

# Identify Your Skills

Skills are acquired through life experiences, education, and work experiences. Every job requires certain skills. Your skills, combined with your interests and values, are key to career success.

There are three main categories of skills: **Functional skills** relate to the functions of a task and can be transferred from one career to another. Examples include communicating, problem solving, supervising, and organizing. **Content skills** result from specific knowledge gained about a subject matter, procedure, or vocabulary. Examples include speaking in Spanish, programming in C++, applying the rules of parliamentary procedure. **Self-management skills** are the personality strengths you bring to a situation. Examples include efficiency, trustworthiness, and accuracy.

This exercise is designed to help you uncover clues to those **skills** that come more easily to you, and those that you especially enjoy using. These skills are the foundation upon which you are likely to build your career. As you learn which skills are required for success in specific occupations, you can better evaluate how well these occupations make use of your strongest skills.

**Directions:** On a separate sheet of paper, describe 10 experiences that made you feel proud or satisfied. The experiences may be academic, work-related, or personal. Examples include developing skill in a sport; teaching a friend a skill or subject; organizing an event; setting up a new filing system; running for officer of a club; writing a story or poem; or designing a database. Review these experiences and think about the skills you used. Look over the list of skills below and check off any skills that you have, especially those that you used during these 10 experiences.

## Functional Skills

**Realistic skills** involve the use of objects, tools, machines, animals or your body. They are required in activities such as tuning a car, planting a garden, competing in sports, building a bookcase, and repairing a sewing machine.

- Constructing:** putting together parts, assembling, building
- Cultivating:** raising or growing things, such as plants or animals
- Designing:** creating furniture, models, patterns
- Handling:** lifting, balancing, carrying, loading, moving
- Inspecting:** appraising, examining
- Installing:** positioning for use
- Maintaining:** preserving optimal condition
- Manual coordination:** dexterity
- Motor coordination:** agility, endurance, strength
- Operating:** controlling a tool, machine, vehicle, equipment
- Repairing:** fixing, refinishing
- Sensing:** smelling, tasting, seeing, hearing

## Identify Your Skills

**Investigative skills** involve exploring, investigating, examining, and analyzing ideas and phenomena. Examples include playing thought-provoking word and number games, reading technical reports, researching a topic, reading science fiction, and passing a course in calculus.

- \_\_\_ **Analyzing:** critically examining, studying, appraising
- \_\_\_ **Conceptualizing:** getting a general idea based on what you have learned
- \_\_\_ **Diagnosing:** investigating and analyzing the course of nature or a phenomenon
- \_\_\_ **Evaluating:** assessing or judging information and alternatives
- \_\_\_ **Examining:** looking over, exploring
- \_\_\_ **Informing:** presenting information through oral or written communication, assigning meaning, translating into familiar terms
- \_\_\_ **Predicting:** anticipating or foreseeing future events
- \_\_\_ **Problem solving:** identifying possibilities and alternatives, developing solutions
- \_\_\_ **Questioning:** interrogating, interviewing, challenging
- \_\_\_ **Researching:** gathering data and information, systematically investigating
- \_\_\_ **Synthesizing:** combining and integrating information
- \_\_\_ **Thinking:** using logic and reason, formulating creative possibilities
- \_\_\_ **Understanding:** perceiving meaning, learning

**Artistic skills** involve creating art forms or products through materials, music, drama, or writing. Examples include writing a poem or short story, preparing a special meal, performing in a one-act play, exhibiting your photographs, designing a piece of jewelry, and attending a concert.

- \_\_\_ **Appreciating:** being critically and emotionally aware of aesthetic value
- \_\_\_ **Composing:** arranging or forming by uniting parts and elements
- \_\_\_ **Creating:** bringing into being from thought or imagination, originating, inventing
- \_\_\_ **Decorating/Consulting:** advising others on artistry, color, form, arrangement of interiors, clothing, accessories
- \_\_\_ **Designing:** conceiving and planning jewelry, graphics, models, patterns for self or others to produce
- \_\_\_ **Drawing:** portraying people, scenes, or events by sketching, painting, illustrating
- \_\_\_ **Entertaining:** performing before an audience, diverting, amusing
- \_\_\_ **Exhibiting:** displaying, demonstrating
- \_\_\_ **Exploring:** seeking new experiences, showing perpetual curiosity
- \_\_\_ **Expressing:** conveying thoughts and feelings through an artistic medium
- \_\_\_ **Imaging:** visualizing, forming mental images
- \_\_\_ **Producing:** making a product in art or craft form, writing, performing
- \_\_\_ **Speaking/Singing:** using voice to entertain, inform, tell a story, dramatize
- \_\_\_ **Writing:** using words to tell a story, describe a product, critique an artistic event

**Social skills** involve working with people to help, teach, inform, train, and lead. Examples include facilitating a personal growth group, counseling runaway teenagers, interviewing applicants for a job, supervising playground, activities, teaching an adult education class, and caring for a sick person.

- \_\_\_ **Advising:** giving information, consulting, aiding decision making
- \_\_\_ **Collaborating:** working as a team member, maintaining cooperation and support
- \_\_\_ **Coordinating:** acting as a liaison, putting others in touch with useful resources
- \_\_\_ **Counseling:** guiding or mentoring others
- \_\_\_ **Empathizing:** understanding and acknowledging the feelings of others
- \_\_\_ **Encouraging:** motivating and developing the capabilities of others
- \_\_\_ **Facilitating:** assisting the progress of a person or group

## Identify Your Skills

\_\_\_ **Giving/Getting feedback:** conducting appraisal of others, asking for and giving supportive and critical feedback

\_\_\_ **Listening:** attending to others actively and accurately and with openness and concern

\_\_\_ **Planning:** arranging meetings, social occasions, activities

\_\_\_ **Rehabilitating:** restoring to healthy functioning

\_\_\_ **Relating:** meeting and associating easily with all kinds of people, developing trust and rapport

\_\_\_ **Serving:** anticipating and attending to the needs of others

\_\_\_ **Teaching:** instructing, tutoring, coaching, training others

\_\_\_ **Valuing:** making decisions that will maximize both individual and collective goods

**Enterprising skills** involve persuading and leading people and organizations to attain goals or economic gains. Activity examples include campaigning, organizing a fundraiser, starting a business, lobbying, and selling Girl Scout cookies.

\_\_\_ **Administering:** managing people and projects by setting standards, choosing priorities, assigning activities, evaluating progress

\_\_\_ **Delegating:** giving responsibility to others appropriately

\_\_\_ **Implementing:** establishing and executing policies and procedures

\_\_\_ **Leading:** taking initiative, advancing ideas, directing action

\_\_\_ **Motivating:** prompting action, providing incentive, inspiring and encouraging others

\_\_\_ **Negotiating:** promoting resolution of conflict, arbitrating, bargaining

\_\_\_ **Persuading:** winning acceptance and approval for ideas or products, selling, advocating, raising funds

\_\_\_ **Planning/Forecasting:** designing long-range strategies based on predictions of the direction and growth and opportunities

\_\_\_ **Risking:** hazarding change, promoting alternatives, troubleshooting

\_\_\_ **Speaking:** communicating publicly and persuasively, representing or acting as a spokesperson

\_\_\_ **Staffing:** recruiting, interviewing, selecting, placing, promoting, and transferring personnel

\_\_\_ **Supervising:** overseeing the performance of others, disciplining setting priorities

\_\_\_ **Team building:** recognizing and utilizing the skills of others, organizing and supporting cooperative efforts

**Conventional skills** involve gathering, organizing, and evaluating numerical and written data; attending to detail systems, computing income taxes, serving as club treasurer, setting up a library system, and budgeting.

\_\_\_ **Auditing:** examining and verifying accounts and records

\_\_\_ **Calculating:** using numbers and performing accurate computations

\_\_\_ **Classifying:** cataloging information, coding, filing

\_\_\_ **Collecting:** gathering data and information

\_\_\_ **Developing:** designing systematic procedures

\_\_\_ **Evaluating:** assessing the effectiveness of procedures, accuracy of information, and compliance with standards

\_\_\_ **Following procedures:** attending to details, following through on the details of a plan

\_\_\_ **Inventorying:** counting, listing, assigning value to articles

\_\_\_ **Keeping records:** carefully recording and listing, keeping books

\_\_\_ **Managing resources:** planning and managing finances, time, personnel, materials

\_\_\_ **Operating:** running business and data-processing, machines

\_\_\_ **Organizing:** organizing information, procedures, tasks

\_\_\_ **Preparing:** producing budgets, written reports, correspondence, maps, charts, tables

\_\_ **Purchasing:** finding and buying resources and materials

\_\_ **Scheduling:** making and keeping a schedule

## Content Skills

1. From work, school, leisure, or volunteer experiences, I have developed considerable knowledge about:
  
2. My favorite school subject(s) were/are:
  
3. I could teach someone else how to:
  
4. If I had a gift certificate for five books in a single field, the field would be:

## Self-Management Skills

**Directions:** Circle the self management skills that are MOST descriptive of you. Add others to the list as necessary.

Accurate	Adaptable	Adventurous	Assertive	Calm	Capable
Cheerful	Clever	Competent	Confident	Conscientious	Considerate
Cooperative	Creative	Curious	Dependable	Determined	Efficient
Energetic	Enterprising	Enthusiastic	Fair-minded	Flexible	Friendly
Helpful	Honest	Humorous	Imaginative	Independent	Ingenious
Intelligent	Kind	Logical	Loyal	Mature	Methodical
Meticulous	Open-minded	Optimistic	Organized	Outgoing	Patient
Persevering	Polite	Practical	Precise	Purposeful	Reasonable
Reflective	Reliable	Resourceful	Responsible	Self-controlled	Sensible
Sensitive	Sincere	Sociable	Sympathetic	Tactful	Thorough
Thoughtful	Trustworthy	Understanding	Versatile	Warm	Witty