



Transferable Skills Employment Skills for Life

Mature job seekers often have years of work experience that result in the development of a wide range of marketable skills. Whether these skills were obtained in paid positions, or during volunteer or other unpaid work, it is important to identify not only the job specific skills but also the "transferable skills" you offer an employer.

This tip sheet provides steps which can help you to identify your transferable skills. Be prepared to give employers examples of your transferable skills which support your experience and qualifications.

What is a "skill"?	A skill is the ability to do a task or activity. Examples of work skills include computer skills, driving skills, leadership and interpersonal skills. Having a skill means you have the competence and experience to perform that particular task or activity. A skill can be learned.
What is a "transferable skill"?	<p>Transferable skills are skills that can be used in a variety of jobs. They are often referred to as "universal" skills. They are learned skills that can be used in one job and then transferable to another. Examples include verbal and written communication skills, organizational skills, leadership, interpersonal and customer service. In the examples below, the transferable skills listed are shown in bold lettering and underlined.</p> <p>Job Posting Example: "Must demonstrate <u>attention to detail, strong organizational skills</u>, have <u>good customer service</u> skills and skills in direct automotive repair."</p> <p>Job Posting Example: "Take a <u>leadership role</u> in managing critical document files pursuant to corporate document management and storage protocols. <u>Organize, administer</u> and <u>manage</u> an online document management system with internal and external users. <u>Assist customers</u> through timely submission of reports as required.</p>
<p>Why is it important to know transferable skills? Combined with any other qualifications you possess, you can strengthen your marketability for a position by clearly communicating your transferable skills. Employers want to know if you have the skills to do their job. Leverage your application and show you are the most qualified candidate.</p>	
Step 1: List work & volunteer positions	Make a list of the positions you have had, paid or unpaid, going back 10-15 years. The more recent the skills, the more effective they are in this process.
Step 2: Identify Your Transferable Skills	<p>If you have already identified the job, career path or industry you wish to pursue, learn the skills and experience you need to become marketable in that field.</p> <p>Identify the job skills employers have specified in job postings for this career path.</p> <p>List your qualifications for the position by identifying the "transferable" skills you possess that would make you a good candidate for the targeted job.</p>
	<p>If you have not identified a career path you wish to pursue, here are a few tips to begin this process of defining transferable skills for a new career path:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a list of skills you possess. • List as many as you can; continue to build your list as you think of more skills. • Use interesting job postings and identify the skills included; determine what employers need from the postings. • The library is another resource for obtaining information on skills. • Utilize online career sites (e.g. QuintCareers.com) to identify transferable skills

**Step 3:
Prepare and practice
sharing examples of
situations in which
you actually exhibited
these skills**

When an employer seeks candidates for a specific job, that employer will state certain skills, knowledge and abilities that are either required or preferred (e.g. in a position description). Consider building a strong message around the skills you possess. Take advantage of building “skills statements” based on what you have accomplished in previous positions. You will then have the ability to demonstrate the unique strengths you would bring to the job in an interview with an employer.

Example regarding Customer Service Skills:

You wish to apply for jobs that requires customer service skills. Before your interview, prepare solid examples of when you provided "outstanding customer service". Ask yourself this question, "***Give an example of a time when you went above and beyond to provide outstanding customer service.***"

Examples of “skills statements” demonstrating your Customer Service transferable skills:

- “In my last position, I was asked to assist a specific group of clients who required immediate help. I was able to first gather the resources I needed to accomplish our goal, including assistance from peers. I then contacted each client gathering the specific information needed to remedy their problem. Once I completed the changes needed in their files and paperwork, I was able to contact each client a second time with the solution taken to resolve their case, and ensure they were satisfied with the results.”
[Transferable skills included: communications, organization, information gathering, research, solving problems, follow-through.]
- “I was given additional responsibility in my position as a Customer Service Representative that included training new CSR’s. With my years of experience, and consistently high evaluations, my supervisor felt I could provide new employees with tips on how to deal with callers in difficult situations. I was asked to develop a list of situations I had encountered over the past year and develop tips on how I was able to diffuse the situations. My supervisor told me that my trainees were 100% successful in learning the new skills and serving customers during their probationary period.”
[Transferable skills included: verbal communications, development of materials/information, creative thinking, attention to details, solving problems.]

Examples of transferable Skills:

- Leadership, self-awareness, intelligence, the ability and willingness to learn
- Communication skills, speaking, listening, reporting information, writing concisely
- Research, planning, forecasting, analysis of information, problem solving, defining needs
- Human relations, delegating, counseling
- Organizing, management, teaching, coaching, selling, managing conflict
- Listening, taking accountability, creative thinking
- Emotional awareness (know what your are feeling), empathy, emotional intelligence
- Meet deadlines, handle multiple tasks, achieve goals, adaptability
- Punctuality, time management, attention to detail, meeting goals

The following websites can provide some helpful tools for completing a skills inventory, discovering transferable skills, as well as information on the skills needed for specific jobs:

- O*NET Skills Search** www.onetonline.org/
- My Skills, My Future** www.myskillsmyfuture.org/
- Career OneStop (Skills Profilers)** www.careerinfonet.org/skills/default.aspx?nodeid=20
- Quint Careers** www.quintcareers.com
- OhioMeansJobs** www.ohiomeansjobs.com