

• Article • Personal

Top 20 Skills You Need To Develop Your Career

👤 BY EVA CHRISTODOULOU

📅 AUG 02, 2022 • 10 MIN READ



Source: Vector image is from freepik.com by @jcomp.

Skills You Need to Hone to be Successful in Your Career

What is it that truly differentiates one candidate from another during the application process? Whether we are talking about the stage involving the vetting of resumes or the interview stage, certain qualities are increasingly

taking centre stage in the mind of recruiters. They are looking for such qualities in potential hires.

For jobseekers who want to remain a step ahead of the pack, it's important to know what the most wanted skills are in today's workplace.

Research on what HR experts believe are the most important skills indicates that we are moving away from a mind-set that potential employees should have the technical know-how and the right academic qualifications. Even though the latter is an inevitable prerequisite, the emphasis has shifted.

In today's world, employers and recruiters have realised that it is much easier to train smart individuals how to perform the specifics of any role. This is as long as they have already acquired a much harder-to-teach skill set. This skill set comprises the likes of critical thinking, soft skills, and some basic competency in a few areas of expertise.

If you want to get the job of your dreams therefore, or excel in the career you are already following, have a look at the skills below, assess where you stand, and find a way to polish the areas you are not doing so well in.

1 COMMUNICATION SKILLS (LISTENING, SPEAKING AND WRITING)

Communication skills are perhaps the first set of skills that potential employers will notice. From the initial moment you get in touch with them, the employer will be scrutinising the way you behave.

Be it the way you talk over the phone, the way you give them information on email, your resume and cover letter, or the way you carry yourself during the interview, they will be assessing whether you have polished communication skills.

Make sure that you proof read any form of written communication you send them, and take your time to listen to what they ask you (or read their

instructions carefully), and answer in well-thought out, grammatically correct sentences. The way you communicate your thoughts should be impeccable, as this is the way they expect you to communicate with colleagues and clients alike throughout your tenure in their organisation.

2 ANALYTICAL AND RESEARCH SKILLS

As much as you think a question/problem presented to you is a piece of cake, be very wary of giving a rushed answer. Take the time to analyse the situation, think of all possible scenarios, and if possible ask for some time to go and do some research to find out more.

Being analytical, but also having strong research skills, differentiates one employee from the other. It demonstrates your determination, your ability to assess different scenarios, and your commitment to be 100% sure before giving an answer to your employer. It could mean the difference between a badly thought out idea and something that may gain the company a huge profit!

3 FLEXIBILITY/ADAPTABILITY

An ability to manage multiple assignments at the same time, and being flexible enough to work under ever changing conditions, management, environment and rules is highly appreciated.

In today's world, a job description is very fluid, and can change shape at any time. An employee that is willing to work under a multitude of changing circumstances is highly sought after.

Being able to adapt from one working environment to the next, or even from one type of assignment to another, is a big advantage. It demonstrates the individual's commitment to the organisation, and will influence their career progression.

4 INTERPERSONAL ABILITIES

“No man is an island”. So the saying goes. Increasingly in the workplace, we all have to work with others in order to complete a project.

Be it working in a team, or dealing with clients or suppliers, interpersonal abilities is a definite advantage and something employers always look for.

The ability to build relationships with those around you under any circumstances, and the ability to inspire them to do what needs to be done is essential.

5 ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS AND SOLVE PROBLEMS

Decision making and problem solving is another skill that is high in demand. The ability to identify complex problems and review related information in order to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions, can distinguish one employee from another. The ability to use critical thinking to rationalise a decision will set an individual apart.

6 ABILITY TO PLAN, ORGANISE AND PRIORITISE WORK

Simple as it may sound, an individual that can show that he/she has been able to plan and organise their work is very valuable. Pay special attention to the way you plan your tasks, and ensure you keep up with all the deadlines you are given.

An employee that can stick to assigned timelines and can provide pieces of information with ease and speed indicates that he/she remains on top of things and can always be expected to deliver the required task or information. Similarly, knowing which tasks to prioritise and which ones to leave for later is an important skill.

7 ABILITY TO WEAR MULTIPLE HATS

Theoretically, when someone is offered a job, there is a job description included in the contract. In reality however, employees are not expected to stick to only

what is under their job description.

On the contrary, they are expected to get involved in other areas of the business, understand all the different steps, and offer help where necessary. At the end of the day, employers look for someone willing to try out different things, and wear multiple hats at the same time, deal with different projects and individuals, and provide more than one sole contribution at a time to the company.

8 LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT SKILLS

The ability to manage people is a very powerful skill. Not only can you inspire individuals to do what is right, you can guide them along the way, and you can monitor their progress in every step. Being able to lead a group and manage these individuals in a way that does not impede their progress and insult their judgement is highly desirable in today's workplace.

With Gen Yers taking over the work place, and their strong desire to be left alone to do what they have to do, it is essential to have managers that know how to lead and manage their teams in a way that leaves all employees room to come up with their own ways of doing things. Exhibiting strong management/leadership skills is therefore a big advantage in today's working world.

9 ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Even though many may think that the bigger picture is more important than the tiny details, attention to detail is what will make someone stand out at what they do. Paying attention to detail may save the company a lot of hassle and possibly keep the distance from a catastrophic outcome.

10 SELF-CONFIDENCE

Being self-confident exudes an aura that can convince those you work for (or with) that you know what you are doing. If you do not believe in yourself, your

skills and abilities, then you cannot expect anyone else to believe in you. You need to be confident with yourself and ensure everyone sees you as someone that has the ability to pull through whatever situation comes your way.

Read more: [4 Skills You Need To Navigate The Gig Economy](#)

11 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Why is it that those that are brilliant at memorising information, solving complex mathematical problems, or reciting Shakespearean plays do not always do well in the business space? Why is it that if they have to stand in front of a crowd and argue a case, they tend to flush and lose it?

Public speaking is a very crucial skill to have, which requires a lot of self-confidence, practice, and analysing of your audience. Even though it comes naturally to some people, it is definitely a skill that can be acquired, and it is a skill sought after by employers.

After all, when you meet clients, you represent the company as a whole. It is only fair that they would rather hire someone that can carry themselves well while expressing the values and products of the company.

12 TACTFULNESS

Being tactful is necessary in many situations, when dealing with clients, as well as colleagues.

No matter how much you believe you are right about something, or that it may be more useful for your colleague to know exactly what you think, realise that not everyone reacts the same way to different styles of confrontation.

It is important for individuals to know how and when to deal with various issues that may crop up in the working environment, whether they are dealing with clients, colleagues, or supervisors.

13 CREATIVITY

Being creative can be beneficial to any role you may have in the workplace. It involves the ability to find solutions to problems using creativity, reasoning and past experience, coupled with information and resources.

Using innovative ways to improve workflows and processes in the work place, or finding a new way to process a piece of work can change the company's dynamics, save time and cost, and even improve the quality of products/services.

14 ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Integrity and well-founded moral values should be highly-respected in the work place. Even though many scandals appear with black sheep here and there, it is essential for employees to maintain their values and integrity at all costs.

Honesty and sticking to your values will definitely repay in the long run. An untainted reputation after all is what will help you move up the career ladder.

15 STRONG WORK ETHIC

Employers always look for employees that are passionate about what they do and are very committed to their assignments. They need to be assured that their employees will keep at a problem until it is solved, and they will do what is necessary to complete all tasks.

Arriving at work on time and willingness to work and take responsibility are basic indicators of an employee's commitment. These factors can show whether an employee is cut out for a specific role.

This might interest you: [140 Top CEOs Identify Crucial Skills And Mindsets For Future](#)

16 ABILITY TO ACCEPT AND LEARN FROM CRITICISM

If a person demonstrates an attitude that is appreciative of feedback, it can be deduced that he/she is willing to learn. Irrespective of age and experience, everyone is constantly learning at the workplace, and one should always remain open to new information that can enhance their skills and abilities.

Jobs are constantly changing and evolving, and employees of all ranks should show that they are open to growing and learning, either by experiencing new situations, by training, or even by listening and learning from criticism.

17 SALES AND MARKETING

Knowledge of the principles and methods of promoting, presenting and selling products and services is essential, no matter what your role is in a company. At any given point in time, you might be faced with an opportunity to promote your company and its products or services to people you meet.

It could be simply promoting these to a friend or acquaintance, or it could be in a more formal environment where you are pulled in for a meeting or project. Knowledge of at least basic marketing strategy as well as a range of sales techniques and sales control systems may come in handy.

18 COMPUTER AND ELECTRONICS SKILLS

Almost all jobs nowadays require some basic understanding of computers and electronics in general. As we move to rely more on technology to help us conduct our daily tasks, be it communicating, writing, calculating, presenting, drawing, creating sound, and many others, we may need in the work place, we are being pushed towards the need to understand circuit boards, processors, electronic equipment and computers.

19 MATHEMATICS

Even if your job has nothing to do with mathematics, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, calculus, and statistics, basic knowledge of these may become necessary at some stage.

Refreshing your knowledge of mathematics often is an essential part of keeping your competitive advantage in the job market. Statistics in particular may come in handy, as many a time you might need to produce some graphs and figures by analysing quantitative data.

20 PROGRAMMING

Computer programming may be seen as a skill that only needs to be mastered by the few IT experts in an organisation. However, knowledge, even at a basic level of computer programming may come in handy if you are trying to develop a new programme that you hope may help your department in the way you process information.

Imagine, for example, that you are working in the HR department of the company and want to come up with a system that monitors and evaluates the progress, performance and salaries of all employees.



Login



Themes ▾ Articles Podcasts Videos Our Services

Ready to jump to a new workplace in Malaysia? Register and browse for job opportunities [here](#).

This article was first published in [Leaderonomics.com](#) and has been featured by the STAR newspaper and other STAR subsidiaries

Leaderonomics.com is an advertisement free website. Your continuous support and trust in us allows us to curate, deliver and upkeep the maintenance of our website. When you support us, you allow millions to continue reading for free on our website. Will you give today? Click [here](#) to support us.

SHARE THIS



PERSONAL • TAGS: HR, Self-Agency, Self Leadership

Eva Christodoulou [in](#) [✉](#)



Eva was formerly the Research & Development leader at Leaderonomics. Prior to that, she was an editor at Leaderonomics.com. Today, she is the Product leader of Happily, an engagement app at Leaderonomics Digital. She believes that everyone can be the leader they would like to be, if they are willing to put in the effort and are curious to learn along the way, as well as with some help from the people around them.

[◀ Previous Article](#)

[Next Article ▶](#)

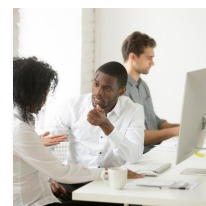
COMMENTS (0)



You May Also Like

• [Article](#) • [Personal](#)

How To Have A Courageous Conversation With Your Boss?



BY MICHELLE GIBBINGS. An age old problem many young professionals face is how to have open conversations with their boss. The difference in power dynamics can be understandably intimidating, but honest communication can be worth your while. Learn how to artfully navigate these conversations by reading this article.

• Podcast • Personal

Why Don't Men Talk About Real Struggles?

Host Nigesh Armon dives deep into the topic of gender by exploring the question of 'Why Don't Men Talk About Real Struggles?' in the first episode of Talk To Me, a podcast series brought to you by Necole.



JAN 06, 2021 • 62 MIN PODCAST

• Video • Personal

Two Signs to Find Clarity In Your Life Direction

Are you at a crossroad where you need clarity for your life direction? While we cannot control every element in our lives, there are two signs that you should be alert to. Watch this video where you can learn about these intersections and how you can find clarity in your life



FEB 28, 2022 • 1 MIN VIDEO

Be a Leader's Digest Reader

Your Name

Your Email

 **Subscribe Now**

How to find clarity in your life direction
Nigesh Armon and Necole

Wow, you scrolled all the way to the bottom! You must really like us.

Since you're here, we'd like to ask you to consider donating to the maintenance and upkeep of our site, which as it turns out is pretty expensive.

Many do not have access to the resources needed to bring out their full leadership potential. That is why our content will always be free, and we would be forever grateful to those who help make that possible.

Earn your one-way ticket to heaven.

Home

About Us

The Team

Get Involved

Contact

© 2024 Leaderonomics Sdn. Bhd. (Company No. 200701005019 (763018-A))
All rights reserved.

[Privacy Policy](#) • [Terms and Conditions](#) • [RSS](#)

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed on this website are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.