INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS
The term skill is defined in the dictionary as the ability to do something well arising from talent, training, or practice.\(^1\)

The term Employability Skills was coined by the Conference Board in 1992 to describe those skills which provide the basic foundation, the combination of skills, attitudes and behaviours to get, keep and progress on a job, to work with others on a job, and to achieve the best results.\(^2\)

In ensuing years we have come to realize that these skills are the skills needed for much more than employability. They are, in fact, the generic set of skills that are needed throughout all career and life development activities. They are not limited in their applicability and may be used in all environments. The term generic also refers to the transferable nature of these skills.\(^3\) In today’s world there is an increasing need for people to be able to transfer their skills to new and constantly changing contexts. Therefore, part of the life/work development process must be the acquisition of skills that can be applied to a variety of situations.

These employability skills are combined in various ways and have several other names, such as: transferable skills, core competencies, core skills, non-technical skills, Essential Skills\(^4\), generic skills, soft skills, basic skills, and critical workplace competencies\(^5\), depending on various perspectives of research and applicability as well as the contexts in which they are being applied or used. Some people have recently coined the term E Skills to describe the broad range of Employability Skills, Essential Skills, Entrepreneurial Skills and Emotional Intelligence.

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SKILLS REQUIRE ACTION
The nature of skills requires action in order for them to be noticeable. Skills also call into play the two functions of thought and action which join together in such terms as common sense and judgement.

The framework of Employability Skills actually includes attitudes and behaviours as well as skills. However, if we can look at what we would see someone doing who is exhibiting a certain attitude, then we can describe that attitude in terms of actions. Then those actions can be learned, developed, practiced and ultimately turned into a set of skills.

FORGET THE LABELS, LOOK AT THE ACTIONS
A key to understanding these generic skills and eliminating the confusion about various labels or titles is by looking at what people do when they are actually using these skills. The lists on the following pages give descriptions of the kinds of actions you would see people carrying out when they are demonstrating or performing these skills. Once it is understood what the skills look like when they are being demonstrated, the actual label given to that skill becomes less important. There is no definitive answer to this dilemma, for there are as many perspectives on this topic as there are specific labels and groupings. It is important for career practitioners to choose the label and grouping which is most significant for their clientele or learner population.

There are two points to keep in mind when seeking to describe or define these attitudes, behaviours, and skills:
1. Ask the questions, What does it look like? or What would you see someone doing? and
2. Can you clearly describe the attitude, behaviour, or skill so everyone in your population or group knows exactly what is meant and expected?

Consider the term good attitude. What does that really mean? What does it look like? What would you actually see someone doing if he/she had a good attitude? When that question can be answered in terms of specific actions, then the career practitioner is on the way to assisting the learner in knowing what has to be learned, practiced, and demonstrated.
In this Appendix, descriptions of the skills (not necessarily performance indicators) are given which should spark ideas for how to demonstrate these skills. It is important to note that these descriptions could be regrouped under a new heading or framework, for example, good attitude. So we might pull together some or all of the descriptions from Listening Skills, Initiative, Oral Communication, Ethics, as well as Self-Esteem and Confidence in order to give a composite picture of a good attitude, for example.

The group of skills currently known as Employability Skills are actually so generic that they are common to all life/work development activities. Research of the literature shows that the descriptions in the following skills lists are fairly common, however, the labels and groupings are varied. For example, change and diversity are found under Flexibility and Adaptability in the grouping in this Appendix. Only the simplest of labels has been given to the groupings of skills that follow and extensive lists of descriptions or performances are included. The career practitioner can search the skills lists for the descriptions that fit their needs and regroup them according to their own purposes.

In the planning phase of the career development activity, practitioners should consider validating the list of descriptors or performance indicators with a group of employers and others in the population who will be using the criteria. It is imperative that there is agreement upon the language describing the demonstrations so that the learner will not be trying to guess what is meant by certain terminology or a particular skill statement. This then leads to a more meaningful assessment process.
MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES
According to Dr. Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences Theory, there are seven intelligences:

- Linguistic
- Logical-Mathematical
- Spatial
- Bodily-Kinesthetic
- Musical
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal

These intelligences are related to generic skill development in that each intelligence highlights a person’s natural ability to do something well. It is not the purpose of this Appendix to outline all the connections, but two examples will serve to illustrate the interrelationship.

1. Interpersonal Intelligence encompasses the ability to understand others (Empathy) and communicate effectively with them, both verbally and non-verbally (Oral Communication and Nonverbal Communication Skills). The ability to listen to (Listening Skills) and collaborate with others as well as work in groups to achieve something (Teamwork Skills) is included in this natural ability. The ability to negotiate and resolve conflicts is also included in this intelligence.

2. Linguistic Intelligence is the ability to think in words and to use language easily and fluently. This intelligence includes skill in reading and writing (Reading and Writing Skills), being able to comprehend and summarize easily what one hears (Listening Skills) and reads, as well as being able to express what is on one’s mind (Oral Communication Skills) in a clear and comprehensive way (Creativity).

Learners can become aware of which of the intelligences they are strongest in by rating their own skills and aptitudes on a simple chart such as the one found on p. 26 of Expanding Your Horizons.

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Daniel Goleman coined the term Emotional Intelligence in his 1995 book of the same name and defines it as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.

Emotional Intelligence includes many of the skills normally associated with personal management or interpersonal relationship skills described in the skills lists on the following pages. In addition, it includes being aware of and understanding one's own feelings (Self-awareness) as well as the feelings of others (Empathy) and having rapport with a broad diversity of people. It also consists of being able to control the emotions connected with those feelings (Self-regulation) and being able to delay gratification to pursue goals. These skills also relate to being able to work towards goals and improve ourselves (Motivation), take initiative and persevere. Emotional Intelligence also includes interacting well with others, leading, persuading, negotiating, co-operating and teamwork (Social skills). Many of the Emotional Intelligence skills dealing with feelings and emotions have been integrated into the skills lists on the following pages.

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10 Ibid., p. 318.
ESSENTIAL SKILLS
Human Resources Development Canada’s Essential Skills Research Project provides information on the skills used in all occupations and in a broad range of daily activities:

- Showing how these skills vary in content and difficulty, depending on the job
- Giving examples of how these skills are used in different jobs
- Providing detailed profiles of the skill requirements of a broad range of specific occupations, including examples of materials used in actual workplace situations

Information made available through the Essential Skills Research Project is based on interviews with more than 3,000 working people across Canada and on occupational standards developed by the private sector. It:

- Examines on a job-by-job basis how people use these skills in the Canadian workplace, with special emphasis on jobs that can be entered from secondary school (more information on higher skill jobs is being added);
- Describes these skills in a way that allows you to compare occupations and decide which occupations are more suited to your strengths;
- Provides examples that illustrate how people use these skills in actual workplace situations;
- Provides rating scales that describe the level of skill required to complete the tasks associated with specific occupations—it allows you to compare the skill levels you have achieved with skill levels required in different occupations and make informed career choices, set goals for personal development and selecting materials for your portfolio that demonstrate your qualifications for desired jobs;
- Provides skill benchmarks to guide learning outcomes initiatives throughout the public education system—this may encourage a broader perspective on some traditional skills like reading and writing, which involve a broad variety of materials in the workplace;
- Reduces the up-front costs for employers and trainers in identifying skill gaps and making training decisions;
- Makes training happen more easily;
- Helps people see where training opportunities are going to be;
- Focuses on skills that are useful in life as well as in the workplace;
- Links to the National Occupational Classification System (NOC);
- Uses rating scales compatible with the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES) and the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB).
**Essential Skills Resources**

**Web Site**
The Essential Skills web site, which is under development, is searchable in a number of ways to meet your information needs. It is temporarily located at: www.atlas.ca/development/esrp2/english.

Visit the Essential Skills Database at the web site for:
- More information on applications of the Essential Skills information;
- Profiles of 170 occupations, showing how the Essential Skills are used;
- Explanations of the complexity scales used to describe skills.

**Authentic Materials Resource Guide**
This Guide, produced by HRDC, includes examples of actual workplace materials relating to Essential Skills (for example, reading text, writing), together with:

- Descriptions of the jobs with which they are associated;
- Assignments of skill complexity levels — the examples illustrate what the different levels of complexity look like in the workplace. This will show you what you would do in other jobs requiring reading or document use at the same level of difficulty;
- Tips to help teachers incorporate authentic materials into classroom activities to help make learning more relevant for students.
The Employability Skills–Essential Skills Connection

- Employability Skills and Essential Skills are the same skills.
- The Essential Skills Research Project looks in greater detail at these skills. It provides information on the different ways skills are used in the workplace. It also describes the different tasks people perform in their jobs and the different skill levels associated with those tasks.
- These skills are used beyond the workplace in a broad range of daily activities.
- The Employability Skills Profile also includes attitudes and behaviours that employers are looking for.

Skills are important

Essential Skills and Employability Skills are enabling skills that:

- Help people perform the tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life
- Provide people with a foundation to learn other skills
- Enhance people’s ability to adapt to workplace change

Having and using these important skills, attitudes and behaviours helps you make smoother transitions and better connections—whether from school to work or further study, from employment back to education, or from job to job—and manage the many changes you experience in your lives.

Essential Skills and Employability Skills information helps:

- Students see what employers are looking for, explore careers and get information about what people do in specific jobs;
- Teachers see the connection between skills development and what teachers are already doing and incorporate actual workplace materials into their classroom activities;
- Guidance and career counselors advise students, workers and others making labour market transitions about career options and educational routes;
- Course and curriculum developers create educational programs and activities;
- Employers select and develop training for their employees;
- Trainers develop customized training programs;
- Parents, mentors and advisors to assist students plan for their future.
Make the Skills Connection

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS
SHOWS YOU WHAT EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS
SHOW YOU WHAT THESE SKILLS LOOK LIKE IN DIFFERENT JOBS

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS & ESSENTIAL SKILLS ARE THE SAME SKILLS

These skills are used beyond the workplace in a broad range of daily activities.

SKILLS FOR LIFE
LEARNING AND WORK

GENERIC SKILLS
# Connecting to the 21st Century

**Skills, Attitudes & Behaviours for Life, Learning and Work**

*Your gateway to the resources*

## Conference Board of Canada: Employability Skills

- Read, comprehend and use written materials including graphs, charts and displays
- Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted
- Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results
- Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted
- Listen to understand and learn
- Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions
- Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g. skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts and social sciences)
- Work with others
- Use technology, instruments, tools, and information systems effectively
- Continue to learn for life

## HRDC’s Essential Skills

- Reading text
- Document use
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Oral communication
- Thinking skill
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Job task planning and organizing
- Significant use of memory
- Finding information
- Working with others
- Computer use
- Continuous learning

## Conference Board of Canada: Attitudes & Behaviours Employers Look For

- Self-esteem and confidence
- Honesty, integrity and personal ethics
- Initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done
- Accountability for actions taken
- A positive attitude toward change
- Recognition of and respect for people’s diversity and individual differences
- The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done—creativity
- The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life
- The ability to manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals
- A positive attitude to learning, growth and personal health
DEVELOPMENT OF GENERIC SKILLS

The development of transferable or generic skills employs three commonly accepted principles of learning:

1. Learning requires the active participation of the learner.
2. People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
3. Learning is both an individual and a group process.

Because people learn in a variety of ways (learning styles), opportunity should be given for learners to experience more than one way of developing skills. Some learn best by listening, some are visual learners, others respond to hands-on learning, and still others require active involvement in order to learn.

The development of generic skills follows the same Learning Process Taxonomy for Life/Work Designs found in Appendix B. The four stages are:

1. Acquisition (discover, explore, understand)
2. Application (demonstrate, apply)
3. Personalization (integrate, internalize)
4. Actualization (externalize, improve)

Fundamental to the development of generic skills is that they must be integrated with other learning and knowledge. One may be required to display some content knowledge in order to apply the skill, for example, writing well, but if one doesn’t have any knowledge of the topic, it won’t be possible to demonstrate the writing skill.

Generic skill development linked to specific content knowledge is a central component of career development. Being able to talk about one’s skills and knowledge and how they can be used in various settings or contexts is crucial to feeling competent or proactive in the deliberate design of one’s life and work.
Skills Development Tools

Your Skills Profiler
HRDC is currently developing a booklet called Your Skills Profiler with input from the Conference Board of Canada, which outlines 3 easy steps to identifying your skills, attitudes and behaviours ... and marketing yourself.

This tool starts from the premise that everybody has skills. It helps you identify the skills you have in the things you do in all areas of your life, at whatever point you are starting from. It then helps you put your skills together in a profile. Finally, Your Skills Profiler helps you match your skills to your situation, whether you are applying for a job or postsecondary education or preparing for an interview.

This HRDC product can be ordered from:
Human Resources Development Canada
Public Inquiries Centre
140 Promenade du Portage
Hull, PQ   K1A 0J9
Fax: 819-953-7260
Internet: http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/career-carriere

Employability Skills Toolkit for the Self-Managing Learner
The Employability Skills Toolkit will be launched in May, 2000.

The Toolkit mirrors the learning cycle in guiding the learner through the stages of:
• Identifying their employability skills in things they do or can do;
• Self-assessing to underline their skill strengths and highlight their skill challenges;
• Planning effective skills development activities;
• Providing examples of best practices in developing individual skills;
• Giving and getting feedback.

The Toolkit does all of this not for students only, but for any learner.
• Making a transition;
• Engaging in or supporting personal or professional development;
• Leveraging individual or organizational skills;
• Documenting and marketing their skills.
The Toolkit will consist of a suite of developmental tools, constructed according to the following design principles. All tools will:

- Be practical;
- Be motivational, perceived as relevant and transparently applicable in a wide variety of learning situations;
- Focus and build on what people do or can do so they feel confident, and see the relevance to themselves, of using the different tools;
- Support the continuous learning cycle that begins before a person enters the public education system and continues into their working lives and beyond;
- Make explicit the links between what a given employability skills looks like in different circumstances to help people transfer their skills.

Employability Skills Case Studies
In-depth analyses of recent and on-going business, education and government initiatives that develop and assess Canadians’ employability skills. Individual case studies in this ongoing series examine successes and challenges, innovative approaches and benefits to students, employees, educators, employers and communities.

Web site
For more information relating to employability skills, including downloadable versions of the Case Studies and further details on the Toolkit, see the Employability Skills web site: www.conferenceboard.ca/nbec
ASSESSMENT OF GENERIC SKILLS

One of the great strengths of the Essential Skills Research Project is that it lays the foundation for employers to assess people’s skills:

• Profile the skill requirements of particular jobs
• Assess the skills of individuals in relation to tasks of varying degrees of difficulty associated with specific jobs
• Identify the skill gaps of individuals and recommend appropriate training
• Explore the suitability of individuals for a range of jobs based on their skill levels and known skill requirements for different jobs
Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES)

TOWES is an assessment tool that measures the skill levels of individuals using the same scales developed by the Essential Skills Research Project. Information collected from a TOWES assessment may be used to:

- Help employers identify their need to provide training in these skills;
- Help employees identify their training requirements, whether for their current jobs or for other jobs they want to move into;
- Help employers work with trainers to develop customized training for their employees;
- Help employers screen candidates for particular jobs;
- Help unsuccessful job candidates identify their skill challenges and embark on appropriate training.

You can find additional information about the Test of Workplace Essential Skills online at: http://www.towes.com.
**General Remarks on Assessment**

Some form of assessment should occur in order for the learner to progress in his/her skill development. Competencies 4 and 5 refer to the need to assess one’s own performance.

The following principles should be reflected in the development and assessment of generic skills:

1. Provide opportunities for observation, including models of performance.
2. Practice the skill, using agreed-upon criteria for demonstration.
4. Reflect on performance.
5. Set goals for improvement or define skill gaps.
6. Practice, re-do and assess again.

It is recommended that there be an opportunity, not only for self-assessment, but an assessment by peers, employers and teachers or instructors. Subsequently, reflection or discussion can occur when the various assessments are assembled and compared.

The strongest skills assessments consist of performance criteria for demonstrations which have been developed and validated (agreed upon) by the groups using them.

The lists on the following pages can lead to the development of an assessment tool which could include rubrics for various stages of development.

**NOTE:**

The numbers in the black boxes in the following skills lists refer to specific Blueprint competencies.
ORAL COMMUNICATION

The range of oral communication skills include simple greetings, giving detailed instructions, using correct grammar, speaking appropriately for a variety of audiences and purposes, expressing feelings adequately, participating in conversations, making presentations and negotiating; also included are asking questions for clarification and expressing opinions in group discussions, telephone answering and a conversation style which is pleasant and conducive to good customer relations.

- Understand the difference between slang, good grammar and vocabulary, and the language of a workplace, and when it is appropriate to use each.
- Speak appropriately for specific audiences; know how to tailor the language used to the people being spoken to.
- Participate in conversations, responding to questions and expressing opinions.
- Answer the telephone courteously so as to promote good customer relations.
- Leave brief but organized messages on voice-mail.
- Make oral presentations; practice public speaking.
- Share ideas with others so they understand.
- Ask questions for clarification.
- Explain things clearly to others and give instructions.
- Deal diplomatically with difficult people or delicate situations.
- Negotiate win-win situations.
- Express feelings tactfully.
- Support debate and open discussion.
- May speak a second language fluently.
LISTENING SKILLS

Active listening involves looking at the speaker and concentrating on what is being said. Listening to understand involves learning. Most importantly, follow-up actions or behaviours must show that instructions have been heard and understood.

- Look at the speaker; may include nodding and eye contact.
- Focus on the meaning of what the speaker is saying.
- Ask questions for clarification.
- Repeat what was said in own words.
- Take notes when necessary, summarizing basic ideas accurately.
- Make sense of and follow directions.
- Ignore distractions.
- Monitor when feelings and emotions arise to distract from concentration.
- Posture shows attention to speaker.

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Body language and gestures (nonverbal communication) should be aligned with verbal statements; shows that speaker is sincere.

- Familiar with examples of nonverbal communication, such as posture, facial expression, tone of voice.
- Aware whether or not body language matches what is being said by self and others.
- Understand that body language can be positively influenced by own thoughts.
READING

Skill in Reading implies the word comprehension so that text and other written materials that are read are clearly understood. Main ideas are grasped, written material is correctly interpreted, nuances of meaning are appreciated, interpretations can be drawn, and a connection to other knowledge is made when there is a good level of reading comprehension. Examples of the wide range of written text include labels, signs, graphs, blueprints, charts, letters, memos, books, newspapers, reports, and manuals.

- Look through text to locate information.
- Skim text for meaning, main ideas.
- Correctly interpret written instructions.
- Use standard reference material for clarification of meanings.
- Summarize written material.
- Draw accurate conclusions from information found in graphs, charts, and tables.
- Comprehend the meaning of text and relate it to other information.

WRITING

Writing is required for a wide range of documents from simple to complex. Includes several purposes for writing as well as a variety of audiences. Of key importance is the ability to communicate thoughts, ideas, and information in a clear, concise way in written form following a language standard that is understood by the reader, no matter whether it is a short list of items, a note of instruction, or a lengthy report.

- Write clearly, in an organized manner, using the rules of written English competently.
- Write in a way that is consistent with the purpose of the writing, i.e., informing, persuading, inquiring, entertaining.
- Write for a variety of audiences, changing style for different purposes, i.e., customers, relatives, supervisors, co-workers.
- Produce documents appropriate to the situation; use messages, memos, letters, reports, and specialized terminology.
- Proofread and edit own work for spelling, grammar, and omissions.
- Write legibly.
- Compose e-mail messages that are organized and to-the-point.
- Compose succinct messages for faxes.
- May write in a second language using written conventions of that language.
CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Critical thinking involves problem solving and decision making. Thinking skills do not operate in isolation and usually involve the application of knowledge, feelings, and other factors such as beliefs and attitudes to a situation. Common sense and judgement are terms that are also used in the application of critical thinking skills.

- Can tell the difference between fact and opinion.
- Recognize and define or explain the problem.
- Use questions to develop understanding of the problem.
- Access critical information needed to make the decision.
- Assess each alternative and anticipate results.
- Decide on solution and act on it.
- Reflect on the decision or solution, evaluate the outcome, and try another solution if necessary.
- Consider problems a challenge.
- Judge an idea by comparing it to a set of rules or needs of the moment.
- Aware of own values and feelings and how they relate to the decision.
- Apply learning and knowledge to new situations.
- Make good decisions even when under pressure.
CREATIVITY

Creativity is a form of thinking that permits the creation of new things, the drawing of new conclusions or the creation of new knowledge.

- Can see what needs to be done.
- Suggest a variety of new and different solutions.
- View problems in a unique way.
- Take pride in one’s strengths and abilities.
- Willing to pursue what one loves.
- Can summarize the situation.
- Keep an open mind to other ideas and suggestions.
- Understand the emotions of self and others.
- See the big picture and where an idea fits in.
- Can connect a variety of ideas in a new way.
- Visualize ideas and solutions to plans.
- Enjoy creating knowledge or producing something new.
- Want to be part of shaping the future.
- Skilled in the art of questioning that extends the mind beyond what is readily apparent.
- Reflect on own learning (metacognition).
Continuous Learning and Willingness to Learn incorporates a good attitude to learning new things; the learner understands that in order to survive in the future, learning new things will have to occur often, both in the community generally, and in the workplace. A willingness to learn also means the learner knows there are many ways to learn and that some ways are easier for him/her than others. It also encompasses managing one’s own learning.

- Curious and enjoy learning new things.
- Believe that learning takes place in all parts of life, not only in classrooms.
- Know there are several ways to learn (learning styles) and which way works best for oneself in various situations.
- Understand there is always more to learn.
- Willing to try learning in new ways.
- Can learn alone or with others.
- Ask questions in order to understand, make connections, and learn.
- Able to apply learning from one situation to another.
- Can teach, explain, coach, tutor, or mentor others.
- Know how to gain access to a variety of materials (textbooks, manuals), resources (courses, friends, mentors, co-workers, workshops), and learning opportunities (observing, reading, listening, note taking).
- Know when to ask for assistance.
NUMERACY

The ability to understand and have the confidence to use mathematics in activities in life, learning and work. It includes the ability to see aspects of the world through numerical connections, to see how the application of mathematical knowledge can enhance one’s understanding of common situations such as population explosion and the leasing of vehicles (for example), so that individuals can tell the difference between truth and nonsense, understand the likelihood of winning a million dollars, and critically think about the validity of information with which they are being bombarded today.

• Use the tools of computation, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, exponents, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, probability and statistics.
• Compute mentally, as well as by using pen and paper, a calculator, and a computer.
• See mathematics as a language.
• See connections in life to mathematical concepts.
• Access knowledge of mathematical concepts in a way that allows them to be applied to situations in daily life, learning, and work.

COMPUTER SKILLS

Computer skills cover the entire range of computer and computerized equipment usage according to the needs of a particular segment of society or workplace. In Information Technology it includes entry level skills in recognized software. In everyday life it includes ATM machines, cash registers and other electronic devices. In industry it includes any equipment with computerized components or controls.

• Use basic computer operating systems and their software.
• Operate computer controlled machinery or equipment in ways it is intended to be used.
• Willing to learn new technology applications and uses.
• Use communications equipment and devices ethically and effectively.
• Handle technical problems in logical and systematic manner (troubleshooting).
TEAMWORK SKILLS

Includes skills needed to work with others and should be considered in connection with communication skills because communicating involves interaction with others. Teamwork skills are also related to personal management skills as one’s effectiveness in handling one’s emotions and interactions with others is integrated into one’s ability to exhibit good teamwork skills. Teamwork skills also encompass the ability to manage teams and show leadership skills.

- Understand the role of each person in the group including one’s own role.
- Plan and make decisions with others.
- Willing to contribute key information and ideas to the discussion or project.
- Deal with differences and conflict within the group with respect.
- Show empathy—understand others’ needs, opinions, and points of view.
- Exercise give and take to achieve group results (co-operation).
- Actively participate in the work of the group and share the credit.
- Provide leadership if necessary such as motivating others, taking initiative, keeping everyone involved, and dealing with change.
- Stand by the group’s decision.
- Contribute to an enjoyable work environment.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Personal Management Skills encompasses a group of skills also known as positive attitudes and behaviours. The behaviours that show a positive attitude towards life and work include things such as: self esteem and confidence; responsibility and accountability for actions which include the ability to set and meet goals, as well as the ability to plan and manage time and money in order to meet those goals; initiative; personal ethics; being able to produce quality work; flexibility and adaptability which includes a positive attitude toward change and respect for diversity. These behaviours also include stress management and standards of hygiene and dress, and a positive attitude to health.
SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE

Self-Esteem and Confidence include being self-assured, to speak up for oneself to respect oneself and to have faith in oneself to do the job well.

- Can state own strengths and recognize personal limitations.
- Willing to try things.
- Able to learn from mistakes.
- Show an ability to handle feedback and/or criticism and be open to self-improvement.
- Have an appropriate sense of humor.
- Accept credit for things well done.
- Express feelings, thoughts and beliefs with confidence even when you have different viewpoints.
- Form positive relationships.
- Develop personal and professional networks.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Involves being reliable or dependable. People can be counted upon to do what they say they will do; includes owning up to mistakes and not blaming others for failing to meet deadlines and commitments; includes plans for setting and meeting goals, and managing time and money to achieve those goals.

- Establish realistic goals and work towards meeting them.
- Re-evaluate goals and make adjustments when necessary.
- Predict the consequences of one’s actions.
- Explain actions taken without blaming others.
- Plan how time will be used.
- Can predict how much time a task will take.
- Handle multiple tasks and demands.
- Complete work on time and meet deadlines.
- Demonstrate good attendance and punctuality.
INITIATIVE

Initiative means being ready to initiate or begin action on something without always having to be told to do so. It also encompasses persistence in completing the work without being reminded.

- Look for things to be done.
- Begin a new task when it is appropriate without being told to do so.
- Accomplish quality work without constant supervision.
- Show commitment to completing the work.

QUALITY WORK

Quality Work belongs with Personal Management Skills in that it is related to responsibility and persistence to get the job done within a time frame while meeting the standards of quality. It is consistent with the concept of good work habits that lead to producing a quality end product.

- Know what the standards of quality work are and what is expected.
- Do things to the best of one's ability.
- Strive to improve, and have pride in one's own quality work.

ETHICS

Ethics are concerned with values which contribute to a person’s right and wrong actions (or ethical and unethical behaviour); concerned with moral conduct and honesty or integrity; includes codes of ethics in organizations and businesses; human rights, sexual harassment, health and safety issues, and the law.

- Know what own values and beliefs are about right and wrong actions.
- Make personal decisions about which actions are right or wrong.
- Behave in a way that is consistent with own ethics.
- Respect confidentiality of information and know when privacy is important.
- Practice safe actions towards self and others.
- Stand up to discriminatory and unethical actions of others.
FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY

Skills in flexibility and adaptability are related to the understanding that change is becoming constant. They also involve a self knowledge that allows for coping with and adapting to a variety of personal and societal changes; includes a willingness to learn new things, a knowledge of what contributes to stress and how to manage it; a recognition of and respect for diversity of people and their individual differences.

• Prepared to accept constant change.
• Aware that one can’t control or know everything.
• Willing to compromise in new situations.
• See opportunity in change and diversity.
• Comfortably interact with others from diverse backgrounds, experiences.
• Open to comments and contributions from others.
• Read situations and relationships.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

The ability to cope with a number of stressful events without falling apart.

• Aware of which changes are influencing current decisions in one’s life.
• Understand which activities are contributing to feelings of stress.
• Recognize one’s emotions and their effect, what causes them and why.
• Control impulsive feelings and manage emotions well.
• Act composed even in trying situations.
• Aware that stress can be managed.
• Show optimism—look at situations hopefully and expect favorable results.
WEBSITES

Human Resources Development Canada’s Essential Skills Research Project
http://hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/hr1b/hrp-prh
A list of the Essential Skills and A Reader’s Guide to the Essential Skills Profiles is available. The complexity ratings for each skill as well as examples of applications for each level is described in the guide. There are also about 100 Occupational Profiles available at this site. They contain descriptions of the Essential Skills people use in each of those occupations along with examples of the typical tasks they perform.

Employability Skills Profile
Produced by the Conference Board of Canada
www2.conferenceboard.ca/nbec/
The Conference Board’s Profile has set the stage for all the developmental work that has occurred on employability skills since 1992.

Employability Skills for British Columbia
www.aett.gov.bc.ca/employability
A report on research undertaken with small and medium sized employers in B.C. to identify the skills most sought by recruiters. The skills list is available (Table 1) as well as the report.

Comparing Work Skills Analysis Tools
Prepared for B.C. Forestry Continuing Studies Network
www.cariboo.bc.ca/bfcsn/local.htm
This report compares various well known employability skills assessment tools; also of value are skills lists in the Appendix.
Applications of Working and Learning (AWAL)
A project of the Centre for Applied Academics
www.est.gov.bc.ca/cfaa
   The database at this website contains classroom applications developed by
teachers after interviewing employees about their use of HRDC’s Essential
Skills. There are also statements about which Essential Skills are most used by
those employees who were interviewed.

The SCANS List
www.ttrc.doleta.gov/SCANS/work.html
   From the U.S. Secretary of Labor’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
   A set of competencies are described in the Report: What Work Requires of
   Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000

Core Skills
www.sqa.org/higher-still/core_home.html
   The Scottish Qualifications Authority has set national standards for the five core
   skills of: Personal Effectiveness and Problem Solving Skills, Communication,
   Numeracy, Information Technology, and Working with Others. They also have
developed a structure for certifying them.