
Transferable Skills

Transferable skills, also known as “soft skills,” are skills that are not job specific, but are those that can be used in a variety of careers and work settings. According to the National Association of College and Employers (NACE), the top ten transferable skills or qualities are:

1. Communication skills (verbal and written)
2. Strong work ethic
3. Teamwork skills (works well with others)
4. Initiative
5. Interpersonal skills (relates well with others)
6. Problem-solving skills
7. Analytical skills
8. Flexibility/adaptability
9. Computer skills
10. Technical skills

It is important when searching for a job that you identify which transferable skills you possess and then highlight these skills during the job search process. Keep in mind what the employer is looking for and choose to highlight the most relevant skills that are true for you. These skills can be interjected into communications you have with employers at various times (i.e., cover letter, resume, job application, interview, etc). Simply providing information to them that demonstrates you possess certain skills is a great way to casually insert the information that might otherwise seem forced if you were to just list what your transferable skills are.

Examples of how to highlight transferable skills in a resume:

A typical way to state it...

1. “Worked sales booth locations on campus”
2. “Responded to customer complaints”

A better way to state it...

1. “Used organization skills to plan and coordinate teams of sales staff to ensure high traffic flow to sales booths”
2. “Further developed communication skills by listening attentively to customer complaints, while also reviewing possible solutions to resolve the issues at hand”

But what if you’ve just started college and you don’t have as many experiences as you would like? That’s okay. Recognizing and honing your transferable skills is like gaining additional job experiences. The Career Consultants at the Career Center can assist you in planning your career while going to school.

So, whether you are a seasoned employee looking for a change in employment or a new student looking for a part-time job, highlighting your transferable skills will enhance your resume as you market yourself to potential employers.