



Teacher's Guide - What Skills Do Employers Want?

No one knows for sure how the future will evolve, but we do know that the nature of work will certainly continue to change. Changes in technology and technological applications are transforming the workplace and redefining the nature of work.

Work today is flexible and often organized in teams. New basic skills are required of all workers in all sectors of the emerging economy. Over time, workers must be prepared to master new skills as they are needed. Since jobs are interdependent, job-specific technical skills are no longer sufficient.

Employers increasingly value transferable employability skills in their workers - for example, good communication, problem solving, teamwork, respect for others and active listening. Employability also includes skills, attitudes and habits such as reading and writing effectively, using technology and information systems, lifelong learning, initiative and energy. Employability skills provide the basic foundation to get, keep and progress in a job to achieve the best results. Because they are transferable, they cut across all industries and jobs from entry level to CEO. All workplaces look for these skills in their employees. They are the same skills that students need to be successful in school and in their future careers.

Students can develop these skills in many different ways even before they enter the workplace. Doing so helps them make a successful transition from school to work - through formal studies at school, observing role models in media and, in their personal lives, having responsibilities such as regular chores at home and talking with significant adults about their strengths, interests and what careers they might like to pursue. Young people benefit from having many and varied work-related experiences, such as career talks, job shadowing, co-operative education placements and volunteering, to enable them to explore the world of work and where they fit. Parents, schools and employers can work together to help students understand and learn these skills and chart their own course into the future.

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IEC Industry - Education Council of Hamilton
554 Main Street E, 3rd Floor, Hamilton, ON, L8M 1J3
www.iechamilton.ca | t. 905-529-4483