



# UPSKILL HOUSTON

April 29, 2020

Good morning,

I hope this finds you in good health and good spirits.

Over the last several weeks, the landscape and nature of work in Houston and across the globe has changed dramatically, more rapidly than many of us could have imagined. The soft skills employers value, such as communication and a growth mindset, translate across industries, careers and work environments, and they will be more crucial than ever as your students prepare to enter the workplace or college.

At this critical time, UpSkill Houston and Red & Black – a “mere mortal” mom and her retired corporate executive sister – are excited to partner to launch a new series of 13 short animations that together demonstrate how an array of soft skills can drive success. Each minute-long episode introduces a different skill and provides a specific example of how the skill applies on-the-job – and in personal, everyday life – in a variety of settings.

The animations were developed as companions to the “My Life As ...” series and are featured at [UpSkillMyLife.org/softskills](https://UpSkillMyLife.org/softskills). The site now links existing “My Life As ...” content with “Soft Skills” content to help reinforce for young viewers how soft skills apply in real-life settings. The animations are also available on [Red & Black’s YouTube channel](#).

The Soft Skills animated series includes:

- Soft Skills (introductory video)
- Communication
- Creative Thinking
- Critical Thinking
- Gratitude & Appreciation
- Growth Mindset
- Personal Finance
- Problem Solving
- Research & Analytical Skills
- Resume Writing
- Safety Mindset
- Silo Busting
- Teamwork

Red & Black’s book, *What I Learned About Life When My Husband Got Fired!* – which was approved by the Texas State Board of Education as a financial literacy textbook and is the basis of over 35 Career and Technical Education curricula – and other resources are currently [free for educators here](#).

In addition, Red & Black Managing Partner Mandy Williams, aka "Black," will join Fred Oswald, professor and director of Graduate Studies at Rice University School of Social Science, and Greg Hambrick, co-founder and CEO of Fast Forward Works, in a discussion of how to identify skills that drive success as part of our [UpSkill Works Forum Series](#) on Wednesday, May 6.

We hope these new tools from UpSkill Houston and Red & Black are useful for you as you continue to teach, guide and prepare your students for their next steps.

Yours,

Susan Moore

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Regional Workforce Development  
Greater Houston Partnership