

# How to Use Transferable Skills



**ANNA MARIA**  
COLLEGE

## Career Services

Trinity Hall East, Room 133 (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)

Anna Maria College

50 Sunset Lane

Paxton, MA 01612

[careerservices@annamaria.edu](mailto:careerservices@annamaria.edu)

508.849.3596

As a current student or graduate, how do you capitalize on your previous work experience? How do you enhance your candidacy when crafting your cover letter and resume? How do you translate summers of waiting tables, a business internship, or volunteering time into viable selling points that are relevant to a current job opportunity.

**Answer: Focus on your transferable skills.**

## **Transferable Skills: What Are They?**

Basically, transferable skills are part of your life experience. They are versatile skills and qualities learned and developed over time that can be applied to many situations. Transferable skills are acquired through upbringing, education, networking, work, mentoring, training, social interaction, and other activities. Honed through self-awareness and action, transferable skills help you navigate through life and are essential to career success.

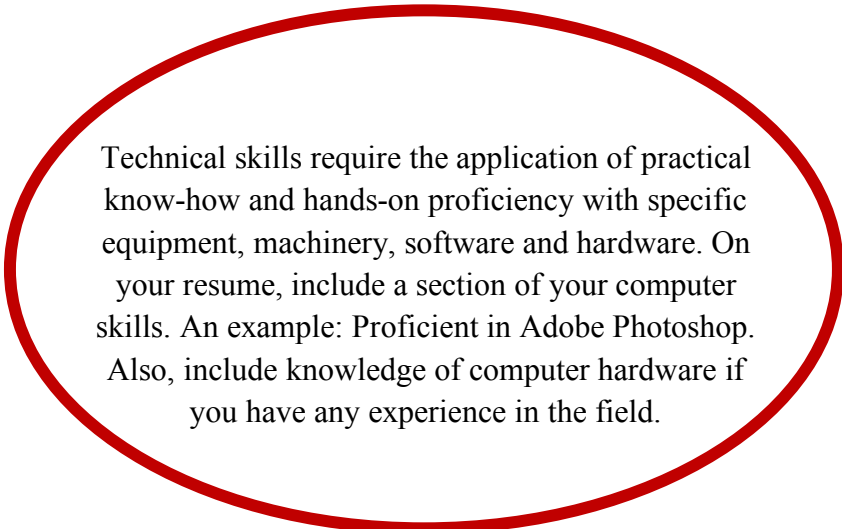
## **Transferable Skills: Invisible Assets**

For employers, candidates with transferable skills are more prepared to solve problems, generate ideas, and meet customer needs. These job seekers can “think on their feet” in various roles and situations. Example: A candidate for a business company may be as adept at handling customer issues as they are at fundraising.

## **Here are examples of Transferable Skills:**

Transferable skills are diverse and include people, data and technical skills. Let’s look at seven transferable skills that create the acronym: **TOPICAL**.

### **Technical Skills**

A large, bold, red letter 'T' with a slight shadow effect, positioned to the left of a red oval containing text.A large red oval graphic that encloses the text describing technical skills.

Technical skills require the application of practical know-how and hands-on proficiency with specific equipment, machinery, software and hardware. On your resume, include a section of your computer skills. An example: Proficient in Adobe Photoshop. Also, include knowledge of computer hardware if you have any experience in the field.

## **Organizational Skills**

**O**

Organizational skills include time management and the ability to prioritize, generate accurate reports and manage resources. During your interview, highlight your time management skills and conscientious work ethic to show your organizational skills.

## **Personal Skills**

**P**

Personal qualities include: having integrity; resilience; self-awareness; self-discipline and control; being punctual; reliable; patient; responsible; fair; creative; positive and so on. In your resume, include all the clubs and organizations you have participated in. Describe these experiences to your interviewer.

## Interpersonal Skills

**I**

Interpersonal skills involve you being able to listen, relate, understand, cooperate, manage, guide, and work well with others. When writing your resume, use the action verb list in the “How to Write A Resume” packet located in Career Services Trinity East, First Floor to highlight the interpersonal skills you may have developed in previous jobs.

## Communication Skills

**C**

Communication skills involve you using your verbal and writing skills, body language and tone of voice to communicate ideas and thoughts clearly, effectively, and persuasively. During your interview with an employer, use and strengthen your communication skills by watching the interviewer’s body language while still being aware of your own. Additionally, use a professional tone of voice to explain your qualities clearly.

## Analytical Skills

# A

Analytical skills give you the ability to analyze data, research, compile, and interpret information. Through using this skill you can handle numbers, apply logic and determine patterns. For example, if you worked on the cash register at your previous job, make sure to include your experience in your resume.

## Leadership Skills

# L

Leadership skills give you the ability to: inspire, influence, motivate, asses situations, make decisions, take risks and determine goals, achieve results through resourcefulness, creativity and teamwork. Most employers are looking for someone with strong leadership skills. On your resume make sure to include volunteer opportunities you participated in because it shows you are a motivated individual.

## Applying what you learned...

First, dissect previous experiences and jobs into core skills. Identify what worked and/or what did not work. Then focus on the value you would bring to a new job. Point out transferable skills that relevant to the job description in your cover letter and resume. Include them in your elevator speech, introduction of yourself, when networking and interviewing to demonstrate your assets and versatility:

Waiting tables in a fast-paced high-pressured setting enables you to develop customer skills and anticipate diner needs. In retail sales, you can then quickly ascertain desires and skillfully offer solutions that satisfy a customer's demands, as well as effectively resolve complaints.

Your museum internship required organizational skills for handling art and scheduling openings. Qualities you bring to an assistant event planner position where networking and time management are crucial.

Building new homes for disaster relief provides technical know how of tools, construction principles, and building codes applicable to a home inspector job.

## Transferable skills enable you to:

- Be a more desirable candidate
- Be more confident, disciplined and resourceful in many areas
- Qualify for more opportunities
- Transition and adapt quickly to new situations
- Establish and maintain meaningful relationships
- Interact well with others to achieve successful results
- Be a well-rounded, independent individual
- 

## Make yourself more marketable:

**Focus on how your transferable skills will add value and generate positive results for your employer. Use the checklist provided to see what skills are your strengths and what skills you can work on.**

# Transferable Skills Checklist

- Adaptability skills**- capacity to adapt to new situations and settings and tolerate change well
- Administrative skills**- able to operate computers and other basic office equipment
- Advanced computer skills**- able to use a variety of software programs (i.e. Microsoft Office Suite); knowledgeable about publishing and web design
- Advanced writing skills**- able to edit a written text to ensure that the message is as clear, concise, and accurate as possible
- Analytical thinking skills**- able to synthesize information and ideas and concisely, with content and style appropriate for the audience
- Artistic skills**- able to design displays and publicity material
- Care-giving skills**- able to empathize with others; able to give sensitive care to people who are sick, elderly, or who have severe disabilities
- Communication skills**- presents information and ideas clearly
- Counseling skills**- responds to what others have to say in a non-judgmental way; builds trust and openness with others
- Creative thinking skills**- able to generate new ideas, create new images or designs; able to use wit and humor effectively
- Critical thinking skills**- able to review different points or ideas and make objective judgments
- Customer service skills**- able to build a relationship of mutual trust with clients; able to handle complaints and concerns in a sensitive way
- Decision-making skills**- able to identify all possible options, weigh to pros and cons, and choose the most viable option
- Financial skills**- able to manage a budget
- Interpersonal skills**- able to interact successfully with a wide range of people
- Interviewing skills**- asks and responds to questions effectively

- Language skills**- able to translate or interpret a given language
- Leadership skills**- motivates and empowers to act; inspires trust and respect in others
- Mechanical skills**- able to install, operate, repair, and monitor the performance of equipment and mechanical devices
- Mediation skills**- able to deal with conflict in an open, honest, and positive way
- Mentoring skills**- gives feedback in a constructive way to increase others knowledge or skills
- Negotiating skills**- knows how and when to make compromises
- Organizational skills**- able to organize information, people or things in a systemic way; able to establish priorities and meet deadlines
- Perceptual skills**- able to visualize new formats and space; able to estimate physical space
- Performing skills**- able to make presentations in an interesting way; able to amuse or inspire an audience
- Persuading skills**- communicates effectively to justify a position or influence a decision
- Planning skills**- able to plan projects, events, and programs
- Problem-solving skills**- able to clarify a problem, evaluate alternatives, create solutions, and determine the outcomes
- Public speaking skills**- able to make interesting, formal presentations
- Research skills**- able to analyze data, summarize findings, and write a report
- Supervising skills**- delegates responsibilities and establishes an appropriate system of accountability
- Technological skills**- understands technical systems and operates effectively within them; reads technical manuals with ease
- Training skills**- able to create an effective learning environment