Improving your Employability Skills



So you’re at the end of Year 11 and you no longer have to come to school and you have a big decision to make. Do you return to school, go to College, get a job or an apprenticeship?

When it’s time to go to college or take a job, in addition to academic knowledge and vocational skills, students also need those “soft skills,” otherwise known as job readiness skills.

Soft skills are those characteristics that help you function as an individual (motivation, self-confidence, and flexibility) as well as within a group (teamwork, negotiation, and respect). When it comes to workplace success, these skills are key. After all, if you can’t show up on time, speak up for yourself, or get along with your peers, chances are you’re not going to have a very smooth go of it.

**Task 1 Watch this short video. Access it through the following link**

<https://youtu.be/-xDazY5s-6M>



While there will always be job-specific skills that an employer is looking for, most employers will also want you to have some general skills. These general job skills are sometimes called "employability skills".

Having employability skills can help you get a job. They can also help you stay in a job and work your way to the top. If you score a job interview, chances are you'll be asked questions about your job-specific skills and your employability skills.

**What are Soft Skills?**

Soft skills are the personal character traits and interpersonal skills that you have that help you work with other people



Generally speaking, these can be condensed into eight core skills that employers want you to have, no matter what industry you’re working in.[​](https://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-and-careers/plan-your-career/8-job-skills-you-should-have#communication) These are:

Communication, Teamwork, Problem solving, Initiative and enterprise. Planning and organisation, Self management, Learning and Technology.

**Task 2 Get your brain working:**

Look at the list of 20 soft skills and try to sort them into the eight core employability skills shown in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Core Employability Skill | Includes Soft Skills  |
| Communication |  |
| Teamwork |  |
| Problem Solving |  |
| Initiative and enterprise |  |
| Planning and Organisation |  |
| Self management  |  |
| Learning |  |
| Technology  |  |

Task 3 How good are you?

On the following table the skills have been broken down again. Look at each of the categories and give yourself a score (be honest) between 0 (Worst) and 5 (Best) to identify your strengths and weaknesses. Don’t worry if there are some you can’t do yet. Its something you may get to learn next year. Remember: You keep learning throughout life – not just in school

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Communication … that contributes to productive and harmonious relations across employees and customers  | Listening and understanding |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking clearly and directly |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Writing to the needs of the audience |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Negotiating responsively |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reading independently |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Empathising – understanding how others feel |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Speaking and writing in languages other than English |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Using numeracy |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Understanding the needs of others |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Persuading effectively |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Establishing and using networks |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being assertive |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sharing information  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Team work … that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes  | Working with people of different ages, gender, race, religion or political beliefs |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Working as an individual and as a member of a team |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Knowing how to define a role as part of the team  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Applying team work to a range of situations e.g. futures planning, crisis problem solving |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Identifying the strengths of the team members |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coaching and mentoring skills including giving feedback |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Problem solving … that contributes to productive outcomes  | Developing creative, innovative solutions |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing practical solutions |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Showing independence and initiative in identifying problems and solving them |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Solving problems in teams |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use a range of strategies to problem solving  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Using mathematics to solve problems |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Apply problem solving strategies  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use data and circumstances to test assumptions  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Resolving customer concerns  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Initiative and enterprise … that contribute to innovative outcomes  | Adapt to new situations |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing a vision |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being creative |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Identifying opportunities not obvious to others  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Putting ideas into action |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Creating a range of options |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Starting innovative solutions |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Planning and organising … that contributes to long and short term strategic planning  | Managing your time and work for yourself & others  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being resourceful |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Taking initiative and making decisions |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Adapting resource allocations to cope with change |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Establishing clear project goals and outcomes |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Allocating people and resources to tasks |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Planning how to use resources and managing time  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Look at how to improve work and planning  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Developing a vision and a proactive plan  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Predicting - weighing up risk, Look for alternatives and measure success |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Collecting, analysing and organising information |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Understand basic business systems and their links |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Self management … that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth  | Having a personal vision and goals |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Measure and monitor your own performance |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Be confident in your own knowledge ideas and visions |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Describe your own ideas and visions |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Take responsibility |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Learning … that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes  | Manage your own learning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Contributing to the learning community at the workplace |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Use different ways of learning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Applying learning to different situations |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being enthusiastic about ongoing learning |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being willing to learn on and off the job |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being open to new ideas and techniques |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Component  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Technology … that contributes to effective execution of tasks  | Have a range of basic IT skills |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Able to apply IT  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Using IT to organise data |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Being willing to learn new IT skills |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Having the physical capacity to apply technology e.g. manual dexterity |  |  |  |  |  |  |

From Employability Skills for the Future, 2002

Task 4 On the table above highlight the areas you have scored below 2 in Red (areas to be developed) and those scoring 5 and 6 in Green (areas of strength)

What are you

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strengths(Scored 5and 6) |  |
| Areas that need improving (Scored 0, 1 or 2) |  |

**Personal Characteristics**

As well as these employability skills are your personal characteristics. These include thing like those listed below:

Task 5. For each of the personal characteristics, describe what it means and then describe an example of when you have demonstrated that characteristic. Finally, score yourself from 0 (Worst) to 5 (Best) Be honest

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Personal Characteristic | Meaning | Example when you have shown this characteristic in your work. | Score  |
| loyalty |  |  |  |
| commitment |  |  |  |
| honesty and integrity |  |  |  |
| enthusiasm |  |  |  |
| reliability |  |  |  |
| personal presentation |  |  |  |
| Common sense |  |  |  |
| positive self-esteem |  |  |  |
| sense of humour |  |  |  |
| balanced attitude to work and home life |  |  |  |
| ability to deal with pressure |  |  |  |
| motivation |  |  |  |
| adaptability |  |  |  |

Task 6 Which areas do you think you need to work on to improve your personal skills. What will you do to try and improve these??

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Task 7 Given what you have done in this booklet write yourself an action plan describing what you are going to do to make yourself “more employable”

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| What will you do? | When will you do it? | How will you know you’ve achieved it? |
|  |  |  |

Task 8 Finally you should put together your curriculum vitae, or cv. This is a written summary of your achievements to date. You can use the template below, but remember to change it every time you apply for a new job, you will need to write a new personal statement, which should be *tweaked to match* the job description.

CV template See the information below

 **Forename Surname**

**Address: xxxxxxx**

**Telephone: xxxxxxxxxxx**

**Email: xxxxxxxxxxxxx**

Personal profile

Provide a summary of your abilities including detail on the skills and knowledge you have to offer employers, including your educational achievements, grades, courses and projects. If you have any part-time work experience, then give an overview here. If not, simply expand on the employability and personal skills you have gained throughout your education, such as communication, teamwork, organisation, planning, IT skills etc. Also, if you have any impressive extra-curricular activities then it’s worth touching upon them here.

Education and qualifications (you won’t have your all exam results yet so say you are waiting for results in August 2020, However, you may have already completed some Don’t forget to add them here)

* **School/college name –** Dates attended (from – to)
	+ **Qualification –** Grade
	+ **Qualification –** Grade
	+ **Qualification –** Grade

Work experience (If you have any work experience, add it here – if not, delete this section)

**mmm yyyy – Present Company Name, Location**

**Role Title**

*Outline*

Give a high-level overview of the role to show how you fit into the organisation and what the overall goal of your role is. 1-3 lines should be enough.

*Key responsibilities*

* Detail your responsibilities and showcase as much of your skills and knowledge as possible
* Use professional language and show how your duties impact the business where possible
* Give lots of detail in recent roles and less in old roles as you go down the CV
* xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
* xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

*Key achievement/projects*

* If possible, try to add some impressive achievements you’ve made that have had a big impact on the employer or a customer/client

**Mmm yyyy – mmm yyyy Company Name, Location**

**Role Title**

Awards and recognition

* **Award and awarding body –** Date achieved
* **Award and awarding body –** Date achieved

Interests

**Interests:** List any interests that could be relevant to the roles you are applying for, or could generally be deemed as impressive, such as competing in contests, fundraising, volunteering, travelling or playing sports.

References

**Referees:** Give the name and contact details of two people who would act as a referee for you. They should be someone who would support your application. It’s probably better to have your HoL or a teacher as one of them.

Referee 1 Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Role \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Contact details:

 Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Referee 2 Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Role: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Contact details:

 Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Don’t forget to read it through and delete things that are unnecessary. Good Luck.