

Yourself

Transferable Skills

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Identify Your Transferable Skills

Developing an awareness of your skills will help you to articulate them during your networking opportunities, in your resume, cover letters and interviews. Many people intuitively know what they are good at, but have difficulty communicating or putting this self-knowledge into words. Your goal is to not just communicate this effectively but to make an impressive first impression!

Transferable skills are skills that can be applied in a range of positions in a variety of settings. Unlike specific skills, such as knowing a particular software program, transferable skills are determined by past experience, interests and abilities.

Examples of Transferable Skills

The transferable skills indicated below are shown in the form of action verbs in the past tense.

1. Read through the lists of transferable skills (action verbs) and underline all of the skills you have used during your previous career, volunteer positions, in school, or in other areas of your life.
2. Review the list again, and place a check mark next to all the skills that you enjoy using the most. Think back and decide if it was the task or action itself that made you enjoy the work or if it was the work environment, culture, or people you worked with. List these factors when doing your self assessment.
3. List your top ten transferable action verbs and include them when performing your self-assessment.

Communication Skills (listening, verbal, written)

Addressed	Edited	Negotiated	Reported
Arbitrated	Followed up	Persuaded	Resolved
Arranged	Formulated	Presented	Satisfied
Authored	Fostered	Problem solved	Sparked
Collaborated	Influenced	Promoted	Spoke
Communicated	Interpreted	Proposed	Summarized
Conferred	Lectured	Publicized	Translated
Debated	Listened	Reconciled	Wrote
Directed	Mediated	Recruited	
Discussed	Moderated	Renegotiated	

Example:

- Exceptional listener and communicator who effectively conveys information verbally and in writing.

Problem-Solving / Reasoning / Creativity

Involves the ability to find solutions to problems using your creativity, reasoning, and past experiences along with the available information and resources.

Adjusted	Generated	Introduced	Released
Built	Guided	Invented	Sparked
Composed	Illustrated	Launched	Stressed
Created	Implemented	Motivated	Recruited
Established	Improved	Persuaded	Summarized
Explained	Informed	Presented	Translated
Facilitated	Initiated	Problem solved	Wrote
Familiarized	Innovated	Proposed	
Fashioned	Instructed	Provided	
Founded	Integrated	Reconciled	

Example:

- Innovative problem-solver who can generate workable solutions and resolve complaints.

Analytical / Research / Financial Skills

Deals with your ability to assess a situation, seek multiple perspectives, gather more information if necessary, and identify key issues that need to be addressed.

Accumulated	Calculated	Investigated	Shaped
Adjusted	Catalogued	Manipulated	Simplified
Administered	Compared	Originated	Stipulated
Allocated	Compiled	Performed	Streamlined
Analyzed	Computed	Planned	Succeeded
Appraised	Developed	Prepared	Transformed
Audited	Estimated	Projected	Unified
Balanced	Gathered	Redesigned	
Budgeted	Identified	Revitalized	

Example:

- Proven analytical thinker with demonstrated talent for identifying, improving, and streamlining complex work processes.

Management Skills

Deals with your ability to manage multiple assignments and tasks, set priorities, and adapt to changing conditions and work assignments.

Accelerated	Assigned	Controlled	Eliminated
Accomplished	Attained	Coordinated	Enforced
Achieved	Authorized	Delegated	Ensured
Administered	Completed	Demonstrated	Evaluated
Analyzed	Consolidated	Developed	Expanded
Approved	Contracted	Directed	Forecasted

Foresaw	Led	Produced	Reviewed
Headed	Managed	Purchased	Revised
Hired	Organized	Recognized	Scheduled
Improved	Oversaw	Recommended	Selected
Increased	Planned	Regulated	Strengthened
Instituted	Presided	Reorganized	Supervised
Interviewed	Prioritized	Resolved	Viewed
Justified	Problem solved	Responded	

Example:

- Flexible team player who thrives in environments requiring the ability to effectively prioritize and juggle multiple concurrent projects.

Mentoring / Leadership Skills

These skills deal with your ability to take charge and manage your co-workers. It also measures your ability to relate to your peers, subordinates and even supervisors. The ability to inspire others to participate and mitigate conflict with co-workers is essential given the amount of time spent at work each day.

Adapted	Delivered	Influenced	Recognized
Advised	Developed	Informed	Referred
Amended	Encouraged	Instructed	Rehabilitated
Clarified	Evaluated	Introduced	Responded
Coached	Explained	Molded	Settled
Conducted	Facilitated	Motivated	Taught
Consulted	Familiarized	Persuaded	Trained
Convinced	Guided	Provided	

Examples:

- Proven relationship-builder with unsurpassed interpersonal skills.
- Goal-driven leader who maintains a productive climate and confidently motivates, mobilizes and coaches employees to meet high performance standards.

Operational Planning / Organizing Skills

Deals with your ability to design, plan, organize, and implement projects and tasks within an allotted timeframe. Also involves goal-setting.

Achieved	Dispatched	Operated	Tabulated
Acquired	Established	Organized	Tended
Activated	Executed	Prepared	Traced
Amended	Expedited	Projected	Tracked
Applied	Forecasted	Purchased	Traded
Approved	Foresaw	Rectified	Transferred
Arranged	Gathered	Renovated	Uncovered
Classified	Improvised	Solved	Unearthed
Collected	Indexed	Sorted	Unraveled
Compiled	Inspected	Spearheaded	Utilized
Constructed	Merged	Specified	Validated
Coordinated	Modulated	Supported	Verified
Corresponded	Monitored	Systematized	Withdrew

Example:

- Results-driven achiever with exemplary planning and organizational skills, along with a high degree of detail orientation.
- Resourceful team player who excels at building trusting relationships with customers and colleagues.

Technical Skills / Computer Skills

Activated	Converted	Launched	Renovated
Applied	Designed	Maintained	Repaired
Assembled	Devised	Mechanized	Serviced
Built	Diagnosed	Operated	Solved
Calculated	Engineered	Overhauled	Upgraded
Computed	Fabricated	Programmed	Widened
Constructed	Installed	Remodeled	

Example:

- Computer-literate performer with extensive software proficiency covering wide variety of applications.

Other Skills

Defined	Increased	Questioned	Settled
Determined	Investigated	Recognized	Stimulated
Examined	Judged	Reduced	Studied
Exceeded	Learned	Rendered	Synthesized
Extracted	Observed	Replayed	Tended
Finalized	Participated	Researched	Troubleshoot
Gathered	Perceived	Satisfied	Viewed

Accomplishment Statements

Accomplishment statements are statements that provide a vivid description of the transferable skills you have identified. Once developed, these statements will be used in several ways.

Benefits of an Accomplishment Statement

Your accomplishment statement helps:

- employers understand what you have accomplished in the past and what you can do for their organization in the future.
- to quantify the scope of your experience.
- employers understand your level of involvement.
- you when creating your cover letter.
- when expressing your past successes in interviews.
- when you are negotiating salaries.

Accomplishment Verbs

Some action verbs are more result oriented than others. The key verbs to express your accomplishments are:

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| • Attained | • Improved | • Reduced |
| • Exceeded | • Decreased | • Saved |
| • Eliminated | • Maximized | • Surpassed |
| • Increased | • Minimized | |

Formula for creating “Accomplishment Statements”

Accomplishment verb + Transferable + Quantifying a scope of = Accomplishment Statement
with result Skill what was accomplished (result of what you did)

See the following page for examples of accomplishment statements.

Accomplishment Verb with result	Transferable Skill describing what skill-set you used	Quantify the scope of what you did
<i>Examples</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Generated over 35,000 unique hits per month	by developing and managing	a 200 page, active server commercial site within 6 months of going live.
Increased	annual sales	from \$11 million to \$17 million in three years.
Improved vendor management by	persuading board of directors to adopt a 5-year plan,	after history of crisis oriented management.
Saved \$10,000 annually	by developing an innovative, cost-effective concept in project management through assigning the design engineering to outside contractors	specializing in chemical plants.
Attained superior quality control	through implementing	ISO training programs for all production employees.

When updating your resume, the following examples may help you to move from an activity based approach to an accomplishment based approach.

EXAMPLE 1:

Old Style – Activity-based:

- Developed and implemented divisional and store merchandise plans.

New Style – Accomplishment-based:

- Increased sales by 22% through developing and implementing divisional store merchandising plans.

EXAMPLE 2:

Old Style – Activity-based:

- Created marketing campaigns for new product launches.

New Style – Accomplishment-based:

- Exceeded sales targets through designing innovative marketing campaign developed through extensive competitor analyses, targeting untapped market sectors, and working with dealers to develop stronger merchandising incentives.

Utilizing Your Accomplishment Statements

Utilize your accomplishment statements while networking, in your internship, project or contract proposals, cover letters and resumes and during interviews. By doing so, you will create a strong impression about your skill set, goals and self-knowledge. All of which will convey a confidence that leads to success.

Tips on How to Use These Statements

Aim to balance your statements so that they provide a broad and balanced picture of your skill set. Plan to present a maximum of six statements/jobs starting first with your "Accomplishment Verbs", then list some of your other major action verbs representing your hard skills (ie: number of years of experience, professional designations, measurable results). Ideally the last two of your statements should characterize your soft skills or personal attributes such as your people skills, communications skills or personal characteristics.

Soft Skills That Are Sought After by Recruiters:

Adaptability	Honesty	Positive attitude	Tenacity
Dedication	Integrity	Professionalism	Willingness to Learn
Dependability	Loyalty	Reliability	Work ethic
Energy	Morality	Responsible	
Flexibility	Motivation	Self-confident	
Hard-working	Passion	Self-motivated	

If you are responding to a job posting make sure that your chosen highlights match the required skill-set of the position that you are applying for. Also, make sure that the skill set you have chosen corresponds well with your job objective / career profile. Be prepared to expand on these skills in interview situations and have at least two additional examples that demonstrate that you mastered that particular specific attribute. To organize your thoughts for verbal communication, you may want to utilize the STAR response method discussed in the interview handout.

In your verbal or written communication, avoid using overly used sentences (such as "Excellent communication skills", "Outstanding leadership abilities", "Self starter") without tying them to a measurable example. In your resume, support your chosen highlights by giving more detailed examples under your "Professional Skills" section. The following examples demonstrate the expectation of content when expressing your skill set.

**Contextualize your skills
from your experiences.**

Examples of How to Express your Skill-Set

Operational / Organizational Skills

- Seven years of hands on experience in manufacturing and operations
- Strong leadership ability with a record of delivering projects on time and within budget
- Liaised between management and a staff of up to 50
- Multi-disciplinary experience including IT, plant automation, facility design, quality systems, project management
- Spearheaded problem solving teams in crisis situations and proven ability to meet project deadlines
- Minimized errors and improved lead times by streamlining product specifications process
- Adapted quickly to challenging environments, balanced priorities, and met deadlines
- Proven track record, creating and implementing strategies which improved production efficiency and reduced project cost
- Excellent problem solver with successful record of process improvements and cost reduction (six years operations experience)
- Proven ability to coordinate cross-functional teams
- Demonstrated track record of steady promotion, culminating in a senior management role
- Implemented a \$100K Enterprise Resource Planning software package throughout a multinational corporation
- Proven track record in implementing organizational change
- Ten years in the construction industry and worked on over 100 projects, directly managing over 50 skilled workers

Communication Skills

- Demonstrated strong written and verbal communication skills through teaching and entrepreneurial responsibilities
- Exceptional customer service skills demonstrated by maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction
- Fluent in English and French (written and spoken); completed Spanish introductory course
- Proven client satisfaction through well developed customer rapport
- Delivered effective PowerPoint presentations to senior management
- Wrote proposals resulting in additional government funding
- Played a key role in several project bidding processes demonstrating superb writing and oral presentation skills

Managerial / Leadership Skills / Initiative

- Strong managerial skills – motivated and assisted employees to achieve 99.5% of their personal objectives during the first six months under my supervision
- Proven leadership and team building skills – encouraged and established an "open door" policy
- Demonstrated leadership and strategy by initiating cost-cutting measures
- Strong leadership ability with a history of delivering projects on time and within budget
- Managed both unionized and salaried employees in demanding production environments
- Experienced project/construction manager in all levels of government
- Strong reputation for keeping a positive frame of mind and "bringing order to chaos"
- Spearheaded problem solving teams in crisis situations and proven ability to meet project deadlines
- Proven ability to lead and motivate a variety of teams in different environments (unionized & non-unionized)
- Managed aggressive sales budgets \$6-7M CDN through outstanding entrepreneurial drive – consistently ranked in the top 10%
- Effective change manager with demonstrated ability to rapidly assess and analyze an organization or project and use that knowledge to create value
- Wide-range management experience in high pressure, fast-paced customer service environments

Analytical / Quantitative Skills

- Excellent analytical skills – ability to diagnose, identify and solve problems quickly and effectively
- Strong analytical and problem solving skills: demonstrated throughout a successful career in the engineering sector and recently a strong GMAT score
- Recognized as a divergent thinker who can also effectively assess risk
- Thoroughly enjoy analyzing data, identifying opportunities and vigorously pursuing them

Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork

- Effective team worker with strong interpersonal skills proven in collaborative projects
- Corporate award winner for dedication and teamwork in surpassing production targets during a production process expansion

Interpersonal Skills / Teamwork con't

- Excellent ability to adapt and react to new environments; worked in Canada's Arctic within a challenging multi-cultural cross-functional setting
- Well-developed skills in team building, negotiating and change management recognized by upper management

Self-Assessment

After going through your transferable skills and favourite tasks of your previous professional life, academic education and extra curricular activities and after having reviewed your previous successes, when reviewing accomplishment statements we suggest that it is time to conduct a personal self-assessment.

Typically MM students are either career changers or career enhancers or fall into the category of being not quite sure why exactly they are taking this step of their lives. Regardless of which category you belong to, this will be one of the best times of your life to carefully consider your next career steps.

Unlike typical self-assessment exercises where one is asked to choose between tasks or functions, we are asking you to first evaluate your previous successes, describe the environments where you did well and finally observe the key characteristics of the fields/occupations that you are attracted to.

Ideally you should go through the following questions in a peaceful environment without having too many interruptions around you. The right mindset is important so, do not try to go through all the questions at once if you feel hurried. Rather, go through one section at a time, according to your own time lines, asking yourself each of the questions listed. The more time and effort you put into this, the more it will reveal of your optimal work environment. After all, nobody else, except yourself, can choose the right career for you.

One of life's biggest success tips is to figure out what you love doing and then find someone who will pay you to do it.

Skills / Interests

- What am I good at? _____
- What was my favourite job? Why? _____
- Which hobbies do I enjoy most? Why? _____
- Which hobbies did I start but quit shortly after starting them? Why? _____
- What motivates me? _____
- What were my biggest accomplishments during high school, university and my previous jobs? _____
- What kind of tasks can I accomplish easily and do I enjoy working through them? _____
- What kind of environment brings the best / worst out of me? _____
- What skill sets would I like to improve? _____
- What skill sets do I not currently have but would like to develop? _____
- What makes me tired? _____
- What do I feel proud of? _____
- Do I enjoy continuous learning? If so, do I learn best in teams or through individual distance study programs? _____
- What is my ideal time span for a project? (do I prefer projects with short turnaround times or do I feel comfortable with long term projects?) _____
- Do I enjoy managing people? _____

Additional comments:

Values / Attitudes

- Which kind of organization do I like to support in my free time (either volunteering or financially) _____
- What kinds of values are important to me? _____
- What work situations have made me angry? _____
- How important are the following attributes:
 - variety _____
 - job security _____
 - creativity _____
 - recognition / status _____
 - regularity _____
 - business travelling _____
 - balanced life style _____
 - high earnings _____
 - expertise _____
 - ability to see the outcome of my work _____
 - independence _____
 - flexibility _____
 - recognition from colleagues, clients, customers, or supervisors? _____
- How important it is to be admired, respected, famous or rich? _____

Additional comments:

People Around Me

- What kind of people do I like to be surrounded by? _____
- Would I like to be exposed to people that I did not know previously? _____
- What kind of people do I not want to be associated with in a professional working environment? _____
- Am I interested in being in active contact with people outside of the organization? _____
- In my next position, how much time (in percentage) would:
 - I like to work in a team environment? _____
 - I like to work alone? _____
 - I like to work with other people but in an expertise role? _____
- Who are the people that I consider my mentors? _____
- Do I make friends easily? _____
- What kinds of people make me envious? _____
- Do I enjoy networking? _____
- What would be my optimal work environment? What kind of colleagues do I like working with? _____
- What are the characteristics that I feel are necessary for my supervisor to have? _____
- How would I be described by my friends? Previous colleagues? Previous supervisors? _____
- What are the main characteristics that differentiate me from my classmates? (you may want to return to this question mid way through your program) _____

Additional comments:

Work Environment

- In my next position how much time (in percentage) would:
 - I like to spend in the office? _____
 - I like to spend out of the office on the road? _____
- What kind of communication methods do I prefer? _____
- Do I have a strong preference for my work environment? _____
- Can I work well in a hierarchy? _____
- How important is a strong organizational culture to me? _____
- How important is it to me to have same ideologies and values that the corporation/people around me promote? _____
- Typically job enhancements are based on seniority, expertise level, productivity, etc. In my ideal work environment, promotions should be based on _____.

Sacrifices

- Am I willing to relocate nationally or internationally to achieve my main career goal? _____
- Am I willing to separate from my family/friends to achieve my career goal? If so, for how long? _____
- How long is my optimal work week? _____
- Am I willing to compromise my time with my family / friends in order to be successful in my career? _____
- Is my family willing to give their support if my main focus is in my work? _____
- Am I willing to take further degrees, designations or courses to reach my career goal? _____

Additional comments:

Career Interests

- Of all the fields and occupations, I am currently interested in the following? (list 3-5) Why? _____
- Do I have an accurate picture of the day-to-day activities in these fields? _____
- Do I know what kinds of skill sets are required in these fields? _____

If you answered no to any of the previous questions, please take a look at the section on informational interviews.

- Is there any kind of additional training I should take to enter into these fields? _____

Additional comments:

The Next Step

After responding to all of the questions, take some time to find common patterns and themes. You may want to return to your responses during the summer to revisit whether your interests have changed since you started the program.

During your career exploration, take a look at the “Your Options” section on line and utilize your personal network as well as the network that you have gained through joining the Sauder School of Business MM Program.