

IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

- > WANT TO BE MORE EMPLOYABLE?
- > WANT TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE AT WORK?
- > WANT TO BE MORE SATISFIED IN YOUR JOB?
- > WANT TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE JOBS, OR GAIN PROMOTION, AND KEEP SUCCEEDING?

THEN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS ARE A KEY TO YOU ACHIEVING THESE AND OTHER GOALS.

What are they?

Employability skills, such as communication or teamwork, are sometimes referred to as 'soft skills', compared with 'technical skills', such as reconciling a bank statement or tiling a floor.

Both employability and technical skills are important. Often you use them at the same time.

Why are they important?

Employability skills are important because:

- > they can help you perform better in the workplace
- > they can be used in any future job you perform
- > they can help your organisation achieve more of its goals

When are they important?

These skills are always important: in a full or part-time job, during an apprenticeship or traineeship, when you are starting out in the workplace and at any time in your working career.

The eight skills

There are eight employability skills:

- > initiative and enterprise
- > learning
- > self-management
- > communication
- > teamwork
- > problem solving
- > planning and organising
- > technology

What are they in detail?

The table on the reverse of this pamphlet lists facets of each of the eight employability skills that employers identify as important. You could set yourself the aim of achieving all of these over your working career.

Which ones do you have already?

You will already have some of the employability skills listed in the table:

- > look over the table and see which ones you believe you have already
- > ask your friends, teachers or employer to comment on your current employability skills

If you have already completed a qualification from a Training Package you can download a report on employability skills for that qualification at <http://employabilityskills.training.com.au>



How can you develop them further?

To identify the ones you already have and to develop them even more:

- > take responsibility for acquiring the skills
- > seek support from your teachers and employers
- > develop and record examples of employability skills you acquire
- > use a journal to reflect on how you are developing the skills
- > self assess your employability skills
- > develop a portfolio which contains evidence of the employability skills you have developed

How are they included in your training?

Employability skills are now included in all vocational education and training (VET) programs that use Training Packages.

For example, for you to demonstrate competency in 'handling customer queries, complaints and disputes', you would need to use a combination of technical and employability skills. In this retail industry example, the employability skills might include planning and organising, self management and communication.

Where can you get more information?

1. Ask your teacher. Ask your employer. Ask people who you believe are effective in their jobs.
2. Look at training organisations' websites, that your teacher recommends to you, that are dedicated to employability skills.
3. Look at websites designed to help you plan and develop your career, for example: www.myfuture.edu.au



| Skill | Facets |
|---|---|
| Communication that contributes to productive and harmonious relations across employees and customers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > listening and understanding > speaking clearly and directly > writing to the needs of the audience > negotiating responsively > reading independently > empathising > using numeracy effectively > understanding the needs of internal and external customers > persuading effectively > establishing and using networks > being assertive > sharing information > speaking and writing in languages other than English |
| Teamwork that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > working across different ages irrespective of gender, race, religion or political persuasion > working as an individual and as a member of a team > knowing how to define a role as part of the team > applying teamwork to a range of situations e.g. futures planning and crisis problem solving > identifying the strengths of team members > coaching and mentoring skills, including giving feedback |
| Problem solving that contributes to productive outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > developing creative, innovative and practical solutions > showing independence and initiative in identifying and solving problems > solving problems in teams > applying a range of strategies to problem solving > using mathematics, including budgeting and financial management to solve problems > applying problem-solving strategies across a range of areas > testing assumptions, taking into account the context of data and circumstances > resolving customer concerns in relation to complex project issues |
| Initiative and enterprise that contribute to innovative outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > adapting to new situations > developing a strategic, creative and long-term vision > being creative > identifying opportunities not obvious to others > translating ideas into action > generating a range of options > initiating innovative solutions |

| Skill | Facets |
|---|---|
| Planning and organising that contribute to long and short-term strategic planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > managing time and priorities – setting time lines, coordinating tasks for self and with others > being resourceful > taking initiative and making decisions > adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies > establishing clear project goals and deliverables > allocating people and other resources to tasks > planning the use of resources, including time management > participating in continuous improvement and planning processes > developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it > predicting – weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria > collecting, analysing and organising information > understanding basic business systems and their relationships |
| Self-management that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > having a personal vision and goals > evaluating and monitoring own performance > having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and visions > articulating own ideas and visions > taking responsibility |
| Learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > managing own learning > contributing to the learning community at the workplace > using a range of mediums to learn – mentoring, peer support and networking, IT and courses > applying learning to technical issues (e.g. learning about products) and people issues (e.g. interpersonal and cultural aspects of work) > having enthusiasm for ongoing learning > being willing to learn in any setting – on and off the job > being open to new ideas and techniques > being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills > acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change |
| Technology that contributes to the effective carrying out of tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > having a range of basic IT skills > applying IT as a management tool > using IT to organise data > being willing to learn new IT skills > having the OHS knowledge to apply technology > having the appropriate physical capacity |



The list of facets set out above is not an exhaustive list and the facets will vary from one qualification to another.

This pamphlet was produced on behalf of the National Quality Council with funding provided through the Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations and state and territory governments. February 2008.

Disclaimer: the views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Australian Government or state and territory governments.