

Examples of key skills

Popular skills that employers want

A roundup of several surveys suggests skills that employers often admire. The following list is representative but not comprehensive:

- **Effective communication:** Employers seek candidates who can listen to instructions and act on those instructions with minimal guidance. They want employees who speak, write, and listen effectively, organize their thoughts logically, and explain everything clearly.
- **Computer and technical literacy:** Almost all jobs now require an understanding, ranging from basic to advanced, of computer software, word processing, e-mail, spread sheets, and Internet navigation.
- **Problem-solving/Creativity:** Employers always want people who can get them out of a pickle. Problem-solving ability can aid you with making transactions, processing data, formulating a vision, and reaching a resolution. Employers need the assurance that you can conquer job challenges by thinking critically and creatively.
- **Interpersonal abilities:** Relationship-building and relationship-management are high priorities with many employers. These skills confirm that a candidate can relate well to others, both co-workers and customers.
- **Teamwork skills:** The ability to work well with others while pursuing a common goal is a long-running favourite of employers. But so is the ability to work with minor supervision.
- **Diversity sensitivity:** In today's world, cultural sensitivity and ability to build rapport with others in a multicultural environment is highly valued by employers.

- **Planning and organizing:** Workplace life requires prioritizing and organizing information. Employers value people who, metaphorically, dig a well before they're thirsty.

- **Leadership and management:** Leadership consists of a strong sense of self, confidence, and a comprehensive knowledge of company goals. These are qualities that motivate and inspire, providing a solid foundation for teamwork. Employers continue to look for assurances that you can, in some way, either make money for them or save money for them. Skills useful in saving money are universally desired, including by the non-profit organizations.

Personal qualities that employers want

Here are some personal qualities that employers typically rate highly:

- **Adaptability and flexibility:** Nearly half of employers in a recent survey gave a high rating to "openness to new ideas and concepts." They also like candidates who can work independently or as part of a team, changing gears when required, whether multitasking or adapting working hours and locale.
- **Professionalism and work ethic:** Employers seek productive workers with positive work ethics who stick with challenges until they meet them.
- **Positive attitude and energy:** The last to be picked and promoted are candidates who show gloomy outlooks and emotional immaturity. Exhibit a sunny outlook and energetic, organized behaviour.

Power Words

Personal Descriptions		Actions	
Active	Industrious	Achieved	Integrated
Assertive	Instinctive	Adapted	Innovated
Attentive	Independent	Administered	Instituted
Agreeable	Integrity Kind	Advanced	Justified
Alert	Knowledgeable	Assigned	Listed
Ambitious	Likeable	Assessed	Logged
Boundless	Leader	Absorbed	Maintained
Bright	Literate	Accelerated	Mentored
Broad-minded	Logical	Attained	Measured
Calm	Mediator	Attracted	Multiplied
Capable	Methodical	Announced	Negotiated
Charming	Motivated	Appraised	Observed
Cheerful	Measured	Approved	Operated
Coherent	Mature	Budgeted	Obtained
Comfortable	Objective	Bolstered	Organized
Composed	Outgoing	Balanced	Prepared
Committed	Organised	Boosted	Promoted
Compassionate	Patient	Bargained	Presented
Conscientious	Persistent	Benefited	Produced
Consistent	Positive	Beneficial	Programmed
Creative	Practical	Built	Provided
Confident	Proactive	Categorized	Projected
Cooperative	Professional	Comply	Qualified
Credible	Placid	Created	Quantified
Cultured	Plausible	Critiqued	Quoted
Decisive	Pleasant	Closed	Recommended
Detailed	Productive	Collaborated	Recorded
Determined	Receptive	Combined	Refined

Power Words

Personal Descriptions		Actions	
Diligent	Reflective	Controlled	Revamped
Discreet	Resolute	Consolidated	Reacted
Dynamic	Responsible	Designed	Retained
Effective	Reliable	Delegated	Recovered
Empathetic	Resourceful	Demonstrated	Reinstated
Eager	Respectful	Developed	Revised
Efficient	Responsible	Detected	Sustained
Encouraging	Sociable	Efficient	Skilled
Energetic	Selective	Enhanced	Saved
Entertaining	Self-Assured	Excelled	Scheduled
Enthusiastic	Sensitive	Exceeded	Shaped
Excellent	Shrewd	Enriched	Solved
Forgiving	Sincere	Established	Supported
Friendly	Skilful	Fulfilled	Supervised
Fair	Steadfast	Financed	Secured
Faithful	Stimulating	Forecasted	Simplified
Fearless	Successful	Formulated	Streamlined
Flexible	Succinct	Generated	Strengthened
Frank	Talented	Guided	Triumphed
Friendly	Tenacious	Granted	Troubleshoot
Generous	Thoughtful	Helped	Taught
Gentle	Trustworthy	Hosted	Tutored
Honest	Unbiased	Implemented	Trained
Harmonious	Upbeat	Investigated	United
Helpful	Vigorous	Increased	Unified
Honourable	Warm	Incorporated	Updated
Impartial	Wise	Initiated	Upgraded
		Influenced	Validated

How to build a CV

What is a CV?

- It is your primary Marketing Tool.
- It will not get you a job but it will get you an interview.
- It outlines where you excel and shows what you can offer.

DO

- Make every word count.
- Spend a considerable amount of time refining and improving your CV.
- Get someone you trust to read through your CV and provide feedback

DON'T

- Use poor grammar.
- Make spelling mistakes.
- Make statements you cannot back up.

Introduction

- Explain who you are. Describe your key attributes.
- Highlight what you have to offer and **have an impact**.
- Capture the reader's attention.
- Your CV is your choice and needs to reflect you accurately in a positive way.
- Consider using 3rd person instead of 1st person to keep your CV concise.

Key Skills

- Select 4 or 5 keys skills that are general and transferable.
- Articulate each skill in a short paragraph which builds on the introduction.
- Always provide an example of an achievement that demonstrates the skill.
- When the Key Skills and Introduction are combined the reader should have a clear picture of who you are and what you have to offer.

Experience

- Outline your experience to validate everything you have said in the Introduction and Key Skills.
- Use power words that are positive.
- Ensure power words have meaning for you and you are confident you know their meaning.
- Use bullets to highlight what you did and when you did it.
- Consider highlighting the start of each bullet point in **BOLD**.

Interests and Achievements

- Use this section to stand out about the type of person you are.
- Highlight what more you can offer beyond that of other candidates, do not just use it to fill space.
- Consider things that are not related to your work such as charity/community work, volunteering etc.
- This section is optional and could also be used for Education and Qualifications.

General Advice

- Add page numbers and your name to the bottom of each page in case they get separated after printing.
- Put your name address and contact details at the top of the first page.
- Add in social media references such as LinkedIn.
- You do not need to state your age or marital status.

Sample Interview Questions

Simple Questions

1. Of the organisations, teams, or roles you have worked in or held, what suited you best and why?
2. What do you consider your key achievements, of what are you most proud?
3. What are your areas of expertise?
4. Tell me about a high profile task you had to manage (or were involved in) where there was a particularly tight deadline involved.
5. Outline an example of when you had to influence others in a difficult, politically charged situation.
6. Tell me about a time when you had to contribute to or influence a key strategic decision.
7. Tell me about a decision you had to make in the face of adversity?

Challenging Questions

1. Describe a time when you felt frustrated by constant change or ambiguity?
2. What are you looking for in your next job or organisation?
3. Tell me about a significant project you have contributed to.
4. Tell me about a time when you have been frustrated by the level of performance in your team.
5. Tell me about a particularly effective team you have worked with, and describe your contribution to its effectiveness.
6. Can you think of a very difficult decision you had to make in your current role?
7. Describe a time when you suddenly had to deal with or lead a change in direction.
8. Tell me about a creative solution you've come up with?

Difficult Questions

1. What are your key strengths and weaknesses?
2. What are your areas of development?
3. What cultural differences do you think you will face between your current role and your next role?
4. What has been the toughest criticism you have recently received and taken on board?
5. Can you give an example of when you had to make a decision without all the facts available?
6. Everyone procrastinates at times. What sort of decisions do you procrastinate on? Please give an example.
7. Can you tell me about a time in your current or recent role where you had more than the usual number of priorities and tasks to juggle at one time?
8. Can you describe your approach to problem solving?
9. How would you describe your style of working?
10. Describe a time you were under pressure to compromise your integrity?