

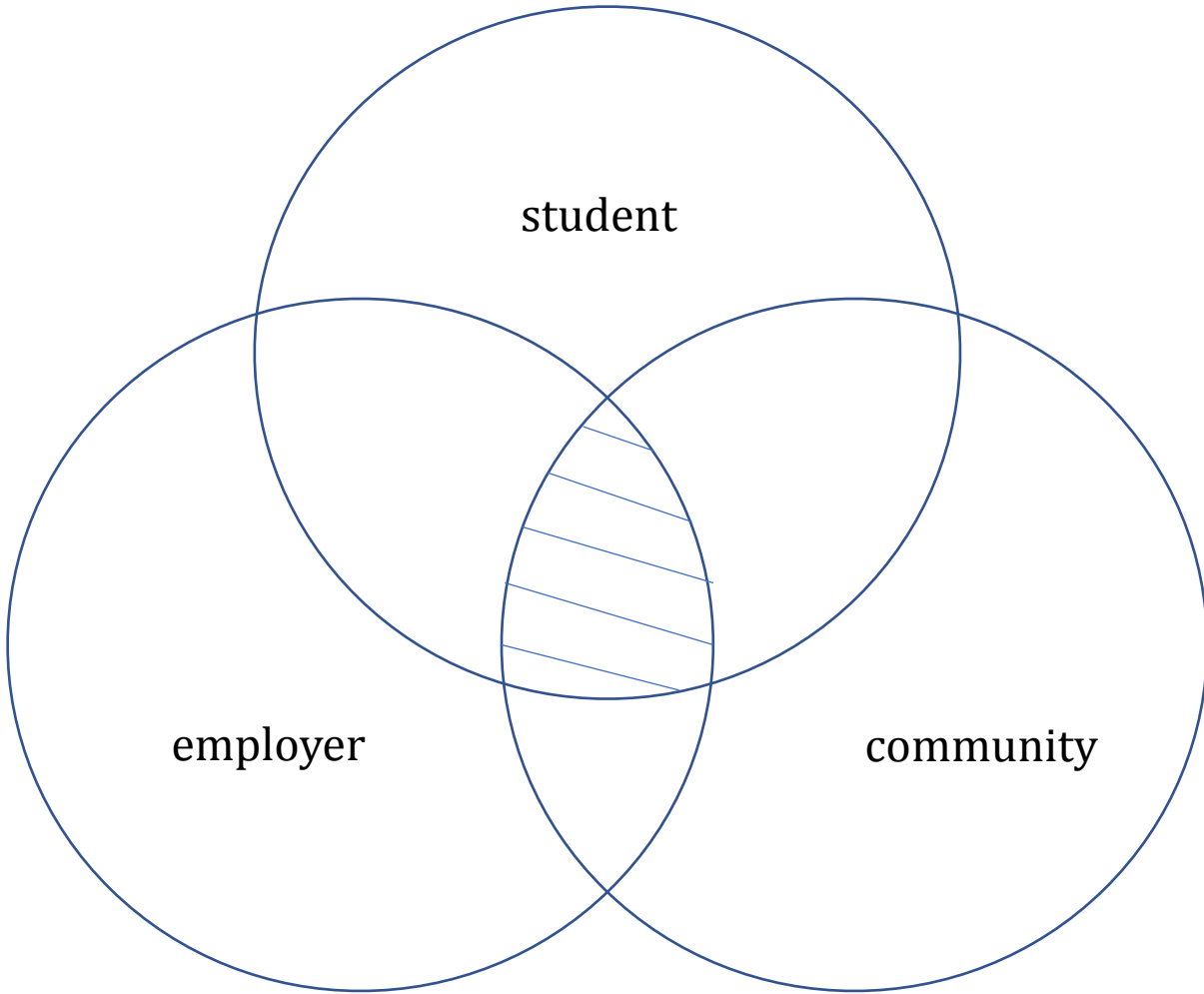
Making ELO's Work for Individuals, Businesses, and Communities

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**The ELO Venn diagram:
3 sets of interests to
align**

Greatest benefit of ELO's is in intersection of the three circles

Students: in families, schools, communities; how to align them to enable good ELO experiences?

Businesses: have short-term pressures and long-term interests (eg in ensuring well-prepared workforce)—how to align short-term pressure to use resources productively with long-term interest in ensuring a good business environment, qualified pool of available employees?

Communities: want to maintain, improve climate for private investment and public goods—good schools, roads, services

- For schools: how to align value of work experience for students with educational objectives (eg language arts, math, science)?
- For businesses: how much personnel time to devote to teaching, mentoring young people in job shadows, internships, after school jobs?
(eg Belfast business HR director: “...our main product is billable hours. I can’t bill clients for time spent by high-skill workers on training students”)
- Communities: Economic and social development objectives compete—eg how much to invest in supporting the needy vs. how much to emphasize creating good environment for business investment?

--True at state level: Maine state 10-year development goals: create a “diverse and sustainable economy” with higher value-added products and a “culture of innovation”
Businesses must “partner with educational institutions, nonprofits, governments to drive that culture of innovation”

--And at national level: how to shape democratic citizens—participate in civic life?



Back to the future?

John Dewey's ideas on school, society, democracy

Education must be linked to all aspects of surrounding life

“Learning by doing” – *experientia docet*

Thinking develops through solving problems, working with others under guidance of teachers

Is creative & social act

When we cultivate ability to plan, act, observe, learn, and share results of learning, we:

--Link education to life

--And help form active citizens—recognize own part in shaping common history

From OECD study:

“secondary school students who explore, experience and think about their futures in work frequently encounter lower levels of unemployment, receive higher wages and are happier in their careers as adults.” (Covacevich et al., 2021, p. 4; Mann et al. 2020)

Key is “individual agency” – ie ability to form own ambitions, can govern own life

Awakening “capacity to aspire” -- especially important for disadvantaged students!

Otherwise, educational system reproduces inequality

Capacity to aspire is closely related to social capital—ie social networks and connections; are channels of information, influence, role models

Disadvantaged kids often in dense networks of similarly disadvantaged people—blocks mobility

Connections to people who have “made it” strongly linked to better chances of success in life—higher graduation rates, rates of continuing for post-secondary study, earning higher incomes

Conclusions:

1. ELO's pay off for individuals, businesses, and communities
2. But takes effort to align all sides
3. Educators, businesses, community leaders face different, competing goals, but can cooperate in making a shared investment in expanding opportunities for students
4. Recognizing importance of working toward a shared goal helps maintain cooperation



Illustration: famous Russian parable about the swan, pike, and crab. They were harnessed to a cart. The swan wanted to fly up into the air, the pike wanted to pull it into the stream, and the crab tried to pull it sideways. *The cart didn't move from its place.*

