A New Vision for Workforce Preparation:

Digital and Open Badges: The Future of Credentials

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This is not about badges.
What it IS about:

- Helping to make achievements – including the development of critical soft skills – more visible and more useful
- Empower people with a form of personal capital that can improve their lives

Much of our learning happens informally or is out of the reach of traditional assessments.

_Banks, et al. “Learning In and Out of School in Diverse Environments”. Seattle: NSF. The LIFE Center, University of Washington, Stanford University, and SRI International. 2007._

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<th>Acknowledge or Commemorate</th>
<th>Endorse or Recognize</th>
<th>Honor or Award</th>
<th>Verify or Validate</th>
<th>Credential or Certify</th>
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<td><img src="image8" alt="World Champion" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Top 10 Hall of Fame" /></td>
<td><img src="image10" alt="Project Management Certificate" /></td>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Assessment" /></td>
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<td><img src="image14" alt="Hacker's Day" /></td>
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Badges verify & tell the story of:

- Skills people demonstrate
- Choices they make
- Communities in which they engage
Badges also help organizations acknowledge and share what they value in the world.
Digital Badges vs. Embroidered Badges

- Don’t need to fit on a sash
- Can be seen whether *you* are physically present or not
- Pretty image + data
- Evidence travels with them
- Earned from lifelong interactions
- Multiple sources, side-by-side
- Can be awarded dynamically when criteria are met

Digital “Open Badges”

- Portable
- Owned by the recipient
- Machine-readable
- Validated by the issuer
- Verifiable by observers
- Standardized technical format
A quick word about the underlying technology of open badges ...

... to help us appreciate their potential.

1. A metadata standard
2. A “packaging” standard

What other systems for sending and receiving digital things work like this?
Anatomy of Badges

1. A metadata standard
2. A “packaging” standard
3. Verification standard

"Assertion" Verifies Badge’s Validity

The badge issuer or a trusted party maintains the "assertion" in perpetuity, acting as proof that the data in the badge matches the issuer’s original data.

The earner’s badge is "baked" with the data about your achievement, including a link back to a "receipt" or "assertion" from the issuer or a trusted party.
Instructors or peers witness evidence of discrete, marketable skills within a class.

A learner participates in a course led by experts at a museum like MoMA.

*Where’s the credit?*
A learner completes a MOOC or a student leadership program, or is recognized by peers.
A professional takes part in a workforce development program or other training.  

Where’s the credit?

A job-seeking veteran wants to present her or his military training as skills employers need.
**Motivation**

- Badges should serve as a “stamp of approval” for behaviors and progress towards goals that are intrinsically motivating.

- Most learners are not motivated by the badge.

- They are motivated by what comes **BEFORE** or **AFTER** the badge.
Digital Credential Lifecycle Management

**Issue:**
- Data / assessment triggered
- Claim / evidence
- Events & location
- Identity Verification
- Manage users
- Display

**Receive:**
- Accept & store
- Trust issuer
- Automate management
- Multiple email address support
- Direct to profile

**Share & Display:**
- Curate one by one
- Curate by category
- Share to Facebook, Twitter, Backpack, LinkedIn
- Embed
- Profile

**Track & Analyze:**
- Sharing analysis
- Impressions and visibility
- Acceptance
- Redirect and contextualize

**Discover & Reward:**
- Suggest
- Aspire, inspire
- Badge consumers
- Partnerships
- Rewards & benefits

Earners of badges own their achievements.
Each person decides what they want to share.

Think of each line on a résumé as verified by its source and independently sharable.
Using verified achievements to tell our story and be discovered for new opportunities
Adding Verified Badges to Portfolios
Nothing has to change, but …

While we are re-inventing the form recognition takes …

… why not think differently about assessment, too?
Embedded and Authentic Assessments

- Participation / presence / check-in
- Membership / interest group
- Geolocation-based
- Role-based
- External data source(s) correlation
- Group Badges through Individual Work
- Organizational Badges
- Given / Discretionary
- Previously assessed / Retroactive badges
- Expert review
- Peer review
- Self review
- Self-Claimed with Evidence
- Evidence submission or confirmation
- Triggers
- Meta-triggers
- Test, quiz or assessment
Transforming Achievement Data into Credentials

Earning Digital Badges based on real time, contextual activities
Acknowledging Soft Skills: A Good Fit for Digital Badges & Credentials

• Contextual and embedded assessments
• Meta skills from across a curriculum or multiple settings
• Achievements that “stack” or add up to credentials
• Alternate pathways
Students demonstrate entrepreneurial skills at a hackathon.
College students learn valuable Info Lit skills outside any single curriculum.

Developing Standards for Soft Skills & Badges that Address Workforce Needs
Competency-Based Education


Competency-Based Education

Source: https://www.brandman.edu/cbeducation
Students participate in volunteer, service learning or other out-of-school programs.
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