

Career Readiness Survey

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How do different career readiness factors predict employment success?

1,244 college students surveyed on
Skills, Confidence, Experience, and Networks

Results

- The correlations are weak and clustered (ranging from 0.109 to 0.158), suggesting no single factor dominates.
- Confidence and Skills** show virtually identical correlations (0.158 and 0.157).
- However, in a combined model controlling for all factors simultaneously, **Skills** emerges as the strongest independent predictor ($\beta = 0.299$), followed closely by Confidence ($\beta = 0.267$) and Experience ($\beta = 0.226$).

FACTOR	CORRELATION (R)	MEAN DIFFERENCE	P-VALUE	COHEN'S D	COEFFICIENT (INDIVIDUAL)	COEFFICIENT (COMBINED)
Confidence	0.1575	0.252	0.0000 ***	0.319	0.3214	0.2671
Skills	0.1569	2.383	0.0000 ***	0.318	0.3297	0.2991
Experience	0.1179	0.433	0.0007 ***	0.238	0.2709	0.2258
Networks	0.1093	0.229	0.0016 **	0.220	0.2202	-0.0237

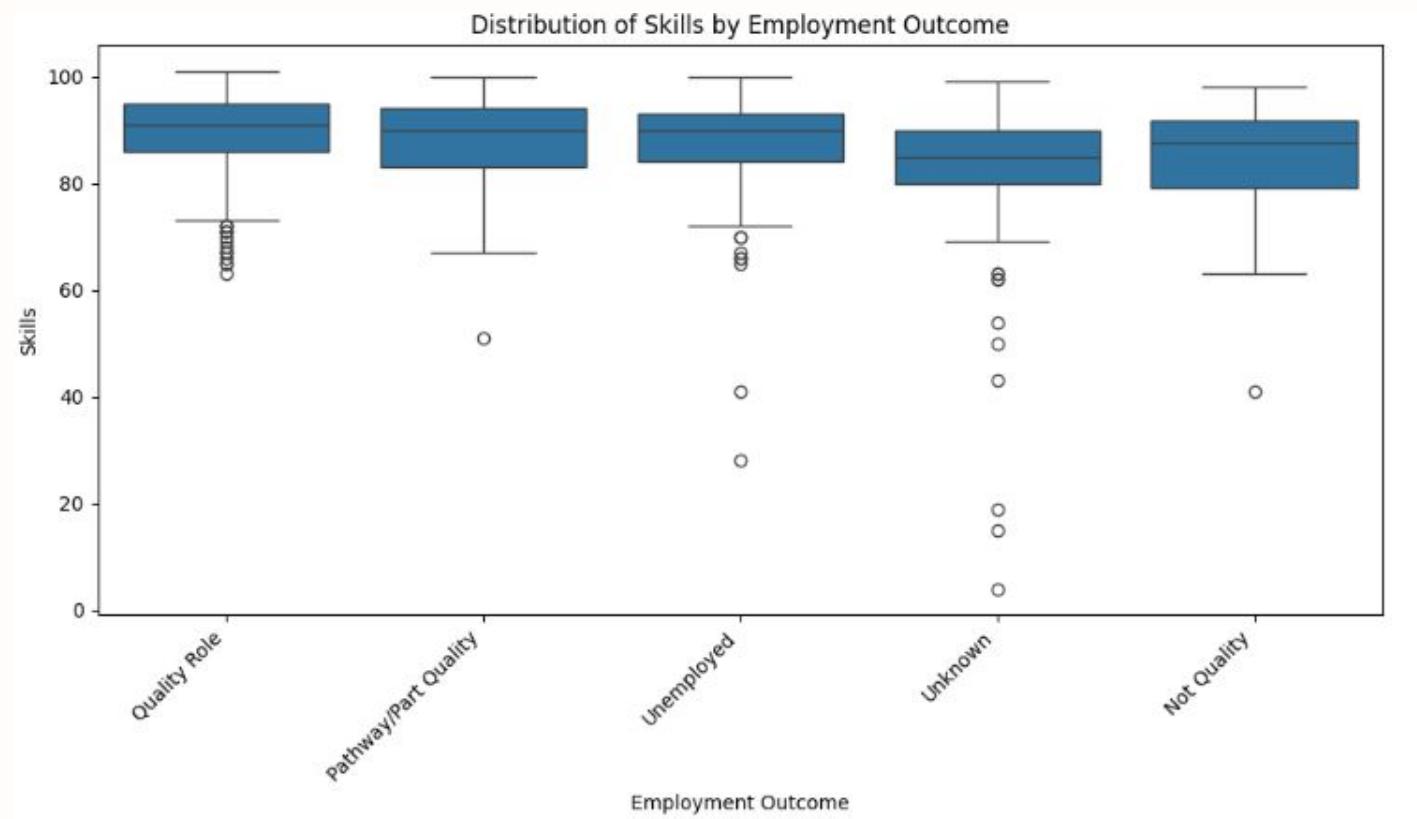
Statistical Significance Levels:

*** p < 0.001 (highly significant)
 ** p < 0.01 (very significant)
 * p < 0.05 (significant)

Results

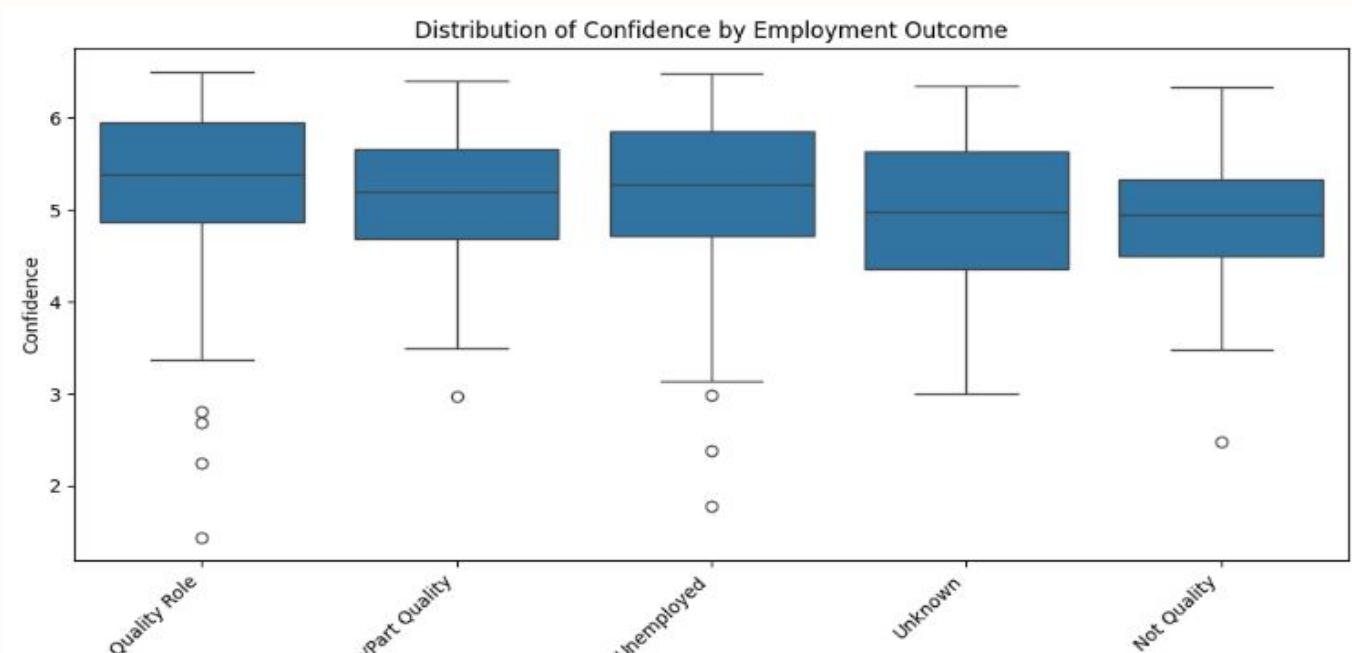
Skills

- **Quality Role vs Unemployed:** There is a statistically significant difference ($p\text{-adj} = 0.0278$) in mean skills scores between individuals in a 'Quality Role' and those who are 'Unemployed'. Individuals in 'Quality Role' have significantly higher skills scores.
- **Quality Role vs Unknown:** There is a statistically significant difference ($p\text{-adj} = 0.0000$) in mean skills scores between individuals in a 'Quality Role' and those with an 'Unknown' employment



Confidence

- **Quality Role vs Not Quality:** There is a statistically significant difference ($p\text{-adj} = 0.0024$) in mean confidence scores between individuals in a 'Quality Role' and those in a 'Not Quality' role. Individuals in 'Quality Role' have significantly higher confidence scores.
- **Quality Role vs Unknown:** There is a statistically significant difference ($p\text{-adj} = 0.0003$) in mean confidence scores between individuals in a 'Quality Role' and those with an 'Unknown' employment outcome. Individuals in 'Quality Role' have significantly higher confidence scores.



Recommendations

Prioritize Integrated Skill Development

Rather than treating career readiness as a separate initiative, embed it within academic curricula. Our data shows that academic performance (skills) has the strongest independent effect, suggesting that rigorous learning experiences build both competence and confidence simultaneously.

Elevate Confidence from "Soft Skill" to Core Outcome

Confidence showed the strongest bivariate correlation and second-strongest independent effect, yet it's typically treated as a supplementary "soft skill." Given its consistent impact across analyses, confidence development should be embedded as a core curriculum that is measured, tracked, and resourced like academic outcomes, not relegated to career workshops.

Design for Baseline Competence

Rather than pushing already-successful students toward perfection, institutions should ensure all students, especially first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, reach baseline competence in each domain. This represents a fundamental shift from excellence competition to equitable access.