

Transferable Skills

Unlike job-related skills, which tend to be used only in one type of work, transferable skills are skills that can be used in every occupation, regardless of the type of work. They are universal skills-you can transfer them from one type of work to another without much effort on your part or training from the employer.

Many employers think that if you are able to use a skill in one situation, you should be able to use that skill in another job, even if the work appears to be unrelated to your past employment or education experience. For this reason, your transferable skills are often more important than your job-related skills. This is especially true if you are changing careers or making the transition from school to work.

In identifying your transferable skills, do not overlook the skills you've gained from everyday living. Most job-seekers fail to see this potential. These skills can, however, help you meet an employer's expectations. Once you've identified your transferable skills, you need to develop them into statements that you can use in your cover letter, resume, or make in an interview, which will show employers that you are the best person for the job.

Information management skills: ability to...

- Sort data and objects
- Compile and rank information
- Apply information creatively to specific problems or tasks
- Synthesize facts, concepts, and principles
- Understand and use organizing principles
- Evaluate information against appropriate standards

Design and planning skills: ability to...

- Identify alternative courses of action
- Set realistic goals
- Follow through with a plan or decision
- Manage time effectively
- Predict trends and patterns
- Accommodate multiple demands for commitment of time, energy, and resources
- Assess needs
- Make and keep a schedule
- Set priorities

Research and investigation skills: ability to...

- Use a variety of sources of information
- Apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data
- Identify problems and needs
- Design an experiment, plan, or model that systematically defines a problem
- Identify information sources appropriate to special needs or problems
- Formulate questions relevant to clarifying a particular problem, topic, or issue

Value skills: ability to...

- Assess a course of action in terms of its long-range effects on the general human welfare
- Make decisions that will maximize both individual and collective good
- Appreciate the contributions of art, literature, science, and technology to contemporary society
- Identify one's own values
- Assess one's values in relation to important life decisions

Communication skills: ability to...

- Listen with objectivity and paraphrase the content of a message
- Use various forms and styles of written communication

Speak effectively to individuals and groups
Use media formats to present ideas imaginatively
Express one's needs, wants, opinions, and preferences without offending the sensitivities of others
Identify and communicate value judgments effectively
Describe objects or events with minimum of factual errors
Convey a positive self-image to others

Human relations and interpersonal skills: ability to...

Keep a group "on track" and moving toward the achievement of a common goal
Maintain group cooperation and support
Delegate tasks and responsibilities
Interact effectively with peers and supervisors
Express one's feelings appropriately
Understand the feelings of others
Use argumentation techniques to persuade others
Make commitments to people
Be willing to take risks
Teach a skill, concept, or principle
Analyze behavior of self and others in group situations
Demonstrate effective social behavior in a variety of settings and under different circumstances
Work under time and environmental pressures

Critical thinking skills: ability to...

Identify quickly and accurately the critical issues when making a decision
Identify a general principle that explains interrelated experiences or factual data
Define the parameters of a problem
Identify reasonable criteria for assessing the value or appropriateness of an action or behavior
Adapt one's concept and behaviors to changing conventions and norms
Apply appropriate criteria to strategies and action plans
Take given premises and reason to their conclusion
Create innovative solutions to complex problems
Analyze the interrelationships of events

Management and administration skills: ability to...

Analyze tasks
Identify people who can contribute to the solution of a problem or task
Identify resource materials useful in the solution of a problem
Delegate responsibility for completion of a task
Motivate and lead people
Organize people and tasks to achieve specific goals

Personal/Career development skills: ability to...

Analyze and learn from life experiences, both one's own and others'
Relate the skills developed in one's environment
Match knowledge about one's own characteristics and abilities to information about job or career opportunities
Identify, describe, and assess the relative importance of one's needs, values, interests, strengths, and weaknesses
Develop personal growth goals that are motivating
Identify and describe skills acquired through formal education and general life experience
Accept and learn from constructive criticism
Generate trust and confidence in others