My Philosophy of Technology Education

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Aside from their parents and family, a child's teachers are likely the most important, influential factor in their growth. In my opinion, Technology Education is arguably the most dynamic subject that students can participate in as they progress through the education system. The disciplines available within the program are extensive and combine the fundamentals learned in many other courses. Many of the qualities an individual needs to excel throughout their careers and in society are an integral part of Technology Education. Technology Education is the preparation of individuals to be successful in all their endeavors in life.

A common question is what disciplines does Technology Education include? Some define it as cutting-edge, computer-based applications. The advent of computers has changed the content to be sure. Computer-aided drafting (CAD) has revolutionized drafting from the traditional board drawing days. A skilled drafter can make a set of drawings in a shorter period of time with pinpoint accuracy. Unique features in the programs give perspectives of the item that were never available in standard drafting. The operator can use three-dimensional views of the object to assess problems prior to the modeling/prototype phase.

I come from a very diverse educational and employment background. From this perspective I feel that I have as good a perception as any on the many options open to students. In high school I concentrated on the sciences. My parents and counselors told me that this was the path to a successful career. I did reasonably well in my courses but in retrospect it is obvious to me that my marks reflected my uncertainty as to the suitability of this career path for me. In my postsecondary studies I have taken courses in business, humanities, technical studies and education. I have achieved at a high-level in all these diverse disciplines. My employment background ranges from retail/wholesale, various accounting functions, managing staff and property, running a construction business all the way to manual laborer/carpenter in residential construction. I know what traits are needed to succeed in all these occupations. Having said this, I will now explain my interpretation of Technology Education.

As educators we need to teach students technological literacy by taking these tangible concepts (computers and manual skills) and combine them with the intangibles that we can develop within them. These include but are not limited to:
-- Responsibility
-- Autonomy
-- Perseverance
-- Initiative
-- Resourcefulness
-- Empowerment through knowledge

Powerful words for sure, but what do they mean and how can we teach them to our students? The best way to teach our students these concepts is through modeling. In other words, don't just talk the talk but walk the walk.