TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

What are transferable skills? Transferable skills are talents and abilities that can be used in many different jobs and career paths. They can be acquired through employment, school, internships, hobbies, and volunteer experiences. For you, as a MedCerts student or graduate, many of your transferable skills come from previous jobs, volunteer activities, and even your online coursework at MedCerts.

HOW DO TRANSFERABLE SKILLS WORK?

Consider your work history, school activities, and volunteer experiences. What skills have you consistently used? Most jobs require communication skills, for example. You might have developed skills in using Microsoft Office or a knack for managing teams.

Looking at job postings you're interested in can also help you think of transferable skills. What are potential employers looking for? Let's say an employer is looking for someone who can juggle multiple tasks. You might have done that in school, balancing academics with extracurricular activities, or in a previous job.

It's especially important to highlight your transferable skills if you're changing career fields. On your resume, work them into the descriptions of your previous experience, taking care to match the language the prospective employer uses in its job postings.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Transferable skills can be used in many different jobs and career paths.
- Transferable skills can be hard skills, which are easy to quantify, and soft skills, which are harder-to-quantify skills like time management.
- You may have transferable skills from previous jobs, school, or volunteer work.
- Transferable skills fall into several categories, including interpersonal skills, clerical skills, and management skills.
- Highlighting your transferable skills is helpful when you're changing careers.

EXAMPLES OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Having examples of transferable skills can help you round out your resume and brainstorm specific examples for interviews. Here are several categories of transferable skills.

General Skills - General skills are basic job skills that are essential to most positions. These include:
- Listening skills
- Understanding and carrying out written instructions
- Observing and assessing your own and others' performances
- Written communication skills
- Basic math skills
- Public speaking
- Punctuality

Interpersonal Skills - Most positions involve working with others. You might be working with colleagues, managing other employees, or interacting with the public. Transferable people skills include:
- Providing and accepting constructive criticism
- Motivating others
- Handling customer complaints
- Training new employees
- Delegating
- Counseling employees
- Building strong customer relationships
- Collaborating with others
- Mentoring less experienced colleagues
- Resolving conflicts between colleagues and/or customers
- Developing positive relationships with suppliers
- Gaining the confidence of clients or customers

Management Skills - Management is also its own skillset. It takes a range of skills to manage a store, department, or branch, including:
- Developing and overseeing a budget
- Recruiting personnel
- Reviewing resumes
- Interviewing job candidates
- Selecting new hires
- Supervising employees
- Scheduling personnel
- Leading productive meetings
- Evaluating employees

Clerical Skills - Clerical and administrative skills are needed in most fields. Transferable skills in this area include:
- Designing and maintaining correspondence and reports
- Managing records
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office programs
- Performing data entry
- Keeping track of accounts receivable, accounts payable, billing, and other bookkeeping tasks
- Screening and transferring telephone calls
- Greeting visitors
- Using office equipment such as printers, copiers, and fax machines

Research and Planning Skills - Employers want employees who can take initiative. Showing your research and planning skills can demonstrate that you're motivated. These skills include:
- Anticipating and preventing problems from occurring or reoccurring
- Using critical thinking skills to make decisions or evaluate possible solutions
- Solving problems
- Defining the organization's or department's needs
- Setting goals
- Prioritizing tasks
- Locating and reaching out to suppliers or sub-contractors
- Analyzing information and forecast results
- Managing your time and meeting deadlines
- Planning and implementing events and activities
- Creating and implementing new policies and procedures
- Coordinating and developing programs
- Documenting procedures and results
- Conducting research using the internet and library resources

Computer and Technical Skills - It's difficult to understate the importance of computer and technical skills in today's job market. Being able to master one program shows you can master other programs. Transferable computer and technical skills include:
- Using job-related software
- Using job-related equipment and machinery
- Troubleshooting problems with hardware and software
- Installing equipment
- Maintaining equipment
- Inspecting equipment to identify problems
- Designing and maintaining websites