

Module 1: Skills Identification

Skills Check List Activity

Directions: There are literally thousands of work specific skills required in the work world. It would be impossible to list them all! What follows is a list of some of the more common skills that can be used in a variety of work settings. They are divided into two groups: transferable skills and personal management skills.

Part 1: Read through the following list of skills and put a checkmark beside each skill at which you are competent. Competent means that you are able to perform the activity as well as most people. You don't have to be an expert at it to check off a skill.

Part 2: Go back through the list of skills and decide which ones are your top five transferable skills and which ones are your top five personal management skills. Record your answers at the end of this document in the space provided.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS		
Numerical Skills		
	Counting	Determining how many items there are in a group
X	Calculating	Using basic arithmetic; adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing
X	Measuring	Using tools or equipment to determine length, angle, volume or weight
	Estimating	Judging the cost or size of things; predicting the outcome of an arithmetic, problem before it is calculate
	Budgeting	Planning how you will spend money, deciding what buy and how much to spend or how to get the work done at the lowest cost
X	Using numerical reasoning	Understanding how to work with numbers or statistics; knowing how to read data and interpret statistics
Communication Skills		
X	Reading	Getting information from written materials, following written instructions
X	Writing	Using good grammar to write clear sentences and paragraphs
X	Speaking (in public)	Delivering a speech in front of an audience
X	Listening	Paying close attention to whatever the other person is saying and responding appropriately
	Questioning	Asking the right questions to get useful information from others or to help them gain insight
	Explaining	Being careful and clear about what you are telling people about things so they can understand you quickly and easily
X	Resolving conflict	Bringing a conflict to a successful conclusion
	Persuading	Convincing others to do what you want
X	Negotiating	Bargaining with others to solve a problem or reach an agreement
X	Teaching	Instructing others
X	Chairing Meetings	Presiding over a group of people who come together for a purpose; listening, speaking, encouraging discussion, and following an agenda

Interpersonal Skills		
X	Getting along	Demonstrating respect and caring about the feelings of others; being considerate
X	Using tact	Displaying discretion and diplomacy, particularly in dealing with sensitive issues
X	Supporting	Helping others with their problems; supporting other's decisions and initiatives
	Accepting authority	Being able to work under supervision
X	Respecting differences	Appreciating diversity; accepting the uniqueness of individuals
	Working on a team	Cooperating with others to accomplish a common goal
X	Stating opinions	Having the confidence and assertiveness to state your views, give your ideas, etc
Leadership Skills		
	Making decisions	Choosing a course of action and accepting responsibility for the consequences
X	Directing/supervising	Overseeing or managing the work of others and accepting responsibility for their performance
X	Initiating	Taking the first step; getting things started
X	Confronting	Telling others things they may not want to hear about their behavior, habits, etc
X	Interviewing	Questioning people to gather information
	Planning	Developing projects or ideas through systematic preparation, and deciding in which order and at what time events will occur
	Organizing	Coordinating the people and resources necessary to put a plan into effect
	Coaching	Providing one-one or small group assistance to help others achieve a goal
X	Feedback	Providing individuals with accurate descriptions of their work, behavior, appearance, etc
Logical Thinking Skills		
X	Problem solving	Identifying a problem, generating alternatives, selecting and seeking a solution
	Investigating/researching	Gathering information in an organized way to determine facts or principles
X	Analyzing	Breaking a problem into its parts so that each part can be examined
X	Synthesizing	Putting facts and ideas together in new and creative ways; finding new ways to look at problems or do things
X	Assessing	Accurately estimating or evaluating the nature of a situation or an issue
Helping Skills		
	Serving	Caring, doing things for others; providing a service when others are in need
	Treating/intervening	Relieving a person's physical or psychological problems
	Cooperating	Working with others to reach a common goal; working as part of a team to complete a task
X	Facilitating	Making it easier for others to accomplish a task (i.e. coordinating group discussion to reach a decision)
	Advising/counselling	Helping others cope with their personal, emotional, educational, and work concerns by providing information and helping them deal with their concerns

Technical Skills		
X	Using computers	Understanding and performing basic computer operations
X	Operating equipment	Using a variety of tools, machines and communication devices
X	Maintaining equipment	Conducting routine maintenance and adjusting equipment to ensure it is working properly
X	Constructing	Using a variety of tools and resources in building and/or maintenance
X	Measuring	Using devices to ensure that the exact size or capacity is achieved according to defined standards
X	Troubleshooting	Assessing and identifying malfunctions, making necessary repairs
Creative Capabilities		
X	Creating/inventing	Coming up with new ideas or ways of doing things
	Designing/displaying	Dealing creatively with spaces, products, objects, colours or images
X	Improvising/adapting	Making changes or modifications to get the job done; finding new and creative ways to accomplish tasks
	Performing/entertaining	Using your talents to hold the attention of an audience
	Drawing/painting/sculpting	Conveying feelings or thoughts through works of art in a variety of media
	Writing/playwriting/composing	Creating original materials to entertain, educate
Organization Skills		
X	Managing information	Maintaining records of inventory, budgets or other data
X	Filing	Sorting information into an organized system
X	Following	Taking direction and completing assigned tasks
	Scheduling	Keeping track of projects, timetables, itineraries, etc
	Coordinating	Mobilizing people and/or materials in an orderly manner

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Time Management Approaches		
X	Determining priorities	Assessing activities and doing what is important first
	Scheduling	Predicting how much time things will take; setting time frames for activities
	Recording	Using planners such as calendars and appointment books to keep track of activities
	Assessing	Reviewing how time has been used and making changes that will increase efficiency
	Adjusting	Revising your schedule to accommodate changes and unexpected events
X	Being timely	Completing work on time/meeting project deadlines; arriving at class, meetings, appointments on time; responding to correspondence, messages, etc in a reasonable amount of time

Money Management		
	Setting goals	Deciding how you want to manage you money
	Knowing your financial resources	Knowing your financial assets and debts
	Knowing monthly income and expenses	Including the basics, small purchases, and larger long term purchase
	Planning	Developing a budget tailored to your life and work situation
Organization Skills		
X	Organizing your work site	Keeping your work area neat and clean; taking care of tools, materials and equipment
X	Organizing information	Keeping files or bingers of information organized
Self-As-Business Skills		
	Assessing quality	Determining the merit or worth of work you are performing
X	Adapting	Adjusting to life/work changes and being prepared for the unexpected
X	Risk taking	Taking chances based on your assessment of a situation; making decisions and taking action when you are not sure what will be the outcome
	Learning	Using a variety of methods and techniques to acquire needed skills, knowledge and attitudes
X	Building relationships	Developing and participating in a variety of associations with others, inside and outside the workplace
	Collaborating	Cooperating with others inside and outside the workplace to achieve shared outcomes
X	Visioning	Imagining or forming a mental image of something and determining the steps required to move it forward
X	Personal Marketing	Presenting your assets in ways that will enhance your work and/or your ability to obtain work
X	Tracking trends	Using a number of information sources to follow changes that will affect your life/work

Part 2

My top five transferable skills are <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Calculating 2. Using tact 3. Problem solver 4. Using computers 5. Troubleshooting 	My top five personal management skills are <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizing my work site 2. Adapting 3. Risk taking 4. Visioning 5. Personal marketing
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Adapted from *Skills Plus Handbook: Discovering your Personal Career Asses*, Government of Alberta, p. 9-10.

Motivated Skills Sort Activity

Directions: Take the 20 skills from the skills table and categorize into the following groups. Each column should contain skills as we don't use our skills with the same level and enthusiasm.

Skills Table

Skill	Definition	Skill	Definition
Multitask	To effectively manage a variety of tasks and projects simultaneously	Adapt to Change	Easily and quickly respond to changing assignments, work settings and priorities
Write	Compose reports, letters, articles, ads, stories, or educational materials	Work with Numbers	Easily calculate, compute, organize, understand and solve numerical an quantitative problems.
Manage Time	Ability to prioritize, structure, and schedule tasks to maximize effort and meet deadlines.	Computer Literate	Develop, organize, and complete tasks and projects using software programs such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel
Evaluate	Assess, review, critique feasibility or quality	Plan, Organize	Define goals and objectives, schedule and develop projects or programs
Analyze	Break down and figure out problems logically	Make Decisions	Make major, complex, or frequent decisions
Team Work	Easily and effectively work with others to obtain results	Motivate	Recruit involvement, mobilize energy, stimulate peak performance.
Read for Information	Research written resources efficiently and exhaustively.	Proofread, Edit	Check writings for proper usage and stylistic flair, make improvements.
Delegate	Achieve effective results by assigning tasks to others.	Deal with Feelings	Draw out, listen, accept, empathize, express sensitivity, calm, appreciate.
Estimate	Appraise value or cost	Visualize	Imagine possibilities
Sell	Promote a person, company, goods, or services, convince of merits	Customer Service	Effectively solve problems and challenges that satisfy customers

These skills I have total delight in using and am highly proficient	These skills I like using and am competent	These skills I prefer not to use and I lack the desired skill level.
<i>i.e. multi task</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze Delegate Adapt to change Work with numbers Computer literate Proofread, edit Visualize Customer service 	<i>i.e. read for information</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-task Evaluate Read for information Sell Plan, organize Make decisions Motivate Deal with feelings 	<i>i.e. sell</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write Manage time Teamwork Estimate

Favourite Things Activity

Part 1: Reflect on up to 12 things that you like to do. Place those answers in the first column under the question. For each favourite thing that is listed in the first column, answer the other questions as it relates to that favourite thing.

What are up to 12 things you like to do?	How long since you did each of these things?	Does it cost money (M) or is it free (F)?	Is it planned (P) or spontaneous (S)?	Do you do it alone (A) or with others (O)?	Does it involve mind (M), spirit (S), emotion (E), or combination (C)?
<i>i.e. Play soccer</i>	<i>Two months ago</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>C</i>
1 Swim	A year ago	F	P	O	M
2 Play trombone	A year ago	F (now)	P	O	C
3 Socialize	Today	M	S	O	C
4 Watch movies	Today	M	S	A	C
5 Cook/Bake	Two weeks ago	M	P	A	M
6 Coding	Two months ago	M	P	A	M
7 Crafts	Today	F	P	A	S
8 Sew	Six months ago	M	P	A	S
9 Hiking	A week ago	F	P	O	S
10					
11					
12					

Part 2: Pick two of your favourite things from the list. For each thing, reflect on the skills you would use in order to do that role. Add the skills in the table. Please include 3-5 skills for each favourite thing.

Favourite Thing 1: Socialize	Favourite Thing 2: Crafts
Skills that I use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict resolution • Planning • Supporting • Respecting differences 	Skills that I use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing • Problem solving • Resource gathering • Workspace organization • Creating/inventing

Part 3: When reviewing your favourite things you like to do are there common skills that you use in order to do those favourite things? If yes, write them in the space below.

Common Skills from my Favourite Things: Planning, creativity, problem solving

Showing your Benefit Activity

Whether you are writing your resume or being interviewed, it is not good enough to make generalized statements to an employer. Making a generalization (a statement that implies rather than giving facts, specifics, and information) to a prospective employer is risky unless you back it up with evidence. To convince an employer of your worth, you must give specifics. How do you prove to an employer that you are dependable, flexible, able to cope with technological change, etc? An effective way of presenting yourself is to prepare some carefully constructed, well-thought out statements of your skills with examples that illustrate them. These are called benefit statements.

A good benefit statement has three parts: It begins with a statement of your skill, ability, knowledge, etc. It then gives examples of when and where you demonstrated or learned it, in other words, proof that you actually have it. The key selling factor of a benefit statement the third part: informing the employer how and why it will be benefit them. In order to do this, you must put yourself in the pace of the employer. If you were the employer and this were your company, what would help you to be profitable and successful?

The more explicit you can be, the better. Give facts, figures, quantitative evidence of your knowledge or experience in the stated area. Don't simply restate the ability you have in part one. When you tell the employers, your ability will benefit them, remember that the bottom line for all companies is saving time and making money. How could your skill of problem solving, for instance, save them time and money? Try to relate the sill directly to what their specialized needs are.

Directions: For the following skills statements, identify an experience that demonstrates your ability to use this skill and briefly describe how that is a benefit to the employer. See next page.

Skill Statement	Experience	Benefit to the Employer
<i>I am a detail-oriented person</i>	<i>When I was working for ABC, I followed step by step procedures and schematics. I troubleshoot and pinpointed problems on systems.</i>	<i>I will follow instructions to the detail, thereby saving time by doing things correctly the first time. This is a benefit to any employer, as not following instructions and having to do things over is costly in terms of profit and time.</i>
<i>One of my greatest strengths is excellent communication skills. I can express myself clearly, both orally and in writing</i>	<i>At ABC Insurance, where I worked for two summers, I was responsible for dealing directly with the customers who were filing claims. I was able to assist them, over the phone and in person in an effective manner by listening carefully and then transcribing the information correctly for the claims adjusters. This saved time and kept the customers happy because their claims were quickly identified and handled</i>	<i>I believe you would find this skill very useful in your business because listening to the customer and identifying what he or she needs is critical to good business and repeat business.</i>
1. I have great interpersonal skills	Working at Big Eric's I sat at the front desk. I answered phone calls with customer questions and concerns, as well as helping customers in the showroom with any difficulties, and remained calm with unhappy customers. We had refreshments available and many resources upstairs, so my main job was waiting with the customers and offering fancy coffee and baked goods while a Sales Representative came downstairs to meet with them.	I believe good customer service is important because it represents the company, and I will listen to the customers thoughts and suggestions and do everything I can to resolve their issue.
2. I have leadership skills	I have volunteered in a Vice President position where I oversaw fundraiser planning. I lead the different teams in setting up, set the schedule of the event, and made sure things were going smoothly during the event. I succeeded in raising the necessary funds and heard good things from peers about the fundraiser afterwards.	I can determine what needs to be done to achieve a goal, and effectively delegate the necessary steps to teams who work together under my supervision. It is important to have strong leadership to get things done, and coordinate teams efficiently.
3. I have analytical and logical thinking skills	Big Eric's sells a lot of different restaurant-grade equipment and janitorial equipment. Many customers came in to find a solution to their kitchen/cleaning problems, and I assisted in searching for the right product for	It is beneficial for employers to have a team that can satisfy customers' needs effectively by assessing their request and choosing the best option. I can find the logical choice for the customer, with the right fit, style, and price for them.

	the job. Often, I would have to take measurements and search the database for different items, that may or may not have been intended for this use.	
4. I have strong critical thinking skills	At Big Eric's I created displays presenting our featured products. I had to determine where to position each piece of the display to catch the eye of patrons in the showroom.	Knowing how to promote products visually is important for any job regardless of if it is in a showroom or not. Presenting company assets in the best way and deciding how and what is promoted is essential to help grow your business and serve customers' needs most efficiently.
5. Problem solving skills are one of my strengths	I often troubleshoot any issues with my computer and equipment at work and school. My friends and family know they can always come to me if they are having trouble with their electronics or internet (and how confusing it is sometimes).	Proficiency with technology is an asset in any field now, as it expands into everything we do and increases productivity for many tasks. As I intend to enter the technology sector, it is more than expected to be proficient, but as I work towards that goal, I am happy to help others with any issues they have with technology as much as I can.

This is the last activity for Module 1: Skills Identification. Please move to Module 2: Cover Letter Writing module located in Moodle.