

# Identify Your Key Skills and Develop a “Skills Language” to Describe Yourself

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*This entire section has been copied from The Quick Job Search, Third Edition by J. Michael Farr. Mr. Farr is one of America’s most knowledgeable authors on job search and career planning. He is a founder of the self-directed career planning and job search movement.*

## **The Three Types of Skills**

Most people think of their “skills” as job-related skills, such as using computer. But we all have other types of skills that are important for success on a job – and that are important to employers.

## **The Skills Triad**

***Self-Management – Transferable – Job-Related***

## **Self-Management Skills**

Write down three things about yourself that you think make you a good worker.

<b>Your “Good Worker” Traits</b>
1.
2.
3.

You just wrote down the most important things for an employer to know about you! They describe your basic personality and your ability to adapt to new environments. They are some of the most important skills to emphasize in interviews, yet most job seekers don’t realize their importance – and don’t mention them.

Review the Self-Management Skills Checklist that follows and put a check mark beside any skills you have. The key self-management skills

listed first cover abilities that employers find particularly important. If one or more of the key self-management skills apply to you, mentioning them in interviews can help you greatly.

<b>Self-Management Skills Checklist</b>	
<b>Check Your Key Self-Management Skills – Employers Value These Highly</b>	
Accept supervision	Hard worker
Get along with coworkers	Honest
Get things done on time	Productive
Good attendance	punctual
<b>Check Your Other Self-Management Skills</b>	
Able to coordinate	Good-natured
Ambitious	Helpful
Assertive	Humble
Capable	Imaginative
Cheerful	Independent
Competent	Industrious
Complete assignments	Informal
Conscientious	Intelligent
Creative	Intuitive
Dependable	Learn quickly
Discreet	Loyal
Eager	Mature
Efficient	Methodical
Energetic	Modest
Enthusiastic	Motivated
Expressive	Natural
Flexible	Open-minded
Formal	Optimistic
Friendly	Original
Patient	Solve problems
Persistent	Spontaneous
Physically strong	Steady
Practice new skills	Tactful
Reliable	Take pride in work
Resourceful	Tenacious
Responsible	Thrifty
Self-confident	Trustworthy
Sense of humor	Versatile
Sincere	Well-organized
<b>List Your Other Self-Management Skills</b>	

After you are done with the list, circle the five skills you feel are most important and list them in the box that follows.

<b>Your Top Five Self-Management Skills</b>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

### Transferable Skills

We all have skills that can transfer from one job or career to another. Your mission is to find a job that requires the skills you have and enjoy using.

In the following list, put a check mark beside the skills you have. You may have used them in a previous job or in some non-work setting.

**It's not bragging if it's true.** Using your new skills language may be uncomfortable at first, but employers need to learn about your skills. So practice saying positive things about the skills you have for the job. If you don't, who will?

<b>Transferable Skills Checklist</b>			
<b>Check Your Key Transferable Skills Employers Value These Highly</b>			
	Instruct others		Meet the public
	Negotiate		Organize/manage projects
	Manage money, budget		Public speaking
	Manage people		Written communication
	Meet deadlines		
<b>Check Your Skills for Working with Things</b>			
	Assemble things		Drive, operate vehicles
	Build things		Good with hands
	Construct/repair things		Observe/inspect things
	Operate tools, machines		Use complex equipment
	Repair things		Use computers
<b>Check Your Skills for Working with Data</b>			

Analyze data	Evaluate
Audit records	Investigate
Budget	Keep financial records
Calculate	Locate information
Check for accuracy	Manage money
Classify things	Observe/inspect
Compare	Record facts
Compile	Research
Count	Synthesize
Detail-oriented	Take inventory
<b>Check Your Skills for Working with People</b>	
Administer	Kind
Advise	Listen
Care for	Negotiate
Coach	Outgoing
Confront others	Patient
Counsel people	Perceptive
Demonstrate	Persuade
Diplomatic	Pleasant
Help others	Sensitive
Instruct	Sociable
Interview people	Supervise
Tactful	Trusting
Tolerant	Understanding
Tough	
<b>Check Your Skills for Working with Words/Ideas</b>	
Articulate	Inventive
Communicate verbally	Library research
Correspond with others	Logical
Create new ideas	Public speaking
Design	Remember information
Edit	Write clearly
Ingenious	
<b>Check Your Leadership Skills</b>	
Arrange social functions	Mediate problems
Competitive	Motivate people
Decisive	Negotiate agreements
Delegate	Plan events
Direct others	Results-oriented
Explain things to others	Risk-taker
Influence others	Run meetings
Initiate new tasks	Self-confident
Make decisions	Self-motivated
Manage or direct others	Solve problems
<b>Check Your Creative/Artistic Skills</b>	
Artistic	Expressive

	Dance, body movement		Perform, act
	Drawing, art		Present artistic ideas
<b>List Your Other Transferable Skills</b>			

When you are finished, circle the five transferable skills you feel are most important for you to use in your next job and list them in the box below.

<b>Your Top Five Transferable Skills</b>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

### **Job-Related Skills**

Job Content or job-related skills are those you need to do a particular occupation. A Computer Support Specialist, for example, needs to know how to oversee the daily performance of computer systems. List your top five job-related skills.

<b>Your Top Five Job-Related Skills</b>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	