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JCCC
Career Services
CENTER
NEWSLETTER

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Transferable Skills—An Important Asset in Today's Job Market

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If you are like many of us, you may find it hard to identify your skills, or you may think that you don't have any. In reality, we all have skills. In fact, we each have hundreds of them. You can start identifying yours by simply asking, "What do I do well?"

Everyone Has Unique Talents

Russ Moxley, in *Leadership and Spirit* (2000), offers a simple way to help you identify your gifts and talents. He suggests you think of something you have always known how to do, but that you don't remember spending time or effort learning how to do. Is it coming up with creative and new ideas? Do you have a knack for staying organized? Do you write well? Instead of having stage fright, have you always enjoyed acting or speaking in front of others? Each of us has mastery in something. It is important to identify, appreciate and understand your gifts and talents so as you decide on a career or a major, your interests, values, and skills can complement your talents.

Defining Your Skills

Skills are abilities you have gained from practice and knowledge. Skills are your "learned" abilities whereas talents are your "natural" abilities. There are two types of skills:

- **Transferable skills** are skills you develop throughout your life and can apply

to a variety of situations. An example of a transferable skill would be the ability to coordinate multiple tasks.

- **Job-related skills** are skills that you use while in a particular job. An example of a job related skill for a dental hygienist would be taking an x-ray.

Essential Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are essential for success in 21st century jobs. They are skills you can apply from job to job and to a variety of work settings. The JCCC 21st Century Learning Outcomes Project Team has identified the competencies and skills students can acquire through their education at Johnson County Community College (<http://web.jccc.net/instruction/21stcentury/compskill.htm>).

The combination of strong academic and thinking skills, strong technical skills, a commitment to lifelong learning, and the ability to work in teams and to communicate effectively are constantly emphasized among employers as basic skills for everyone entering the competitive job market.

Identifying Your Transferable Skills

Your skills are like a chair. Each skill is a leg of a chair—remove one leg and the chair is off balance and may even collapse. People without a balance of skills may find it difficult to be successful in their career or educational plans.

What are your transferable skills? Begin to identify yours by taking this simple and easy survey: http://www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/car/self/career_transfer_survey.html

Additional Resources

For more information on the resources available to assist you in identifying your transferable skills, stop by the Career Services Center located on the 2nd floor in the Student Center.

