to basic people skills so they understand how to get along with people.
- Segue to teaching essential customer service skills.
- Foster student understanding by facilitating a problem-solving discussion based on real-life situations.
- Have students demonstrate the people skills they have learned using roleplay exercises in a mock business setting.

(Executive Perceptions of the Top 10 Soft Skills Needed in Today's Workplace, 2012)

Human Timeline
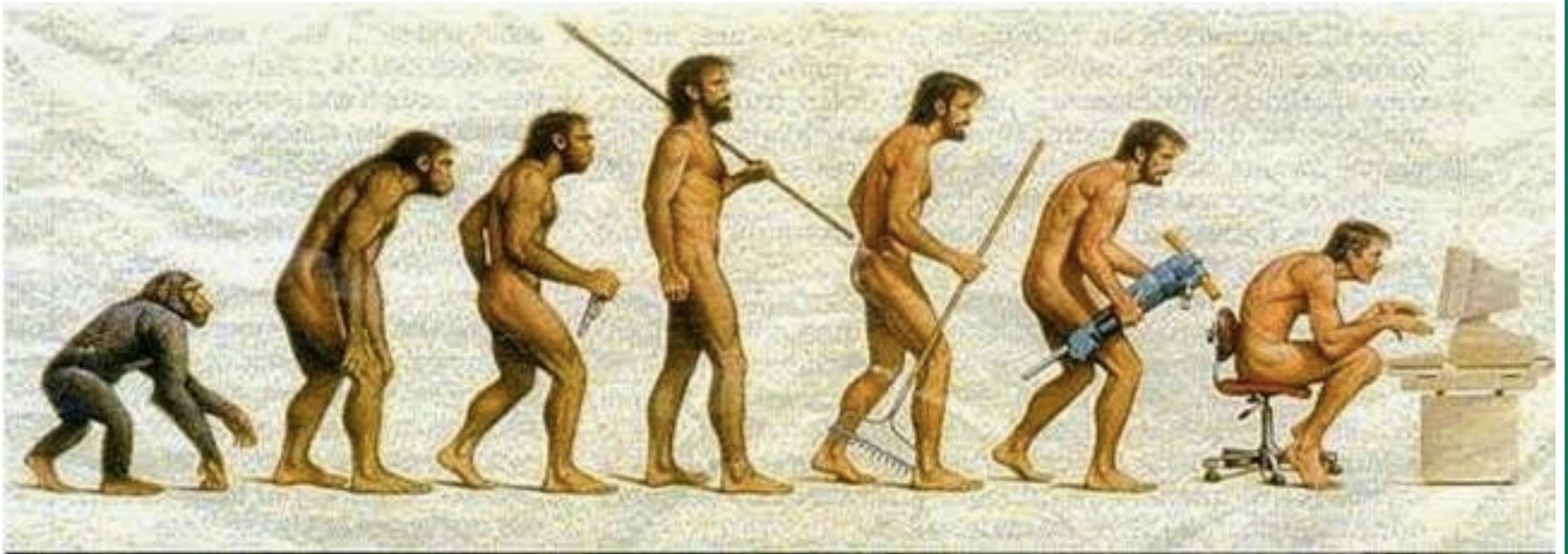
Resources to Support the Timeline & Framework:

Consider Creative Partnerships:

- VR and Higher Ed: MRS/MSU/TNT, MRS/WMU
- Career Services and Accessibility Services offerings (Career assessments, discussion with VR counselor)
- Transition-specific programming (Western, MSU's Project Venture), Transitions in Translation.

Printable resources, transition assessments and transition curriculums:

- [Transition Toolkits](#) (transition assessments, guides, etc).
- "[Real College Readiness: Developing a Student Who Thrives](#)": http://www.transitionsintranslation.com/news/2016/1/28/real-college-readiness-developing-a-student-who-thrives

Soft skills development:

[Executive Perceptions of the Top 10 Soft Skills Needed in Today's Workplace](#)

References

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Korbel, D. M., Lucia, J. H., Wenzel, C. M.& Anderson, B. G. (2011). Collaboration Strategies to Facilitate Successful Transition of Students with Disabilities in a Changing Higher Education Environment. New Directions for Higher Education, 154, 17-25.

Morningstar, M. E., Lombardi, A., Fowler, C. H., Test, D. (2015). A College and Career Readiness Framework for Secondary Students With Disabilities. Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals. Vol 40, Issue 2, pp. 79 - 91.

Wessel, Roger D., James A. Jones, Larry Markle, and Curt Westfall. "Retention and Graduation of Students with Disabilities: Facilitating Student Success." Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability 21.3 (2009): 116-125. 13 Sept. 2015.