

# Identifying and Leveraging Your Transferable Skills



# Agenda

- **What do you mean by "transferable skills"?**
- **Activity – Identify your transferable skills!**
- **How to leverage your transferable skills in the job market**

# What You'll Learn Today

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to...



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**Identify the transferable skills that you have gained in graduate school**



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**Leverage these transferable skills in the job search process, from your resume to interviews**



# Transferable Skills

## What are they and why are they important?

Transferable skills are the skills you have acquired during **any activity** in your life that are transferable and applicable to what you want to do in a particular position.

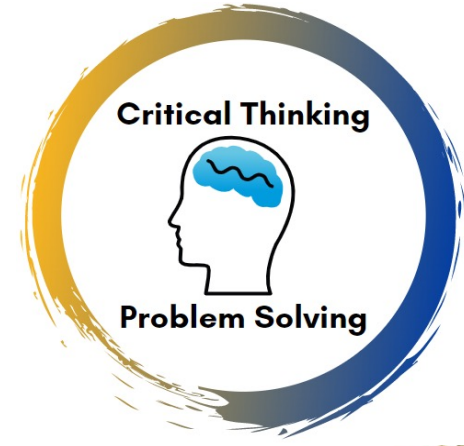
As a graduate student, you have developed a wide range of skills that have prepared you for multiple career options after graduation.

## Why are they important?

- Very useful when pursuing a change in career path
- Gives employers a holistic view of your capabilities, particularly your soft skills
- Demonstrates how well you fit in with the company and its culture



# NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES



*Obtaining requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.*



# ➤ Can you think of some other transferable skills?

What are they and why are they important?

- Think about some of your greatest accomplishments. Determine what skills you used in order to achieve these accomplishments.
- Examine your current and past experiences– think about all the skills you have learned by managing your various responsibilities.

# ➤ Can you think of some other transferable skills?

What are they and why are they important?

**Reflect on your academic and professional training.**

Research  
Problem based learning sessions  
Communicating with peers  
Oral Presentations  
Writing and reading scientific literature  
Teaching assistant experiences  
Collaborative research and projects  
Managing projects

- Analytical and Research skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Communication skills
- Public speaking/presentation skills
- Writing and reading skills
- Leadership/interpersonal/teaching skills
- Collaborative skills
- Project management skills



# Group Activity

1. Get into a group of 3
2. Follow the instructions and answer the questions on the next slide
3. Be prepared to share your insights with the whole group



# Activity

**Step 1: Work together to identify the transferable skills that this employer is looking for:**

- Transferable Skill #1- collaboration and communication
- Transferable Skill #2- Public speaking
- Transferable Skill #3- reading and writing; flexibility; teaching skills

**Step 2: Choose a volunteer from your group.**

**Volunteer - choose a transferable skill from the list above, think of a task that you have completed that involves this skill, and answer the following questions about this task:**

•Task

- How did I do this?
- Why did I do this?
- How often did I do this?
- How many people/events (if applicable)? About 50 participants: 28 students, 28 parents, principal

**Step 3: Work together and discuss how to present this task on a resume and use it to demonstrate the transferable skill.**

Example: “Facilitate laboratory and class discussions of up to 40 undergraduate students in bioinformatics and engineering” for Leadership/Interpersonal/Teaching Skills

Organized a classroom symposium for up to 50 participants to showcase Black History Month “projects?”



# Sample Job Description

## What transferable skills is this employer looking for?

### Research Associate and Project Coordinator, Concord Consortium

- Managing schedules and resources to meet project deadlines; facilitating the efficient running of the projects and the office
- Assisting in writing annual and final project reports and development of research papers
- Assisting in presentations at professional conferences
- General office management tasks, including coordinating with the East Coast office in matters relating to running the West Coast office, ordering supplies, coordinating with building manager, and handling expense reports for senior staff

#### Required qualifications:

- Master's or beyond in science or engineering, learning sciences, educational technology, computer science, or equivalent
- Technical adeptness and agility
- Good writer and editor
- Quick learner
- Good with people in small group and collaborative settings
- Good team player — willing to pitch in and do what needs to be done
- Familiarity with schools, classrooms, teaching, and education
- Data literate
- Willingness for out-of-state travel



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# ➤ Leveraging Your Transferable Skills

Now that you've identified your transferable skills, how do you leverage them to employers?

## Experience

2012-03 - present

### Master electrician

*Mosaic Life Claire, St Joseph, MO*

- Interpreted contract plans and specifications: one-line diagrams, cable and conduit schematics and wiring diagrams.
  - Installed and repair electrical systems, wiring, fixtures, motors per plans.
  - Supervised and assigned work to apprentices, electrical helpers, and journey-level electricians.
  - Trained and mentored electrical apprentices.
  - Diagnosed problems and checked leakages in low and high voltage systems.
  - Took the highest level of care for keeping the workplace area safe and organized by implementing the NEC safety regulations and guidelines.
  - Installed circuit breaker panels, switches, relays, and grounding leads.
- Key achievements:**
- Increased efficiency by 33% by identifying our client's complex wiring issue. Scheduled a repair plan and supervised a team of 6 specialists.
  - Supervised an internal training program, fully trained 11 apprentices.

2007-10 - 2012-02

### Journeyman maintenance electrician

*Mosaic Life Claire, St Joseph, MO*

- Troubleshoot and maintained electrical work on low and high voltage equipment including variable frequency and DC speed control equipment.
- Installed, maintained and repaired switchboards and circuits.
- Carried out preventive maintenance on electrical circuits and machinery.
- Repaired a variety of telemetry systems: two-wire alarm circuits, security systems, fire alarm devices and other electronic alarm systems.

**Key achievement:**

Installed energy saving devices which reduced the client's quarterly electricity consumption costs by 24% without affecting power efficiency.

2003-04 - 2007-08

### Electrical helper

*Tradesman International, Overland Park, KS*

- Helped with installing wiring and conduits: struts and MS cables.
- Used measuring tools to measure and cut wire and conduit.
- Assisted in maintaining electrical tools and equipment.
- Prepared cost estimates for materials and services.

**Highlight your relevant skills on your resume - Match the desired skills on a job description with your identified transferable skills and be sure to feature them throughout your resume, through your work experience.**

**Use action verbs!**

# ➤ Leveraging Your Transferable Skills

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August 17, 2020

Jane Smith  
Director, Human Resources  
*Acme Company*  
123 Business Rd.  
Business City, CA 54321

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am interested in the author's assistant position at Acme Company, as advertised on LinkedIn. I am currently employed as legislative director for Assemblywoman Nora Kiel, Chairperson of the NYS Assembly. I believe that the skills and experiences I have gained at this position make me an ideal candidate for the job of author's assistant.

As legislative director, I have developed strong writing and editing skills. For example, one of my main duties is to prepare Assemblywoman Nora Kiel's personal legislation, which deals with issues related to her position as Senior Member of the NYS Assembly Standing Committee.

This duty requires meticulous writing and editing skills, and an ability to convey complex legal ideas clearly. I have prepared dozens of pieces of legislation and received praise for the clarity of my writing.

**Use your cover letter** - In your cover letter, focus on how your prior experience has prepared you for the new job. This is an opportunity for you to explain how your relevant transferable skills will benefit the organization, through specific examples.

# ➤ Leveraging Your Transferable Skills

Now that you've identified your transferable skills, how do you leverage them to employers?

**Talk about your relevant skills in interviews** – behavioral interview questions are a great time for you to highlight your transferable skills. Example - "Describe a situation when you had a conflict at work and how you handled it."

**Sample Answer:** *"While working on a project for a previous employer, one of my team members regularly challenged every solution I presented. He also had a tendency to interrupt and talk over others without listening to their input. I experienced a challenge in maintaining my patience when he interrupted others without listening. It reached a point where our respective managers counseled both of us on our behavior.*

*"To resolve this conflict, I had to recognize that I cannot change or control his behavior. I also acknowledged that this behavior, from both of us, was likely a result of stress due to the heavy workload of the project. Therefore, I adjusted my **own communication style** to increase empathy, avoid triggers and build patience with interruptions. We were able to complete the project and maintain polite correspondence whenever we needed to work together after that."*

✓ Professionalism; Good communication skills; Good problem-solving skills

## ➤ Resources

- **Worksheet to Identify your Skills (Skills Self-Assessment from Princeton University)** - [https://careerdevelopment.princeton.edu/sites/careerdevelopment/files/resource-links/ph.d.\\_transferable\\_skills\\_self-assessment.pdf](https://careerdevelopment.princeton.edu/sites/careerdevelopment/files/resource-links/ph.d._transferable_skills_self-assessment.pdf)
- **NACE Career Readiness: Assessment Resources** - <https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/sample-assessments/>
- **Self-Assessment for Career Exploration (provided by EDD)** - [https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/LMID/Self\\_Assessment\\_for\\_Career\\_Exploration.html](https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/LMID/Self_Assessment_for_Career_Exploration.html)
- **Schedule an appointment** with our Graduate Student Career Specialist, Vanessa Lee, or connect with the Graduate Peer Advisor/GSA Career Center Liaison during office hours! Visit <https://careers.ucr.edu/grad-students> for more information and resources.



# Questions?