

Identifying your skills

Use this information to help you develop your CV, complete application forms and prepare for interviews. Keep this record and use it to help you match yourself to specific jobs, when making applications and preparing for interviews. These will be your key 'selling points' for that particular job. Reflect on all of the activities that you are involved do and aim for two or three examples where you can provide *evidence* of each skill/attribute.

Skill	Understand it	Develop it	Demonstrate it (use examples as part of your degree, part-time work, sandwich placements, voluntary work, hobbies, clubs and societies)
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing rapport with many different kinds of people. • Using styles appropriate to clients, customers, suppliers, colleagues and senior managers. • Active listening skills. • Interpreting non-verbal signs and signals. • Making interesting and convincing presentations to an audience. • Conveying ideas or information clearly and concisely both orally and in writing. • Adapting writing styles for different media and contexts (e.g. through reports, emails, business letters etc). • Using statistics, graphs, models etc as well as words to convey your message. • Contributing to meetings to put across your point of view. • Influencing or persuading people. • Being tactful and 'politically' sensitive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations. • Liaising with colleagues, managers, customers and clients. • Team meeting plans, agendas and minutes. • Group projects. • Creation of documents - reports, handover notes, project plans. • Use of email in a business context. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>

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<p>Self reliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive /energy • Willingness to learn • Commitment • Self motivation • Passion • Enthusiasm • Humility • Flexibility • Reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaying a can-do attitude and going the extra mile when asked to carry out tasks. • Being determined to get things done. • Bouncing back from setbacks and persevering during challenging times. • Thriving on change and adapting positively to changing circumstances. • Reflecting on your performance and taking responsibility for your own development. • Understanding your position in the structure of an organisation and behaving appropriately. • Keeping calm in the face of difficulties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation in something you are passionate about such as a hobby, community project or charity. • Working shifts or working with short notice. • Working in a pressurised environment. • Getting involved in additional, optional activities in your part-time job. • An active student life (clubs and societies, student rep, voluntary projects) will demonstrate a lively and energetic outlook on life, a sociable personality and a positive attitude. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>

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Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate appropriate amounts of time and resources to each task you are working on. • Organise your own workload and prioritise different tasks simultaneously. • Monitor your own performance and review progress. • Set achievable and realistic goals and implement a systematic and organised strategy to achieve them. • Plan ahead in order to anticipate issues and challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting and meeting deadlines and project dates. • Writing project plans. • Using Gantt charts or project planning software. • Delegating/allocating tasks to the most appropriate person. • Planning a gap year. • Organising social, charity or sporting events. • Checking, monitoring and reviewing progress of plans to gain insight for the future. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>
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Initiative and enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work unsupervised and make sound decisions. • See things that need to be done and do them without the need to ask someone. • Translate ideas into actions • Make improvements to processes and systems to improve efficiency or make life easier. • Take an innovative approach to a task or problem. • Identify new business opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to colleagues in different departments to understand the 'bigger' picture of your role and department. • Join Brunel's Entrepreneurship Society to learn new business ideas and share student experiences. • Critically assess workplace processes and systems around you and identify different ways of approaching tasks. 	

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Commercial awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appreciation of business stories and their impact on a wider scale. • An understanding of the issues facing an industry and an employer's competitors. • A consideration of economic issues and concerns such as increased revenue/profit, decreased expenditure, increased productivity, improved company image and market share. • The ability to analyse financial trends and forecast accordingly. • An awareness of commercial activity, competitive products and services and market trends. • Appropriate strategies for working within a limited budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the companies that interest you - identify their position in their sector, understand who their competitors are and the challenges they face in the economic market place. • Follow a company in the press for 3 months. • Analyse the performance of a company's key competitors. • Review a company's annual report. • Regularly read the financial and industry press as well as websites of professional bodies - raise your awareness of relevant issues and who's in the news. • Reflect on your current work experience - what would you do differently if you were the Managing Director of the company? • Involvement in a family business may provide exposure to processes such as book keeping, accountancy and tax. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>

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Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the problem by thinking critically about what you are dealing with. • Break the problem down into each component part and analyse relevant information, data and statistics. • Consider a range of options open to you including the implications of each. • A SWOT analysis where you consider the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats may help you to identify the best way forward. • Use logical and/or creative thinking to highlight the most appropriate option. • Decide on the best course of action and make a plan for how you will get there. • Implement a solution and monitor progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with unexpected staff shortages at work. • Resolving issues and conflict within your course (student rep). • Assisting with technical or IT problems in a part-time job. • Handling complex customer complaints or queries in retail. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>

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Team work and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact effectively with others on a one-to-one and whole group basis. • Work with a range of people from different backgrounds and experiences and attitudes. • Acknowledge and respect different opinions and viewpoints. • Understand individual responsibilities in order to complete assigned tasks. • Overcome obstacles and resolve any conflict. • Seek feedback and discuss and accept ideas from others. • Encourage contributions and listen to others. • Support each other and contribute to a positive atmosphere among the group. <p>Leadership is about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting objectives. • Being able to motivate and supervise others. • Taking responsibility for the direction and actions of a team. • Creating a positive working environment. • Suggesting alternative ways of working if things don't work out initially. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group projects as part of your degree - particularly when you have taken on differing roles and made a successful contribution. • Clubs and societies when you have worked in a defined role within a committee structure. • Part-time jobs in environments such as retail provide opportunities for team work in a commercial setting. • Team sports such as football, hockey and netball require leadership strong team spirit and group identity. • Supervising less experienced members of staff at work. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>

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Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate appropriate amounts of time and resources to each task you are working on. • Establish priorities and work out a schedule for what will be achieved when. • Organise your workload and prioritise different tasks simultaneously. • Work to deadlines and stay on track. • Review your work practices to ensure efficiency. • Identify anything that can be delegated. • Stay calm when deadlines are approaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juggling a demanding part-time job with study. • Setting and meeting deadlines and project dates. • Writing project plans. • Using Gantt charts or project planning software. • Organising social, charity or sporting events. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>

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Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and anticipate the needs of the customer. • Deliver consistently high standards of service in keeping with the company ethos. • Find solutions to problems that are mutually beneficial to the customer and the company. • Use effective interpersonal skills to respond appropriately and professionally to arising issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any customer facing job (e.g. retail, hospitality and sales) requires the ability to communicate effectively with customers, clients or suppliers. Excellence can be evidenced by awards such as 'Employee of the month'. • Putting yourself forward to deal with more challenging customers will help you develop expertise in this area and provide evidence of more challenging situations for job applications. • Sharing customer service experiences and new ideas with your colleagues will raise individual and team standards and identify new techniques for you to try. 	<p>You will need to be reflective in the way that you describe the examples you have developed. The STAR approach where you explain the situation, task, action and result will help you to articulate your evidence in a convincing way</p>