

[Information Sheet - Institute of Welfare](#)

Careers – Transferable Skills

What are Transferable Skills?

Transferable Skills are skills learned in one context that are useful in another. They are skills you have gained from past experiences that are transferable to a different type of career, industry or environment.

Key Skills are generic skills which individuals need in order to be effective as members of a competitive work force and for lifelong learning. The Key Skills are:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information Technology
- Working with Others
- Improving Own Learning and Performance
- Problem Solving

The transferable skills that employers identify are:-

- Interpersonal skills
- Communication skills
- Self-management skills
- Intellectual skills

It is easy to identify occupationally relevant skills acquired through training and education but much more difficult to pinpoint transferable skills.

There are many skilled things we do instinctively every day. Women have the most trouble recognizing them, yet women who look after their families have one of the most demanding jobs there is incorporating a diversity of skills. Knowing you are skilled and capable gives you the confidence to try new things.

Discounting qualifications and experience, there are some very important attributes that all employers look for. They are:-

- Communicating effectively
- Working well in a team
- Problem solving
- Using initiative
- Well organised
- Adaptable

These six transferable skills are often learnt and perfected in ordinary situations. For example, women at home with small children perhaps use these skills far more than a typical day in the office. It is important that you have the qualities employers are looking for and that you can identify and describe them in a convincing manner.

The role of transferable skills in career planning?

Transferable skills may have been developed from past work experience, academic work, volunteer activities, or through hobbies, clubs, community organisations, associations, etc. Skills can be divided into **three** areas:

- **Skills with Things**
This includes using office equipment, computers, software, tools, instruments, machinery, vehicles, clothing, food, animals, and plants.
- **Skills with Information or Data**
This includes using information or data for planning, researching, developing policies or procedures, record keeping, compiling information or data, filing, and classification.
- **Skills with People**
This includes dealing and interacting with types of people such as customers, patients, students, colleagues, (as individuals, or groups); and the nature of your interaction with people through consulting, negotiating, selling, serving, informing, entertaining, interviewing, motivating, or training.

Re-evaluate yourself

To be an effective communicator you need to;

- speak clearly and accurately
- talk easily to all you meet
- listen carefully
- persuade others
- follow written instructions
- ask the right questions
- explain effectively
- reach agreement by negotiating or bargaining

To be a good team worker you need to:

- get on well with all sorts of people
- share information
- be open to the ideas of others
- trust your colleagues

- be flexible
- always support your team mates

To be a good problem solver you need to:

- see problems before they get too big
- look at problems from different view points
- take on the challenge yourself
- learn from mistakes
- try out alternative solutions

To show initiative you have to:

- see what needs doing without being told
- take on new things
- make decisions
- get things started

Good organisational skills mean:

- the ability to plan and prioritise work
- get things done on time
- do more than one thing at a time
- make and follow action plans
- have the ability to co-ordinate people and resources

In career planning, it is important to identify skills you already have, and to determine if you have an interest in using that skill in a new occupation. The above information is there to help you do just that.