



# Discover your employability skills

## Context and background

The CBI\* defines employability as “a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy. A positive attitude is the key foundation of employability...” (*Time Well Spent – Embedding employability in work experience*, CBI, 2007).

A survey conducted in 2012 by the CBI and Pearson Education in 2012 concluded that there was a pressing need to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of school leavers (30% and 35% respectively). Sixty one per cent of employers were unhappy with school leavers’ self-management, 69% with their customer awareness and 37% with their overall attitude to work. (*Learning to grow: what employers need from education and skills*, Education and skills survey 2012, Confederation of British Industry)








**Why does employability matter?** It matters because increasing competition in the labour market means that candidates with skills and aptitudes beyond academic achievement have more to offer. All of your activities including academic work, hobbies, participation in clubs or teams, voluntary work or part time jobs allow you to develop skills. You need to be able to make the link between your skills and what employers are looking for and how analysing your skills can help your chances.

This activity can help you to start to consider your own level of employability and ways to maximise the evidence for your skills.

This group activity supports the learning outcome “Self-development through careers and work related education: Self-awareness” in the ACEG framework for careers and work-related education, 2012.

<b>What is the purpose of this task?</b>	To understand what is meant by the term “employability skills”
<b>How much time do you need?</b>	About 50 minutes
<b>What will you learn from this task?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To understand the definition of employability skills To carry out a personal skills audit</li> <li>2. To understand how you can develop these skills in other aspects of your life</li> </ol>
<b>You will need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CBI skills definitions sheet</li> <li>▪ Skills audit worksheets</li> <li>▪ Skills development worksheets</li> </ul>
<b>Now complete the task</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In a group discuss what skills you think employers are looking for, allow a few minutes for the discussion.</li> <li>2. Display the skills definitions sheet on a board or flipchart</li> <li>3. Give every participant a copy of the skills audit worksheet and ask them to complete it by putting a tick or cross in the box that best describes them. Refer to the definitions to help with this.</li> <li>4. Allow a few minutes for feedback – how easy or difficult was this task?</li> <li>5. Give every participant a copy of the skills development worksheet. In the boxes record what skills you have developed or could develop in other areas of your life.</li> </ol>
<b>Review</b>	<p>Discuss as a group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did you fill in more or less than you expected to?</li> <li>2. Where do you think your main skills are?</li> <li>3. Could you now describe your skills to others?</li> <li>4. How might your personal skills affect the type of career you choose?</li> </ol>
<b>Extension</b>	<p>If you want to spend longer on this activity...</p> <p>How would you use this knowledge about your skills in a job application or for an interview?</p> <p>If you haven't had any work experience how can you use your other activities to gain evidence that you have skills?</p>

## CBI SKILLS DEFINITIONS SHEET

	<b>Self-management</b>	<p>Accept responsibility, flexibility, resilience, self-starting, appropriate assertiveness, time management, readiness to improve own performance based on feedback/reflective learning.</p>
	<b>Team working</b>	<p>Respecting others, co-operating, negotiating/persuading, contributing to discussions, and awareness of interdependence with others.</p>
	<b>Business &amp; customer awareness</b>	<p>Basic understanding of key drivers for business success – including importance of innovation, taking calculated risks and profit – and the need to provide customer satisfaction and build customer loyalty.</p>
	<b>Problem solving</b>	<p>Analysing facts and situations and applying creative thinking to develop appropriate solutions.</p>
	<b>Communication &amp; literacy</b>	<p>Application of literacy, ability to produce clear, structured written work and oral literacy, including listening and questioning.</p>
	<b>Application of numeracy</b>	<p>Manipulation of numbers, general mathematical awareness and its application in practical contexts (e.g. measuring, weighing, estimating and applying formulae).</p>
	<b>Application of IT</b>	<p>Basic IT skills, including familiarity with word processing, spread sheets, file management and use of internet search engines.</p>

## SKILLS AUDIT WORKSHEET

	I am good at this	I am OK at this	I am not confident
<b>Team working</b>			
Joining in discussions			
Working in a group			
Influencing others			
Accepting the opinions of others			
Learning from others			
<b>Customer awareness</b>			
Answering questions			
Dealing with complaints			
Talking to people I don't know			
Helping with enquiries			
<b>Problem solving</b>			
Analysing facts			
Understanding why things go wrong			
Finding solutions			
Working to a set of rules			
<b>Self-management</b>			
Meeting deadlines			
Getting to places on time			
Being responsible for my belongings			
Working to a goal			
Not using my mobile phone for an hour			
<b>Communication</b>			
Asking questions			
Listening to others			
Being accurate with my work			
Writing clearly			
Using computers to find and store information			
Speaking to a group			
Speaking to people in authority			
Using e mail appropriately			
<b>Numeracy and ICT</b>			
Analysing figures			
Using standard computer packages such as Word or Excel			
Doing basic sums without a calculator			
Keeping track of what I spend			

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET

<b>School</b>	<b>With friends</b>	<b>Drama, music, dance</b>
<b>Sport</b>	<b>me</b>	<b>Part time job</b>
<b>Home</b>	<b>Personal hobbies</b>	<b>Volunteering</b>