



NACE[®]

Career Readiness Resources

Skills Employers Seek

Courtesy of Allegheny College Career Education

SKILLS Employers Seek...

that liberal arts graduates have!

VERBAL COMMUNICATION



Consider your experiences as a student, intern, or employee. In any of those roles, have you: Conducted a classroom presentation? Led a student group meeting? Participated in a debate? Negotiated with your student group on how to complete a project? Used the spoken word to de-escalate a tense situation?

PROBLEM SOLVING



Have you put together an argument for a paper? Solved connectivity issues between your computer and printer? Devised a strategy to move to the next level of a game? It is important to understand how you accomplished these tasks. What was your process and how can it apply to different situations? Look at the learning outcomes on your syllabi for help.

ADAPTABILITY



Sometimes the unexpected happens and employees must be able to pivot quickly to meet new demands. You are particularly adaptable because of the cross-disciplinary nature of your liberal arts education. Think of a time when you had to overcome an obstacle. How did you alter your approach to meet the challenge?

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE RELATED TO THE JOB



Many job descriptions will include details about the technical knowledge you must have. Stay current on industry trends by reading new research, following companies on LinkedIn, attending or participating in annual conferences, or using onetonline.org to learn about technical skills needed for thousands of jobs.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION



Written communication is a large part of your work as a student. In many classes you'll be required to write a multi-page report or respond to an essay on an exam. Written communication is important in the working world because you must represent your company in a professional manner at all times. Practice writing appropriate and professional e-mails, using appropriate greetings, and avoiding "text talk".



TEAMWORK

You may have already worked in teams while preparing for group projects and class presentations, practicing for, and playing team sports, planning events, raising funds for your fraternities/sororities or student clubs, working part-time or interning.



ORGANIZATION

Do you keep a daily planner? Write lists or use sticky notes? How do you determine what projects need to be completed first and which ones can wait? Do you start tasks early or leave them to the last minute? Remember one is not necessarily better than the other as long as you understand your preferences and produce quality results in a timely manner.



ANALYTICAL ABILITY

Whether you're working with numbers every day or only periodically you will need to know how to interpret and draw conclusions about data. If you're not in a field that required a lot of math, think about how you manage your personal finances and determine what you need versus want.



COMPUTER PROFICIENCY

This can include industry specific software, Microsoft Office programs, or social media depending on your job. Minimally, you should be comfortable with Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. If your industry uses a particular software, be sure to familiarize yourself with it if possible. Look to the job description or ask your faculty to learn more about what skills you might need.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership skills can come from a myriad of situations. Have you been part of a club, athletic team, or held a job? Did you take the lead on a group project or perform community service? Remember, you don't have to have the title of "manager" or "president" to be considered a leader!

THE GATEWAY · CAREER EDUCATION

Describing Your SKILLS

INSTRUCTIONS

In this activity you will learn how to develop bullet points for your resume. Read the guidelines below and then compose one action statement for each skill listed to the right that could go on your resume.

Remember to consider all jobs, internships, volunteer experiences, service-learning projects, involvement in clubs/organizations or other co-curricular activities, sports, research, study abroad, major/relevant class projects, and professional memberships or professional development such as conferences.

GUIDELINES

A proper bullet point is a qualitative or quantitative action statement that describes a particular task, skill, and sometimes the result.

Examples:

1. A **task** only action statement would be, "Assisted students with scheduling appointments over the phone and in person."
2. A **skill + task** action statement might say, "Utilized customer service skills in scheduling student appointments over the phone and in person."
3. Although not always necessary or applicable, a **skill + task + result** action statement could read, "Received high customer satisfaction ratings for customer service provided to students calling to schedule appointments."

All of the above examples are correct but the second and third provide the employer with a clearer understanding of which skill was used, how it was used, and demonstrates its successful use.

Additional rules to keep in mind:

- Do not use complete sentences, periods, or personal pronouns like, "I", "me", or "we"
- Action verbs should be in past or present tense depending on whether you are currently doing that work or have already completed it. The Career Education office can provide you with a list of appropriate action verbs.
- Use a thesaurus to identify synonyms describing the same action verb in a different way. For example, instead of saying, "worked with" multiple times try, "collaborated" or "partnered".
- Quantify when appropriate. Placing numbers on the resume provides the employer with an additional depth of information. For example:
 1. Tutored children ages 5-13 with homework assignments in English and math after school
 2. Presented academic research to a group of 50 peers and faculty members
 3. Managed club budget of \$2,000 and provided regular financial updates



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