



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

- **What are Transferable Skills?**
- **Identifying Transferable Skills & Examples**
- **Using Transferable Skills in Your Job Search**

A compilation organized
by TQM Consulting in association with
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What are Transferable Skills?

Transferable skills are skills you have obtained through previous work experience, workshops, classes, parenting, hobbies, sports, volunteering or any other experiences or activities in your life that are applicable to your future employment opportunities. Transferable skills are important when changing careers, facing a layoff and/or graduating from college. If you are a first time job seeker or have been unemployed for an extended length of time, these skills will be essential in your search for work.

Identifying Transferable Skills & Examples

To help identify transferable skills, start by writing down previous jobs and the skills and duties obtained at those positions. If you are re-entering the workforce or seeking your first job, make a list of your life experiences including volunteer work, workshops, training, classes, etc., and the skills you've acquired to make up this list. The following are examples of skills "transferred" from one position to another.

Stay-at-home mom seeking position as a Server

Many of the skills acquired through raising your children are easily transferred to a Server position, such as:

- Communication, organizational and time management skills
- Preparing meals and catering to specific allergies and food preferences
- Keeping track of supplies and food items needed
- Keeping your kitchen and food preparation station clean and safe
- Volunteering with your kids and activities at school

Student seeking position as a Customer Service Representative

Some of the skills that you've acquired as a student that are easily transferred to Customer Service positions are:

- Listening, communication and verbal skills
- Honesty and reliability
- Good time management and organizational skills

(Remember, employers are looking for a positive attitude and excellent work ethic. Demonstrate these skills in your networking, resume, cover letter and interview.)

Receptionist seeking position as an Administrative Assistant

The skills you'll need to become an Administrative Assistant are very similar to those you previously obtained as a Receptionist, such as:

- Comfortable with various software programs and the Internet
- Ability to answer multi-lined telephones
- Taking direction and ability to work independently
- Strong verbal and written communication
- Time management, planning and organizing

Using Transferable Skills in Your Job Search

Cold Calls

If you are applying for a position not yet advertised, the first thing you should do is conduct some research on the industry or the company. Find out what skills they are looking for and emphasize those on your resume and cover letter. Also, see the “**Informational Interviews**” handout for more information (located in our resource library).

Advertisement

If you are replying to an advertisement, the information you’ll need is in the ad. If they are looking for an individual with an “outgoing personality and excellent time management skills” and you have both those qualities, write that down. Use their wording whenever possible (without stretching the truth of course). Show confidence by demonstrating you are exactly the person they are looking for.

Remember to use a cover letter. This gives you the opportunity to highlight what you’ve done in the past and how these skills relate to the position you are applying for.

Resumes

When you have limited work experience in the field of work you are targeting, the best resume style to use is the *Combined* or *Functional Resume* style (see below).

Sandy Beach
#1122 -44 West Rodeo Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 92033
(000) 111-2222
lookingforwork@hotmail.com

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position as an Office Assistant

QUALIFICATIONS

Accounting

- Performed various clerical and administrative tasks related to employee benefits and payroll for over 120 staff

Research/Planning

- Researched and prepared occupational classifications
- Planned and administered staffing, total compensation, training and career development, employee assistance, employment equity and affirmative action programs with a budget of over \$10 million

Communications

- Managed programs and maintained human resource information and related record systems
- Screened, interviewed, tested, recruited and trained over 150 staff on an ongoing basis
- Coordinated employee performance and appraisal programs
- Researched employee benefit and health and safety practices and recommended changes or modifications to existing policies
- Developed alliances with professional recruiters, advertising agencies and temporary services

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

1995-Present	Human Resource Specialist	Vanilla Skies Ent. Beverly Hills California
1987-1995	Human Resource Generalist	Top Gun Academy Miramar, California
1986-1987	Flight Instructor	Top Gun Academy Miramar, California

This style allows you to highlight your skills in the “Qualifications” section using headings such as “Communication” or “Organization” and add your skills into the appropriate sections without having to mention where those skills were acquired. The advantage of this is that the employer can see the skills you have and immediately see how he/she can use those skills. Your specific work history is separate and simply contains the name and position in which you’ve worked. If you don’t have any direct experience in the field you are pursuing, this style of resume allows you to show your “relevant” transferable skills and how they relate to the position you are now pursuing.

Functional Resume Style

Interviews

Once you've applied for the position and have been invited for an interview, it is essential to prepare for this meeting. If you answered an advertisement from a job bank or newspaper ad, review it and think about what initially fascinated you about the position.

- Was your experience very similar to what they are asking?
- Are they advertising for great organizational and time management skills or strong communication and team player skills?

Always use the abilities you have that are relevant and useful for that position. Some specific examples of how you acquired those skills and how you can apply them to this new position are a great way to impress the employer and assist them in hiring you as their new employee.

For more information for preparing for an interview, please see the “**20 Typical Interview Questions**” or “**Behavioural Based Interview Questions**” handouts in our resource library.

