What are Employability Skills?

Employability skills are the basic personal skills and traits that any employer expects a potential new recruit to have.

Formal qualifications are important but that's not all that an employer looks at.

7 Key Employability Skills

1. Teamworking
2. Self-management
3. Business and Customer Awareness
4. Application of Information Technology
5. Application of Numeracy
6. Communication and Literacy
7. Problem Solving

Team working

Team working is all about working effectively as a member of a group. It is rare that you will ever work completely alone so an employer needs to know that you can work alongside others to get the job done. If you don't play your part as a member of the team, the team won't be effective and the job may not get done.

What skills do you need to have to be able to work effectively a part of a team?

What examples can you think of when you have shown team-working skills?

What jobs can you think of that require a lot of teamwork?

Self management

Self management means taking responsibility for yourself, your actions and for progress towards your targets. It's a pretty safe bet that you demonstrate self-management every day without even realising it.

Do you complete your coursework and hand it in by the deadline?
Have you learnt a musical instrument, learnt lines for a play or trained for a competition?
Do you at least try to get to college on time?
Do you still have to be dragged out of bed in the morning of have your progressed to taking responsibility and setting an alarm?

Each of these tasks demonstrated you have some level of self-management

What examples can you think of where you have shown self-management skills?

Business & Customer Awareness

This is the trickiest skills to develop whilst in education. It's about understanding different types of business, how their people work together and how they make money in order to be successful.

Building your business and customer awareness skills is best done through:
- work experience placements
- partaking in enterprise activities (such as running a small business whilst in education)
- researching a company you might like to work for and finding out what their vision is, what their product and market is and how they interact with their customers
- Studying a business course

What businesses might you be interested in working for in the future?
What is their vision?
How do they interact with their customers?

How have you demonstrated business and customer awareness skills? Have you completed any work experience? Have you done any enterprise activities?

Application of Information Technology

This is a skill required to demonstrate that you understand and can use effectively all manner of technology. It's safe to say that you use some form of technology and your skills will be valuable in the workplace.

What technology do you use in everyday life?

Can you send an e-mail?
Can you work your way around a computer using the appropriate programmes to complete your coursework?
Can you use the internet? What can/do you use it for?

What examples can you think of when you have shown IT skills?

What tasks might you need to do in the workplace that require IT skills?

What jobs do you think particularly emphasise IT skills?

Application of Numeracy

The 'application of numeracy' simply means the ability to bring the maths you've learnt in the classroom into the workplace. Love it or hate it, maths is a staple subject throughout your educational, personal and work life.

There may be many practical ways you have been able demonstrate this skill. Have you got your own bank account and save for what you want or do you know exactly what you want you buy with your birthday money?

Knowing what time the bus or train is that you need to catch and having the correct fare ready is a demonstration of your numeracy skills.

Understanding how you demonstrate your numeracy skills in daily life will help you begin to expand on them.

How do you use your maths skills in everyday life?

Application of Numeracy

The 'application of numeracy' simply means the ability to bring the maths you've learnt in the classroom into the workplace. Love it or hate it, maths is a staple subject throughout your educational, personal and work life.

Numeracy…numbers…money. Let's face it; no business can survive without this skill.

There may be many practical ways you have been able demonstrate this skill. Have you got your own bank account and save for what you want or do you know exactly what you want you buy with your birthday money?

Knowing what time the bus or train is that you need to catch and having the correct fare ready is a demonstration of your numeracy skills.

Understanding how you demonstrate your numeracy skills in daily life will help you begin to expand on them.
How do you use your maths skills in everyday life?
What jobs focus on numeracy skills?

Communication & Literacy

The skill of communication and literacy simply means the ability to use the spoken and written word to interact with others. No matter the industry, communication and literacy skills are of vital importance to every business.
Face to face, internal communications, e-mails, letters, telephone or graphics, every bit if how you communicate sells the company's message.

We communicate with others all the time in our personal lives, at college and also in the workplace. Most of what you do in lessons or coursework will be written and any team activities will have involved to talking to others to plan what you need to do.

You will have been developing your communication and literacy skills for most of your life. The trick is being able to draw on those skills when it counts, like in an interview.

How have you demonstrated good communication and literacy skills?

What jobs have a strong focus on communication and literacy skills?

Problem solving

This is literally about how well you can overcome a problem using the skills and resources at your disposal.

Examples might include dealing with a conflict at college or overcoming a personal difficulty.

Problem solving skills are used a lot in business, so much so that you will eventually get used to dealing with the smaller scale problems without even realising it.
In the workplace you may have to deal with a complaint from a customer or work with a colleague whom you find challenging.

Can you think of any ways that you have shown good problem solving skills?

Have you overcome a personal difficulty that you found challenging?

What jobs have a strong focus on problem solving?