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Transferable Skills



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Other publications on resumes and applications

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Publications on related topics

INTERVIEWING

Keys to Successful Interviewing (DETJ-6951-P)
Hidden Elements of Interviewing (DETJ-9484-P)
Informational Interviewing (DETJ-9407-P)

JOB SEARCH

Qualities an Employer Looks for When Hiring (DETJ-8459-P)
Job Search Issues (DETJ-8456-P)
Where to Look for Job Opportunities (DETJ-9467-P)

DETJ-8961-P (R. 04/2010)

Unlike job-related skills, which tend to be used only in one type of work, transferable skills are skills that can be used in every occupation, regardless of the type of work. They are universal skills — you can transfer them from one type of work to another without much effort on your part or training from the employer.

Many employers think that if you are able to use the skill in one situation, you should be able to use that skill in another job, even if the work appears to be unrelated to your past employment or educational experience.

For this reason, your transferable skills are often more important than your job-related skills. This is especially true if you are changing careers or making the transition from school to work.

Suppose that an automobile mechanic wants a job repairing household appliances. The mechanic should emphasize general mechanical skills, not specific automotive skills.

The household appliance employer will be interested in the mechanic's general skills: Can the mechanic use hand tools? Can the mechanic troubleshoot, repair, adjust, and maintain mechanical devices? The employer does not care that the mechanic can grind pistons, rebuild carburetors, and adjust ignition timing.

In identifying your transferable skills, do not overlook the skills you've gained from everyday living. Most job seekers fail to see this potential. These skills can, however, help you meet an employer's expectations.

If you do not already know your transferable skills, complete the transferable skills exercise on the following pages. This exercise will help you identify at least ten of your transferable skills.

Review the list of transferable skills on the next pages and check all of the skills that you feel are the skills you have.

Check the EDUCATION column if you acquried that skill during your education or through a training program. Check the LIFE column if you acquired the skill anywhere else, which would include paid employment, volunteer activities, and general life experience. Check the third column, NEXT JOB, if you feel you will need that skill in the next job you have that meets your primary job objective.

Education Life Next Job	Education Life Next Job	Education Life Next Job
act/perform adapt to situations advise people analyze data anticipate problems appraise service arrange functions assemble products assess situations audit records assemble products assess situations audit records bargain/barter be cost conscious be responsible for budget money build buy products/services calculate numbers chart information check for accuracy classify information cleck for accuracy classify information collect money communicate compare data compile statistics compute data conceptualize conduct confront others construct buildings consult w/ others contact others control costs control people control situations correspond w/ others cope w/ deadlines copy information correspond w/ others create delegate deliver demonstrate design detail detect detect detect determine develop direct others dispense information	do precision work do public relations work draft dive dive dit edit encourage endure long hours enforce entertain establish estimate evaluate examine exchange exhibit expand expedite explain explore file records find information fix/repair follow directions follow through gather information fix/repair endure long hours enforce endure long hours enforce file records file records file records file records find information fix/repair explore file records find information fix/r	Iift (moderate) listen locate information log information make/create make decisions make policy manage a business manage people measure boundaries mediate problems meet the public memorize information mentor others monitor progress motivate others move materials negotiate nurse nurture pobserve obtain operate equipment order goods/supplies organize data organize data organize people porganize tasks paint perceive needs perform routine work persuade others plan plant process information process materials print process materials print process materials produce program produce program produce program produce produc
□ □ □ distribute	□ □ □ lift (heavy)	□ □ □ refer people

Education	Φ	xt Job		Education	Φ	xt Job		Education	Φ	xt Job	
Е	Life	Next		Щ	Lite	Next		Щ	Life	Next	
			rehabilitate people				shape				transfer
			remember information				signal				translate
			remove				size up situations				travel
			repair				sketch				treat
			replace				socialize				troubleshoot
			report information				solve problems				tutor
			research				sort				type
			resolve problems				speak in public				understand
			restore				study				unite people
			retrieve information				supervise				update information
			review				supply				upgrade
			run meetings				support				use hand/eye coord.
			schedule				survey				use words correctly
			seek out				synthesize				verify
			select				tabulate				visit
			sell				take instructions				visualize
			separate				tend equipment				volunteer
			sequence				test				weigh
			service customers				think ahead				work quickly
			service equipment				think logically				write procedures
			set goals/objectives				tolerate interruptions				write promo material
			set up equipment				track				write proposals
			set up systems				train/teach				write reports
			sew				transcribe				write technical work

Once you've identified your transferable skills, you need to develop them into statements that you can make in an interview, which will show employers that

you are the best person for the job. Below are sample statements about transferable skills. Each is followed by an example and a connection to a specific job.

Transferable skill statement Example Connection	"I can meet deadlines." "While in school, I rarely missed a due date on an assignment." "If I was able to meet deadlines in school, I will also be able to meet your work deadlines and quotas."
Transferable skill statement Example Connection	"I can keep financial records." "As a full-time homemaker I handled all of the family money, including savings and checking, without ever bouncing a check or failing to pay a bill on time." "If I could handle the family finances so well for twenty years, while taking care of all of the other household chores at the same time, I could be a good account clerk for you."
Transferable skill statement Example Connection	"I am a well-organized person." "At my last job I had six bosses. I had to organize my time and set priorities to get the job done to everyone's satisfaction." "If I could handle that confusion, I'm sure I'll be able to deal with the organizational demands of this job."
Transferable skill statement Example Connection	"I'm a good explainer." "Whenever anyone at work had trouble understanding a procedure, they came to me for an explanation." "I can learn quickly, train new workers, and help others."

Now choose three transferable skills from your list that you think will interest most potential employers. Write these skills as complete statements, like the samples. Then include examples from your own experiences that support your statements. Also, state the connection between each ability and the job you want.

	Transferable skills	
Connection		
	Transferable skills	
Statement		
Example		
	Transferable skills	
Statement	Transierable Skills	
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Example		
Connection		