SELF-IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS

The following exercise will help you discover and articulate the full range of your skills. This exercise will be particularly helpful if you are considering making a career change, interested in identifying areas of development, or having difficulty articulating what you are really good at.

You will need to think about what you have done in your life—at work, at school, part-time and full-time jobs; as a volunteer and in your leisure time. Think about what you have learned over the years through all the experiences you have had in different areas. In today's working climate it is unlikely that you will find a job that is the same as your previous employment. For most of us, a new job will be totally different from what we have done in the past. So it is very meaningful for a successful job seeker to carefully decide how their skills transfer into other opportunities. It is also important for the job seeker to know how to sell these transferable skills to a prospective employer. The following activity will help you accomplish this goal.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS INVENTORY

Some people have trouble determining the difference between the skills they have acquired and the duties they have carried out. Duties are functions that you did as part of an activity, while skills are the tools you use to accomplish these functions. Listed below is an inventory of skills that are transferable from one job to another, from one employer to another and from one occupation to another.

In evaluating each skill, recall a situation in which you demonstrated the skill. If you are not sure whether you have a skill, think about how others would describe you. Below is a list of broad skill areas which are divided into more specific skills. Read each skill listed and rate your enjoyment and feelings of satisfaction in using the skill on a scale of 1-5, 1 being no ability, 5 being strong ability

Communication

The skillful expression, transmission and interpretation of knowledge and ideas.

1= no ability, 5 = strong ability

		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Listening attentively – answer questions, provide information, accept input					
2.	Speaking effectively					
3.	Facilitating group discussion					
4.	Persuading – give recommendations, convince others to adopt your ideas					
5.	Editing					
6.	Describing feelings					
7.	Read or speak another language					
8.	Negotiating – settle disagreement, or help others to see all sides of situation					
9.	Having compelling sales approach					
10.	Writing concisely – correspondence, reports and technical or specialized documents					
11.	Expressing ideas confidently and creatively					
12.	Providing appropriate feedback					
13.	Communicate electronically – web, e-mail to present and exchange information					
14.	Reporting information					
15.	Interviewing people to obtain information					
16.	Perceiving nonverbal messages					
17.	Translating complex ideas into everyday language					
18.	Handling complaints in person, over phone					
19.	Conveying a positive self-image.					
20.	Responding to non-verbal cues.					
21.	Developing rapport easily with groups of people.					
22.	Expressing feelings through body language.					
23.	Using body language that makes others comfortable					
24.	Establishing culture to support learning					
25.	Modeling behaviour or concepts to others					
26.	Promoting concepts through a variety of media					
27.						
28.						
29.						

Research / Planning / Analyzing

The search for specific knowledge and the ability to conceptualize future needs and solutions for meeting those needs.

1= no ability, 5 = strong ability   1   2   3   4   5

		1	2	3	4	5
30.	Identifying problems					
31.	Identifying resources					
32.	Investigating and record finding					
33.	Interpreting underlying themes from complex information					
34.	Gathering information					
35.	Extracting important information					
36.	Working diligently and patiently					
37.	Managing obstacles—be persistent and resourceful					
38.	Integrating efforts of others					
39.	Writing analysis of study and research					
40.	Studying data or behaviour for meaning and solutions					
41.	Systematizing information and results					
42.	Formulating insightful and relevant questions					
43.	Interviewing primary sources					
44.	Compiling numerical and statistical data					
45.	Patiently search for hard-to-find sources					
46.	Imagining alternatives					
47.	Creating ideas					
48.	Developing evaluation strategies					
49.	Determining a hierarchy of tasks even when not given a designated starting point					
50.	Setting goals					
51.	Defining needs					
52.	Use the web to conduct research					
53.	Delegating effectively to make best use of others' skills					
54.	Forecasting, predicting - thinking ahead and contingency planning					
55.	Analyzing quantitative, physical and/or scientific data					
56.	Comparing and evaluating information					
57.	Applying curiosity					
58.	Using technology for statistical analysis					
59.	Hypothesizing and testing for results					
60.	Classifying and sorting information into categories					
61.						
62.						
63.						

Human Relations / Interpersonal / Developing / Coaching

The use of interpersonal skills for resolving conflict, relating to and helping others.

1= no ability, 5 = strong ability

		1	2	3	4	5
64.	Conveying a sense of humour					
65.	Encouraging, empowering, advocating for people					
66.	Expressing feelings appropriately					
67.	Adjusting plans for the unexpected					
68.	Listening carefully to communication					
69.	Gaining trust and respect of others					
70.	Perceiving feelings, situations					
71.	Relating to diverse people					
72.	Caring for and serving people; rehabilitate heal					
73.	Helping people make their own decisions					
74.	Knowledge of self-help theories and programs					
75.	Mediating peace between conflicting parties					
76.	Facilitate self-awareness in others					
77.	Conducting needs assessments					
78.	Developing educational curriculum and materials					
79.	Creating and administering evaluation plan					
80.	Consulting and recommending solutions					
81.	Explaining different ideas, complex topics					
82.	Anticipate people's needs and reactions					
83.	Processing human interactions, understand others					
84.	Creating positive, hospitable environment					
85.	Facilitating conflict management					
86.	Counselling, advising, consulting, guiding others					
87.	Mediating / resolving conflicts / building consensus					
88.	Using intuition to understand and respond to the work environment and people's needs					
89.	Networking / building relationships					
90.	Demonstrating empathy, sensitivity and patience					
91.	Helping others improve health and welfare					
92.	Coaching, guiding, encouraging individuals to achieve goals					
93.	Listening empathically and with objectivity					
94.	Teaching, advising, coaching, empowering					
95.	Using a variety of media for presentation					
96.	Assessing learning styles and responding accordingly					
97.						

Organization / Management / Leadership

The ability to supervise, direct and guide individuals and groups in the completion of tasks and fulfillment of goals.

1= no ability, 5 = strong ability

		1	2	3	4	5
98.	Identifying and organizing tasks or information					
99.	Coordinating people, activities and details					
100.	Creating guidelines for implementing an action					
101.	Creating efficient systems					
102.	Arranging correct sequence of information and actions					
103.	Identifying and organizing tasks or information					
104.	Anticipate problems and respond with solutions					
105.	Developing a plan and set objectives					
106.	Developing realistic goals and action to attain them					
107.	Developing and facilitating work teams					
108.	Adjusting plans/procedures for the unexpected					
109.	Communicating well with diverse groups					
110.	Envisioning the future and lead change					
111.	Assessing and evaluating your own work as well as that of coworkers					
112.	Developing and mentoring talent					
113.	Setting goals and determining courses of action					
114.	Managing personnel, projects and time					
115.	Facilitating conflict management					
116.	Increasing productivity and efficiency to achieve goals					
117.	Providing training for development of staff					
118.	Fostering a sense of ownership in employees					
119.	Utilizing technology to facilitate management					
120.	Remaining flexible—see obstacles as a challenge rather than a setback					
121.	Establishing policy					
122.	Motivating/inspiring others to achieve common goals					
123.	Communicating well with all levels of the organization					
124.	Encouraging the use of technology at all levels					
125.						
126.						
127.						

Problem Solving

The use of interpersonal skills for resolving conflict, relating to and helping others.

		1= no ability, 5 = strong ability	1	2	3	4	5
128.	Identifying and diagnosing a problem to get at the root						
129.	Identifying several solutions to the same problem and choose the appropriate alternative						
130.	Initiating projects, interventions, programs						
131.	Taking personal responsibility for decisions						
132.	Analyzing problems						
133.	Defining and expanding issues						
134.	Setting and attaining goals						
135.	Developing innovative, effective solutions to complex problems						
136.	Creating new ways to solve on-going concerns—subvert the dominant paradigm						
137.	Making decisions and following through						
138.	Dealing with ambiguity						
139.	Grappling with abstract issues						
140.	Innovative—thinking "outside the box"						
141.	Using critical judgment to determine cause and effect relationships						
142.							
143.							
144.							

Miscellaneous Categories

		1= no ability, 5 = strong ability	1	2	3	4	5

Time Management

145.	Prioritizing to best meet customer / organization needs						
146.	Establishing achievable goals and objectives						
147.	Working effectively under pressure / demanding deadlines						
148.	Balancing work and personal life						

Learning and Professional Expertise

149.	Developing new skills and knowledge to remain leading-edge						
150.	Staying current.						
151.	Expert in field						
152.	Developing new skills and knowledge to remain leading-edge						

Thinking

153.	Seeing the "big picture"						
154.	Conceptualizing ideas, models, relationships						
155.	Thinking strategically						

156. Integrating and synthesizing information from different sources

Create and Innovate

157. Visualize concepts and results
158. Intuiting strategies and solutions
159. Executing colour, shape and form
160. Brainstorming and making use of group synergy
161. Communicate with metaphors
162. Inventing products through experimentation
163. Remember faces, accurate spatial
164. Creating images through sketches, sculptures, etc.

Entrepreneurship/ Business Development

165. Identifying and capitalizing on opportunities
166. Developing new products / services to meet emerging needs
167. Actively seeking new opportunities
168. Generating income

Cost Sensitivity

169. Preparing budgets, computing costs, etc.
170. Establishing cost controls
171. Managing activities to stay within budget
172. Increasing profitability by reducing overhead
173.
174.
175.

SKILLS SUMMARY

After completing this exercise, review each category and prioritize the characteristics from that list, that you gave a score of 3 (strong ability). Record the top three (3) characteristics from each category, onto the corresponding category below.

Communication:
1.
2.
3.

Researching / Planning / Analyzing:
1.
2.
3.

Human Relations / Interpersonal / Developing / Coaching:
1.
2.
3.

Organization / Management / Leadership:
1.
2.
3.

Problem Solving:
1.
2.
3.

Miscellaneous Categories:
1.
2.
3.

Top 5 Skills

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Strongest Skills

Look at the category heading e.g., Communication, Problem-solving, Leading… under which most of your strongest skills fall, along with your deepest sense of satisfaction. Using these skills represents your greatest opportunity for optimizing career satisfaction and effectiveness.

Skills for Development

Skills I really enjoy using but am not very good at:

I may be able to improve these skills:

SKILLS EMPLOYERS ARE SEEKING

A profile developed by HRDC identified the following skills as those most desired by Canadian employers

Positive attitudes and behaviours
Including confidence, self-esteem, honesty, integrity, a positive attitude towards growth, initiative, and the energy to get the job done.

Responsibility
Including the ability to set goals and priorities, the ability to plan and manage resources (including time and money), and personal accountability.

Adaptability
Including a positive attitude towards change, respect for people's differences, and the ability to come up with new ideas.

Teamwork Ability
Including the ability to understand and contribute to the organization's goals, the ability to work in a group, the ability to lead others, and the ability to make decisions with the support of others.

Communication Skills
Including the ability to listen, to read written materials including graphs and charts, to write effectively in the language in which the business is conducted, and to speak clearly and understandably.

Thinking Skills
Including the ability to think critically, evaluate situations, solve problems, make decision, use mathematics, use technology and information systems effectively, and continue to learn for life.

The Conference Board of Canada provides additional information on employability skills below:
http://www.conferenceboard.ca/education/learning-tools/pdfs/esp2000.pdf
http://www.conferenceboard.ca/education/learning-tools/pdfs/ISP_brochure.pdf

As you can see, most of the skills required by Canadian employers are transferable skills. Technical skills alone are insufficient to succeed in most work settings. Therefore, if you are able to identify a solid base of both technical and transferable skills, you place yourself in higher demand.

These top skills, essential for success in the most high-powered jobs, are often learnt and perfected in ordinary situations.

COMPARE YOUR SKILLS TO WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

Compare each Transferable Skill that employers seek to your rate of enjoyment and feelings of satisfaction in using the skill (same scoring system used in the Self-Assessment).

Read each skill listed and rate your skills on a scale of 1-5, 1 being no ability, 5 being strong ability.

Transferable Skills that Employers Seek

1= no ability, 5 = strong ability	1	2	3	4	5
1. Confidence					
2. Self-esteem					
3. Honesty					
4. Integrity					
5. Positive attitude towards growth					
6. Initiative					
7. The energy to get the job done					
8. Ability to set goals and priorities					
9. Ability to plan and manage resources (i.e. time & money)					
10. Personal accountability					
11. Positive attitude towards change					
12. Respect for people's differences					
13. Ability to come up with new ideas					
14. Ability to understand and contribute to the organization's goals					
15. Ability to work in a group					
16. Ability to lead others					
17. Ability to make decisions with support of others					
18. Ability to listen					
19. Read written materials including graphs and charts					
20. Write effectively in the language in which the business is conducted					
21. Speak clearly and understandably					
22. Ability to think critically					
23. Evaluate situations					
24. Solve problems					
25. Make decisions					
26. Continue to learn for life					