

# Employability Skills

While a good GPA is important, it is not the most important thing to employers. According to the 2008 NACE study (National Association of Colleges and Employers), below is the rank order of qualities most highly desired by employers:

## Top Qualities / Skills Employers Want

1. Communication Skills
2. Strong Work Ethic
3. Teamwork Skills (works well with others)
4. Initiative
5. Interpersonal Skills (relates well to others)
6. Problem-solving Skills
7. Analytical Skills
8. Flexibility/Adaptability
9. Computer Skills
10. Technical Skills

Employers want new hires that can communicate and work well with the team. They want to see commitment to the job and initiative to find new and better ways of doing things.

How can you get these skills? By in-class (curricular) and out-of-class (co-curricular) involvement, such as course projects, jobs/internships, volunteer work, clubs/organizations, and other life experiences. Work experience adds considerable value – 95% of employers prefer to hire new graduates who have work experience. Reflecting on your experiences makes you more marketable and proves your ability to integrate learning. You can also include these reflections in your employment portfolios (See career brief on Portfolio Information).

## Employability Grid

The following grid will help you identify some of the areas in which students are lacking and for which employers have cited as important in new hires. Look at job descriptions and use information from your research to add other skills specific to your career goal. Insert these skills to complete the grid, identifying gaps which may prevent you from getting the job you want. Set goals to develop skill areas that need developing. Conduct mock interviews to clearly communicate evidence of the skill. Demonstrating your mastery of these skills will give you a clear competitive advantage in the interview and help you reach your career goals.

Skills	Courses (projects, research, thesis, ...)	Jobs/Co-ops/ Internships	Service/Volunteer Work	Clubs / Organizations
Communication				
Work Ethic				
Teamwork				
Initiatives				
Interpersonal Skills				
Problem-solving Skills				
Analytical Skills				
Flexibility / Adaptability				
Computer Skills				
Technical Skills				