The Conference Board of Canada

Employability Skills

Employability skills are the skills that you need to enter, go through, and grow in the world of work—whether you work on your own or as part of a team. Understanding and applying these skills will help you create a set of tools to improve your ability to grow and do well in the workplace and beyond.

Apply Your Employability Skills at Work

Employability skills are the critical skills you need in the workplace—whether you are self-employed or working for others. Employability skills include communication, problem-solving, positive attitudes and behaviours, adaptability, working with others, and digital skills.

Develop Your Employability Skills

You can develop your employability skills at home, at school, at work, and in the community. Family, friends, teachers, neighbours, supervisors, and co-workers can all play a part in helping you build these skills.

Fundamental Skills

**These are the skills you need as the basis of your employability skills.
You'll be better prepared to develop skills in the world of work when you can:**

Manage Information
- Find, gather, and organize information using technology.
- Learn and use knowledge and skills from different fields.

Think and Solve Problems
- Assess situations and spot problems.
- Find different points of view and evaluate them based on facts.
- Recognize multiple dimensions of a problem.
- Identify the root cause of a problem.
- Be creative and innovative in exploring solutions.
- Use science, technology, and math to solve problems and make decisions.
- Consider solutions to make recommendations or decisions.
- Apply solutions.
- Check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities to improve.

Communicate
- Read and understand information presented in different ways (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams).
- Write and speak so others can pay attention and understand.
- Listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others.
- Share information using different technologies (e.g., phone calls, e-mail, social media, the Internet).
- Use relevant knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas.

Use Numbers
- Decide what you need to measure or calculate.
- Study and record data using the right methods and tools.
- Make estimates and check answers.

Use Digital Tools
- Use digital technologies to create and share information and content.
- Safely, securely, and legally use virtual tools.
- Buy or sell things online and use digital tools to manage money.

Social and Emotional Skills

Social and emotional skills are sometimes called soft skills, human skills, or people skills. These skills describe how you connect with others, build relationships, solve problems, and interact with people, whether that's your family, friends, classmates, or co-workers.

Here are some examples of social and emotional skills that will make you not only a great employee, but also a great friend, family member, and co-worker:

Active Listening

- Listen attentively when someone else is speaking.
- Stay engaged with someone you're talking to in a positive way throughout your conversation.
- Repeat what someone has said to you in your own words.
- Show kindness and acceptance of other people's ideas.
- Use words and body language to show someone you're speaking with that you value them and hear what they're saying.

Resilience

- Recover quickly from difficult situations.
- Understand that setbacks are part of learning and growing.
- Accept that failure is okay and doesn't mean that everything else you do will be wrong.
- Do your best to be positive even in tough times.

Working Together

- Add to a team by sharing information and skills.
- Understand and work within the roles of a group.
- Recognize and respect people's diversity and perspectives.
- Lead or support when it's appropriate.
- Understand the role of conflict in a group in reaching solutions.

Flexibility

- Adapt to new situations as they come up.
- Be open to new ideas and challenges.
- Think and make decisions quickly when you need to.
- Proceed politely and confidently as conditions change.

Personal Management Skills

These are the personal skills, attitudes, and behaviours that help you grow. You'll find more ways to achieve your goals when you can:

Demonstrate Positive Attitudes and Behaviours
- Feel good about yourself and be confident.
- Deal honestly with people, problems, and situations.
- Recognize your own and other people's good efforts.
- Take care of your personal health.
- Show interest, drive, and effort.
- Think about, anticipate, and respond to the needs of others.

Be Responsible
- Set goals and priorities to balance your work and your personal life.
- Plan and manage time, money, and other resources to achieve your goals.
- Measure and manage risk.
- Be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group.
- Be socially responsible and contribute to your community.

Be Adaptable
- Work independently or as part of a team.
- Carry out multiple tasks or projects.
- Figure out and suggest other ways to achieve goals and get the job done.
- Be open and respond constructively to change.

- Learn from your mistakes and accept feedback.
- Be flexible and willing to try new things.
- Handle uncertainty.

Work Safely
- Know and follow health and safety practices and procedures.

Learn Constantly
- Be willing to always learn and grow.
- Review personal strengths and areas for development.
- Set your own learning goals.
- Be proactive about learning new things on your own time.
- Plan for and achieve your learning goals.
- Look for hands-on learning opportunities, like co-op work placements or volunteering.

Teamwork Skills

These are the skills you need to contribute to a group productively. You'll be better prepared to add value to the outcomes of a project or team when you can:

Work With Others

- Understand and work within the roles of a group.
- Make sure that a team's purpose and aims are clear.
- Respect and support the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others.
- Recognize and respect people's diversity and perspectives.
- Accept and provide feedback in a useful and kind manner.
- Add to a team by sharing information and skills.
- Lead or support when it's appropriate.
- Understand the role of conflict in a group in reaching solutions.
- Manage and settle conflict.

Participate in Projects and Tasks

- Design or carry out a project with well-defined outcomes.
- Develop a plan, ask for feedback, and apply it.
- Work to shared standards of quality.
- Choose and use the right tools for a task or project.
- Adapt to changing information and conditions.
- Keep an eye on the success of a project or task throughout and find ways to improve.