



Skills, Attributes & Experiences Valued by Employers C5

As you begin to evaluate your interests, abilities, skills and values in relation to your career goals and plans, one question that may be lingering in your mind is, “What do employers want or expect?” The information below was gathered through two different studies – a telephone interview and survey of professional leaders conducted by the OSU Bureau for Social Research and a research report identifying skills required for successful job performance in a global economy published by the Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) within the U.S. Department of Education. This information can be useful to you in planning experiences during your college education that support the development of these desired skills and attributes.

RESULTS FROM 2002 STUDY BY OSU BUREAU FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

Skills Desired for Entry-Level Positions

- People skills
- Teamwork/collaboration
- Professional behavior
- Listening skills
- Self-directed/work independently
- Practices ethical behavior
- Decision-making skills
- Ability to follow-through
- Time management skills
- Open attitude to learning new things
- Leadership skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Multi-tasking
- Written communication skills
- Attentive to detail/thorough
- Organizational skills
- Ability to follow directions

Attributes Employees Should Have to Achieve Job Success

- Dependable/ reliable
- Work ethic
- Flexible
- Positive attitude
- Adaptable
- Honest
- Motivated

- Open attitude to learning new things
- Creative
- Enthusiastic
- Initiative
- Personable/friendly
- Willing to be a contributing member of a team
- Confident
- Mature

Helpful Experiences for Students to Have Upon Graduation

- Dealing with people
- Internships – formal internships in field of study
- Paid work – related to field of study
- Computer classes
- Leadership role in university student organizations
- Volunteer work – related to field of study

How Recent Grads Are Falling Short of Employer Expectations

- More hands-on field experience
- Interpersonal skills
- More application of theory to practice
- Organizational skills
- Time management skills
- Developing relationships with mentors in the field
- Leadership skills
- Computer and technology skills
- Conflict management abilities

- Need to start internships before junior/senior year
- Working with clients from diverse backgrounds
- Writing skills
- More practical experience
- Realistic expectations of an entry-level position
 - Dedication
 - Open to learning/growing
 - Awareness of career ladder
- Interview skills
 - Good cover letter
 - Articulate well
 - Good personal references
 - Fine-tuned résumé
 - Present self professionally
 - Professional dress and image
 - Make follow-up calls and write letters following the interview
 - Research the employer and ask questions to show that homework has been done on the employer
 - Have a portfolio
- Passion or desire to be a professional in one's chosen field

**RESULTS FROM
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S
"A SCANS REPORT FOR
AMERICA 2000"**

Basic Academic Foundation Skills

- Reading – Understanding written materials
- Writing – Communicating thoughts, ideas and information through writing
- Arithmetic/mathematics – Performing basic computations and choosing appropriate mathematics techniques to solve problems
- Listening – Interpreting and responding to verbal messages and cues
- Speaking – Organizing ideas and communicating orally

Thinking Foundation Skills

- Creative thinking – Generating new ideas and trying new things
- Problem solving – Defining, understanding and solving a problem

- Decision making – Specifying a goal, gathering information, identifying alternatives, considering risks and choosing the best alternative
- Seeing things in the mind's eye – Creating a mental picture from information
- Knowing how to learn – Asking questions, using resources and researching information
- Reasoning – Understanding the relationship between things and using that knowledge to solve a problem

Personal Quality Foundation Skills

- Responsibility – Completing tasks on time, having materials ready and being dependable
- Self-esteem – Believing in self; having a positive view of self
- Sociability – Meeting new people; being friendly and polite
- Self-management – Setting priorities and goals and controlling behavior and attitude
- Integrity/honesty – Making ethical choices

Workplace Know-How Skills

- Managing resources – Managing time, money and materials, and being organized
- Teamwork – Contributing to group efforts; cooperating
- Teaching others – Helping others to learn new skills
- Serving customers – Working to satisfy customers
- Leadership – Persuading and convincing others and planning to achieve goals
- Negotiating – Working towards agreements with others
- Diversity – Working well with others different than self; seeing other's points of view
- Information – Obtaining, evaluating, organizing, interpreting and communicating information
- Technology – Using computers and other technology to process and convey information
- Understanding systems – Knowing how social, organizational and technology systems work