

Skills employers are seeking in candidates



People are constantly building new skills, experiences and competencies that contribute to your overall personal growth and professional development. Many of these skills and experiences can be used to help become job ready. Below are eight career competencies that employers are seeking, and highly qualified candidates often possess. Career competencies were developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) that works to promote career readiness in students. Often times, competencies employers are seeking can be found in a job posting or on the employer's website.

Critical thinking/problem solving



Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret and use knowledge, facts and data in process and may demonstrate originality and innovation.

Professionalism/work ethic



Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from their mistakes.

Teamwork/collaboration



Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

Digital technology



Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new emerging technologies.

Global/intercultural fluency



Value, respect and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations and religions. The individual demonstrates, openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

Career management



Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities and understand how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

Oral/written communication



Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write and edit memos, letters and complex technical reports clearly and effectively. Individual is adaptable to all forms of communication, or advocates for resources to effectively communicate their ideas.

Leadership



Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage their emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize and delegate work.

Career readiness means that you have **experience and skills** in each of the career competencies and are capable of navigating the **job search and interview process** and have the skills and knowledge to be **successful** in your professional path.

Putting career competencies in action

Now that you are familiar with these career competencies, let's take a look at which ones you have most developed and which you would like to develop further. Employers are going to not only seek out these competences, but want to see evidence on how you apply them. Fill in the section below to summaries your most developed competencies.

Skills developed:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Comments:

(What activities have I engaged in that prove my proficiency in this skill)

Now that we have looked at what competencies you are strong in, what about the ones that you would like to develop further? Employers are going to want to address a variety of different competencies and might hit on ones that you are not so strong in. Why not work on developing some strategies to strengthen them? Start with listing four competencies you would like to get more experience with and what activities and steps you can take to develop them. You can ask for suggestions from friends, mentors, advisors if you can't think of activities yourself.

Skills developed:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Comments:

(What activities can I engage in that will increase my proficiency in this skill)

