



# Transferable Skills

414.288.7423 ■ [career.services@marquette.edu](mailto:career.services@marquette.edu) ■ [www.marquette.edu/csc](http://www.marquette.edu/csc) ■ Holthusen Hall, 1st floor

Transferable, functional skills are required in many different work situations. They are built into your liberal arts education and are valued by employers. A bit of reflection will allow you to see that your courses, research projects, college work experience, extracurricular activities, internships and field study experiences have all been instrumental in providing you with skills that employers value. If asked in a job interview how your education has prepared you for a specific job, you can be ready with some good answers if you think about it beforehand. Take a look at the list below and determine which of these transferable skills you have developed.

## Planning and Organizational Skills

- Meet deadlines and manage time effectively
- Work under time and environmental pressures
- Successfully juggle multiple demands (school and work)
- Identify and prioritize things to be accomplished
- Assess needs
- Develop goals for self and/or an organization
- Work effectively with organization members
- Follow up with others to evaluate progress of tasks
- Stick to a difficult endeavor and see it through to completion (4 years of college)

## Critical Thinking Skills

- Quickly and accurately identify the key issues when making a decision or solving a problem
- Identify general principles that explain data or human behavior
- Examine assumptions underlying analyses or conclusions
- Recognize interrelationships in information obtained from diverse sources
- Use facts to judge validity of theories
- Create innovative solutions to complex problems
- Critically evaluate theories and research and apply the results to solve problems

## Human Relations and Interpersonal Skills

- Maintain group cooperation and support
- Keep a group on track when working towards a goal
- Interact and work effectively with peers, superiors and subordinates
- Interact with and appreciate people from diverse cultural, social, ethnic and religious backgrounds
- Communicate effectively and sensitively in both individual and group situations
- Teach a skill, concept or principle to others
- Leadership skills
- Demonstrate effective social behavior in a variety of settings and circumstances
- Effectively collaborate with others to complete projects or reach goals
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities
- Ability to work on a team on diverse assignments

### Oral and Written Communication Skills

- Organize and present ideas effectively for formal and spontaneous speeches
- Effectively participate in group discussions and brainstorm ideas
- Debate issues while respecting the opinions of others
- Read and condense large amounts of material
- Write reports clearly, grammatically, concisely, objectively, convincingly and in appropriate format
- Write and speak effectively in a foreign language
- Delivered verbal presentations clearly and persuasively
- Express and defend ideas in a clear, objective, non-dogmatic manner
- Effectively utilize campus resources for public relations
- Use various media to present ideas effectively and/or imaginatively
- Possess courteous telephone skills

### Research and Investigation Skills

- Use a variety of sources of information to research problems or answers to questions
- Conduct literature searches on \_\_\_\_\_.
- Develop a new research question(s)
- Apply a variety of research methods to test the validity of data
- Design and experiment, plan or model that systematically defines a problem
- Construct, administer and interpret questionnaires or surveys
- Ethically recruit and treat research subjects
- Select appropriate statistical tests for the analysis of research
- Analyze and interpret statistical data.
- Interpret qualitative and quantitative data
- Use computers or laboratory equipment to assist with research
- Select, administer, score, and interpret various psychological tests or assessments
- Deal effectively with financial, temporal, and personnel constraints on research

### Computer Skills

- Use computer software to prepare reports, graphs, brochures, etc and to conduct research
- Internet research and e-mail skills
- Computer programming skills
- Webpage and website design skills

### Personal Skills

- Define and explain ethical behavior and practice it in difficult situations
- Take initiative in job related duties
- Tolerance for stress and ambiguity
- Demonstrate flexibility and ability to handle change
- Recognize the value of life long learning and seeks professional development opportunities
- Identify personal values and apply them when making decisions
- Ability & motivation to develop knowledge and skills in expanding job responsibilities

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New economy organizations value liberal arts education because general skills can better prepare the student for changing economic conditions than pre-professional courses. Liberal arts curricula (i.e., fields including English, literature, social, physical, and natural sciences) offer a competitive edge for job seekers in the current information-based economy. It is important for the student to supplement his/her core liberal arts skills with proficiencies in research design, data analysis, computer applications, and general areas of business. The student should take a variety of courses that uniquely position him/her in the job market in order to become more competitive in today's economy.

<b><u>New Economy Skills</u></b>	<b><u>Courses for Enhancing New Economy Skills</u></b>
<p><b>Core Liberal Arts Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Written Communication</li> <li>▪ Oral Communication</li> <li>▪ Creativity</li> <li>▪ Critical Thinking</li> <li>▪ Theoretical Thinking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Core Liberal Arts Skills</b></p> <p>Traditional liberal arts courses with written and oral components. Courses in history, English, and communications may be particularly beneficial. Philosophy and political theory classes can develop theoretical thinking.</p>
<p><b>Research Design Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data Collection</li> <li>▪ Hypothesis Development</li> <li>▪ Questionnaire Development</li> <li>▪ Issues of Validity and Reliability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research Design Skills</b></p> <p>Social science-related courses. Research design skills are usually covered in the first semester of a two-semester research sequence.</p>
<p><b>Data Analysis Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quantitative Analysis</li> <li>▪ Qualitative Analysis</li> <li>▪ Descriptive Statistics</li> <li>▪ Hypothesis Testing</li> <li>▪ Cross tabular Analysis</li> <li>▪ Bivariate Statistics</li> <li>▪ Multivariate Statistics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Data Analysis Skills</b></p> <p>Applied statistics courses and discipline-specific social science data analysis courses. Courses in policy analysis may also be beneficial.</p>
<p><b>Computer Application Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spreadsheet Applications</li> <li>▪ Social Science Statistical Software</li> <li>▪ Geographic Information Systems Software</li> </ul>	<p><b>Computer Application Skills</b></p> <p>Social science statistical analysis courses, computer information system courses, and geography or public administration courses for geographic information system skills.</p>
<p><b>General Business Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accounting</li> <li>▪ Finance</li> <li>▪ Management</li> </ul>	<p><b>General Business Skills</b></p> <p>Basic business courses. Public administration courses for public sector accounting, management, and finance.</p>

Knotts, H. Gibbs. (2002, Spring). Rethinking Liberal Arts Skills in the New Economy. *NACADA Journal*, 22 (1), 26-31.