We asked our business advisory partners questions about today's workplace environment, industry needs, and future employment opportunities. Here is a sample of what they had to say:

**QUESTION: What does it take to be successful in your industry?**
- Be aware of Social Media. Things you do now, may have negative consequences later!
- You can’t just want the glorious job. You must earn it! Most often, an individual must work his/her way up, beginning with an entry-level position.
- “Soft Skills” continue to be the most important thing we can teach students.
- Ambition, a sense of urgency, time management, and multi-tasking are essential to being productive
- How to talk and interact with others in a professional manner
- Learning never ends!
- Get the proper education in order to perform essential duties of the job.

**QUESTION: What changes do you feel need to be addressed in our curriculum?**
- More safety instruction
- Cell phone etiquette
- Professional appearance, including piercings, tattoos, clothing, etc.
- How to work independently and as a member of a team
- More students need the opportunity for work-based learning
- Create a career “road map”

**QUESTION: What qualities of an individual are most significant when selecting one candidate over another?**
- We take into consideration what an individual has done to set him/herself apart, i.e., volunteer work, taken extra classes, earned certifications, etc.
- An individual with a good attitude can be trained, but the one with the skills and a bad attitude will not
- Strong work ethic and work availability
- Good communication skills and a willingness to learn
- A strong portfolio with work samples
- Ability to assess oneself, identifying his/her strengths/weaknesses

**QUESTION: What are the most critical issues facing your industry today?**
- Quality training
- Public perception of the job
- No one gets a second chance to make a first impression
- Well-rounded qualified candidates
- Exposure to equipment in the field

**QUESTION: As a business person, parent, and/or community member, what do you want teachers to know?**
- Deadlines matter! Do all of us a favor, do not accept late work!
- Grades don’t matter at work. If it is not correct, do not accept it. No such thing as an A- work product.
- Be upfront and honest.
- Instill in students that learning is a lifelong process. Prepare for the future and opportunities will come.
- Financial literacy is important! Understand the importance of their spending habits versus savings, how to file taxes, etc.
- Collaborate with your fellow teachers and find projects that can bring disciplines together.
- Show students all education and career options
- Provide classroom management so that it is conducive to learning
- Contextualize your teaching so that it is real-life scenarios
- Hands-on learning is a critical part of the learning process
- Teach students to think
- Teach students how to talk to people, not just a screen!