



## Recognising your skills and abilities

### You have many, and they are unique to you!

Too often, we think only about our technical skills as they are easiest to identify. Though these are important, employers want a person for more than just their ability to do a specific task. How you approach the task and interact with others is also particularly significant.

In the changing world of work, your transferable and personal skills are increasingly important. If you have a clear understanding of your skills, it helps you to be more confident when you approach employers. It also helps you to consider other patterns and forms of employment and should enable you to explore realistic work options.



*"It is WORTH taking the time to identify your skills."*

## Three kinds of skills you need in the world of work – Technical, transferable and personal skills

Technical skills are the specialised skills and knowledge required to perform specific duties and are often easily recognisable. They are sometimes referred to as 'work skills'. Some examples are listed below.

- Driving a forklift
- Arranging flowers
- Word Processing
- Information technology
- Window cleaning
- Gardening

- Bookkeeping/MYOB
- Machine operator
- Nursing
- Accounting
- Mechanic
- Specific software skills

Each one of these broader skills is made up of many specific skills a person must be able to do in order to complete those technical tasks. These will often form the basis for the position advertisement.

**Transferable skills** are the basic skills required to perform a variety of tasks. They are your greatest asset as they can be 'transferred' from one area of work to another and employers value their portability. Some examples are listed below.

- IT/Computer/digital
- Customer service
- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Planning/organisational

- Time management
- Reasoning and creativity
- OHS
- Driving
- Staff management
- Leadership



Determining these skills can be useful when you are trying to make a career change. Your transferable skills may also include some of your personal skills.

**Personal skills** are the individual attributes you have such as attitudes, personality, work habits and style of operation. They often describe what you are like and how you would naturally go about doing things. Some examples are listed below.

- Working under pressure
- Work unsupervised
- Being trustworthy
- Self-motivated
- Honesty and reliability
- Fast learner

- Adapts to change
- Professional
- Show initiative
- Ethical
- Planning/Organisational
- Loyal

Personal skills will often be related to how you fit into ‘the team’ or the ‘culture of the workplace’.

## How to identify your skills...we take them for granted!

*“The first critical step in the job search process is to determine your skills and qualifications and to become familiar with the best possible way to present them to employers.”*

Employers reiterate that a high proportion of job applicants interviewed cannot explain their skills. In many cases, these people may have the necessary skills and abilities to be successful in a job, but cannot communicate them effectively.

Identifying, listing and describing your skills requires a little time and patience. However, as it is critical to job search success you should plan to invest the time needed. Listed below are some examples within a table which you can use for skills identification.

Think about all the skills and abilities that you have acquired through your lifetime, from a range of sources including your **hobbies, sporting activities, school** and other **training, work, and interests**. Take a look at the next page for a couple of examples.



Job title: (Or hobby/voluntary work/sport/other)	Description: What you did and all skills required	Skill type:		
		Technical	Transferable	Personal
<b>Mother</b>	Food preparation	•		
	Washing	•		
	Cleaning	•		
	Driving a car	•		
	Child care skills	•		
	Budgeting		•	
	Organising		•	
	Planning		•	
	Money handling		•	
	Meeting deadlines		•	
	Coordination/Multi-tasking		•	
	Prioritise tasks		•	
	Reliability			•
	Work unsupervised			•
	Trustworthy			•

Job title: (Or hobby/voluntary work/sport/other)	Description: What you did and all skills required	Skill type:		
		Technical	Transferable	Personal
<b>Truck driver</b>	Drive cars and trucks C + HR class licences	•		
	Word processing: MYOB, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, internet, email	•		
	Keyboard skills	•		
	Operate a cash register	•		
	Excellent verbal communication skills		•	
	Good at problem solving		•	
	Money handling skills		•	
	Good organiser		•	
	Work for long hours			•
	Hard working			•
	Reliable and honest			•
	Able to work under pressure			•
	Outgoing and friendly			•
	Able to work autonomously			•
	<b>OTHER SKILLS:</b>			•
	Play piano and guitar	•		
OHS training		•		



Now have a go at doing this for yourself. Use a piece of paper or make a similar table on your computer and start listing! You may find it easier to simply brainstorm all your skills at once, or you may prefer to list them systematically and individually by job title, interest area, hobby etc. Whichever way you choose, remember this is your own unique set of skills – and they are **your greatest assets!**



Go to the Jobs and Careers section of the Jobs and Skills WA website to help you build a list of your skills.

[jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/jobs-and-careers](https://jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/jobs-and-careers)

You may find it useful to get a friend to add to your list

### **Be open to new possibilities**

Remember, this is your journey and you DO have control over the entire job search process. By remaining open and flexible, you will invite opportunities that you may not have considered in the past – but may be just what you were searching for all along!

Before starting to look for work, consider what kind of work suits you and what kind of working pattern will agree with your lifestyle.

You may decide you need to improve your current skills and abilities to take a whole new career direction or you may want to stay in the area you have always worked.

*Having a good idea of both your “skills” and your “needs” will make it much easier to focus on your unique job search plan and also to decide which areas you will be prepared to compromise if necessary.*