

# Identifying Your Skills

## What is a Skill?

A skill is the ability to do something well. You develop skills through training and experience that improve your ability to perform specific tasks. Your skills will tell an employer if you have the necessary background and experiences to do a good job. Everyone has skills. What are yours?

Having a clear understanding of your skill sets will allow you to plan a more effective job search. You will have greater success by picking job openings that match what you have done before and what you already know how to do. Based on the labor market, you may find that jobs in your industry may be declining or require new skills. If you find this is the case, you may want to consider retraining. Begin with determining what an employer is looking for, matching the skills that you have learned from other jobs with their requirements. Being able to identify and describe your skills in advance, will help you in choosing jobs better suited to you, market yourself in a résumé, answer key questions in interviews, and find a more satisfying job. If you are interested in additional training, contact your local Career Center or One-Stop Center. Staff will connect you with resources to help meet your employment goals.

## Knowing Your Skills

Research says that the most common interviewing mistake is not being able to talk about job skills. Why? Probably because individuals do not always take the time to think about all the things they do every day in the workplace. When you know how to do something, you do it automatically. Try to remember any training you had to learn at your last job. During this time you were learning job skills. Don't be shy. It is not bragging to talk about what you can do when it is the truth.

## Grouping Your Skills

To complete a task, there may be many steps that require various skills. These skills can come from life, work, or education. A good way to organize skills is to divide them into three basic types: technical skills, self-management skills, and transferable skills.

- Technical skills, often referred to as hard skills, are abilities that you may have learned in a particular job or type of job. They are not just learned on the job, but can also be gained from other life experiences such as in a classroom, online, and through practice or repetition. Employers may list these skills in a job description to describe the tasks of a position. Some examples include:
  - operating equipment
  - using computer software
  - writing computer programs
  - teaching
  - marketing
  - data analysis
  - assembling
  - budget planning
  - project management
  - testing
  - accounting
  - creating videos

## Have Questions?

Georgia Department of Labor Career Centers are available to assist you with job leads and free access to the Internet, copiers, phones, and fax.

Locate an office near you at [dol.georgia.gov](http://dol.georgia.gov)



# Identifying Your Skills

- Self-management skills, which are also referred to as soft skills, tell the employer if you would fit in with the personality of the company, the management, and the coworkers. These skills are the abilities that allow an individual to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions. You may be asked to highlight these skills in an interview, so be sure to be able to explain how you have used these skills. Employers place a lot of value on soft skills and can be the deciding factor for an employer when considering promoting or keeping an employee. Some examples of self-management skills are:

- honest
- adaptable
- enthusiastic
- creative
- responsible
- energetic
- dependable
- sincere
- dedicated
- conscientious
- organized
- on time
- goal-oriented
- accountable
- self-motivated
- flexible

- Transferable skills can be used in a variety of jobs. These can be a combination of soft skills (examples listed above) or hard skills that may not be job-specific. They are skills you can transfer from one job or career to another without much training. Think about your work history. What are some skills that you consistently used in your previous jobs? What positions are you currently interested in applying to? Do any of those skills transfer from job to job? Some examples of transferable skills are:

- communication
- listening
- handling money
- gathering information
- training others
- bi-lingual
- public speaking
- written communication

## List Your Skills and Give Examples

Make a list of your skills in each category, then select the top three from each group. Next, think of specific examples showing how you used that skill on the job. Use the five steps below to write a strong example of your skill. Identify and name a skill. Give an example of where and how you used this skill. Describe the example by answering “who, what, when, why, and how” questions. Strengthen the example with numbers, dollars, savings, or profits. Give the results, or how the employer would benefit from your actions.

Practice presenting each example as if you are speaking to an employer. That's how you sell your skills. The ability to identify, explain, and prove your skills can make the difference between getting the job or not getting it. To be successful, you must be able to talk about yourself and your skills.

## List Your Skills and Give Examples

According to recent surveys, these are important skills that recruiters and hiring managers will be looking for in top candidates:

- honest
- adaptable
- enthusiastic
- creative
- responsible
- dedicated
- conscientious
- organized
- on time
- goal-oriented

## Additional Resources

[careeronestop.org/toolkit/Skills/skills-matcher.aspx](http://careeronestop.org/toolkit/Skills/skills-matcher.aspx)

[myskillsmyfuture.org/](http://myskillsmyfuture.org/)

[oneline.org/find/descriptor/browse/Skills/](http://oneline.org/find/descriptor/browse/Skills/)



Visit our website at [dol.georgia.gov](http://dol.georgia.gov)

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program  
Auxiliary Aids & Services are Available Upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities