



## SKILLS EMPLOYERS VALUE

**"The new economy favors people with qualities like self-motivation, initiative, flexibility, ability to work with a team, and the capacity to learn and adapt to change."**

-LAURENCE BOLDT

### JOB PERFORMANCE

What skills do employers value? What attitudes, traits and characteristics would most employers like their employees to have?

- Competence - Ability to do the job well.
- Initiative - Working without constant direction or supervision.
- Dependability - Being there when needed.
- Reliability - Getting the job done.
- Efficiency - Being accurate and capable.
- Loyalty - Being trustworthy and honest.
- Maturity - Behaving as an adult, being stable and even-tempered, and maintaining composure.



**"In emphasizing the importance of seeking meaningful work and acknowledging dignity in all work, it is natural to also promote the virtue of working hard. It is a logical extension of the concept of worthwhile work to celebrate diligence in labor, a strong work ethic, and an industrious attitude. If we feel a true connectedness to the work we perform, we can experience great satisfaction in doing hard work."**

-MICHAEL LEBEAU / Career Counselor

### JOB GROWTH

Professional development... getting ahead in your job... improving your skills... enhancing your job performance... making yourself more valuable to your organization... expanding your opportunities...

What are some ways you can contribute to your job growth? Here are some suggestions...

Be aware of changes and new developments in the organization. Document your accomplishments. Take some risks. Take on additional responsibilities and assignments. Think like a manager. Adopt a business perspective. Continue your learning, training and education. Cross train. Find a mentor. Continue to build a network of professional contacts. Be open to criticism and suggestions. Be positive, cooperative and supportive in your interactions with co-workers, colleagues and clients. Stay updated by reading professional literature and attending conferences. Stay active in your professional and community associations.

Also, ask yourself... Am I punctual? productive? focused? cost-conscious? cooperative? results-oriented? Do I save the company money? offer solutions to problems? take pride in my work? set goals? see value in what I'm doing? manage conflict in a mature and timely manner? refuse to be involved in office politics and company gossip?



- Communication - Ability to express oneself clearly and concisely through speaking and writing
- Problem-Solving - Ability to address issues, generate options, settle uncertainties, make decisions
- Cheerfulness - Being pleasant, optimistic and agreeable
- Helpfulness - Willing to pitch in, serve or assist with a sense of urgency
- Teamwork - Working together with others, being cooperative and unselfish
- Perseverance - Determination and patience in carrying on with a tedious project
- Responsibility - Taking care of duties, being accountable
- Creativity - Being original, resourceful, imaginative, innovative
- Enthusiasm - Being energetic, positive, self-motivated about work
- Adaptability - Ability to adjust to new situations, being flexible.

## PRACTICAL ABILITIES

What intellectual and practical abilities are desired by employers? According to Hart Research Associates, employers identified the following traits:

- Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing (89%)
- Critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills (81%)
- Ability to analyze and solve complex problems (75%)
- Teamwork skills and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse group settings (71%)
- Ability to innovate and be creative (70%)
- Ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources (68%)
- Ability to work with numbers and understand statistics (63%)

(Source: *Raising the Bar: Employers' Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Turndown*)



## WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES

The changing workplace demands a change in the skills workers will now need to develop. A new set of expectations are now associated with the new world of work... Learning skills... Writing and speaking skills... Computation skills, Cognitive reasoning skills... Interpersonal skills... Critical thinking and problem solving skills... Leadership skills... Computer and technical skills. Also, the demands of the new workplace will require a greater multicultural understanding and competency in working with diverse populations.

"Start with a solid education. And then specialize in something. There won't be much demand for generalists with no particular skills, nothing special to offer. At the same time, be flexible. Be open to change. Also, communication skills are a must, getting ideas across clearly... Education will be a lifetime process. More emphasis will be placed on entrepreneurship. Pay will be tied more to performance."

-KIPLINGER WASHINGTON LETTER

## EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

When asked to rate what is most important in the traits possessed by candidates applying for professional positions, one typical employer provided this feedback. On a scale of 1 to 10, the following items were evaluated:

Work Ethic	10
Ability to Learn	8
Maturity	8
Communication Skills	7
Skills and Knowledge	6
Grades	5



## POOR PERFORMANCE

Sometimes your progress and satisfaction are impeded by factors that are not within your control. These external blocks result from office politics, organizational inconsistencies, the firm's financial constraints, layoffs, mergers, and other corporate activity outside of your control.

Otherwise, your progress and satisfaction are oftentimes impeded by factors that are completely within your control. These internal blocks originate from your own attitudes and actions. These examples of poor performance might lead to job stagnation, limited opportunities or termination.

Examples include excessive absences, frequently coming to work late, too much attention to outside interests and concerns, lack of initiative, disloyalty and dishonesty, irresponsibility, being negative and causing trouble, not being adaptable, carelessness, unwillingness to follow rules and laziness.



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