

ROLE OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS IN CAREER PLANNING

Are you starting on your career path? So you believe that your qualifications will be the biggest things that will count. Certainly, there is no denial that a good degree or diplomas can open doors to prestigious jobs. But it is not knowledge alone that will help you along in your career. Look through job advertisements and just what proportion of each job description refers to knowledge and qualifications and how much is devoted to other skills. You could be in for a surprise. Your specialised knowledge may get you a position, but it is those important skills we tend to overlook which will enable you to do your job successfully.

These are the times of high employee turnover and mobility. How good are you to put over your point of view effectively? Would you be able to explain a technical point to someone with only Basic English skills? Can you figure out complex financial reports? How would you react if you were asked to lead a team? Employers today are looking not as much for bright young sparks, but for people who can function effectively in the workplace.

The Skills which will ensure your marketability, increase your professional competitive advantage and ease the transition into any new role are your “Transferable Skills”. These skills are the assets that help you transition and excel into a new role. They ensure your professional resilience and the robustness and longevity of your career .These are the skills that every employer looks for and are transferable across workplaces. While highly specialized skills may be essential to building your own personal competitive advantage and ensuring success in a particular role or organization, it is the transferable skills that ensure you do not become professionally redundant or obsolete over the long term.

Thus it becomes essential that you start working on them early and cultivate them, add on to them and be much more confident when you face the real world after school and college. These are certain core skills which we often overlook but which apply to a wide range of situations and jobs. The more you will move up the career ladder the more you will discover that it is the little things that count. While some of these skills can be taught, most are gained through experience. If you wish to have a great career path, these are the skills that are well worth cultivating and deploying on a daily basis in order to succeed in your chosen career.

The Key Transferable skills that you should develop in your career progression are:

Soft Skills: Also known as interpersonal or people skills, these are the set of skills that allow you to positively relate to, communicate with, influence and inspire others. Delegating, Coaching, Listening, Presenting, Co-operation and Communication Skills.

A lot of people fail when it comes to communicating with other people. They give explanations but leave out essential details; they write reports which are badly structured, contain grammar errors, punctuation and spelling mistakes; they adopt the wrong tone when addressing people because they fail to take into consideration their level of sophistication or competence.

Analytical skills: You need to identify and analyse problems by being more innovative and creative. Research, Data gathering, Data analysis, Creativity, Risk analysis are a few skills that you need to develop.

Leadership and Management Skills: You are a good leader if you can direct and motivate others to achieve individual, team and organizational roles. What you need to develop is the art of managing groups and delegating responsibilities by planning and coordinating tasks. Solving problems and managing conflict and implementing decisions.

Technical Skills: These are the practical hands-on skills like computer proficiency, ability to work with specific machinery, software or hardware, ability to build or repair.

Planning and Research Skills: You should know how to set goals and identify course of action by gathering relevant information and evaluation of results. Forecasting situations by analysing, interpreting and disseminating information. Understanding financial matters and budgets for dealing with clients and people in the organization.

Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills: These skills are about how you interact and relate with others to achieve a common goal. Sharing credit and accepting responsibility while contributing and encouraging the ideas of others. Developing a strong rapport with others while respecting other opinions. Mastering the art of negotiation and an ability to get along well with others.

Self-Management Skills: It is about how you direct your own activities toward the achievement of objectives. These are the set of skills to do with workplace character,

Integrity, Punctuality, Diligence, and Reliability. Working well under pressure and accepting responsibility, Self-evaluation and decision making ability.

Developing Transferable Skills

Some courses have a strong practical component and deal with some of these skills. Business studies courses sometimes offer mock sessions of meetings and interviews and also interactive sessions with the industry. But, not everybody emerges from university or college fully equipped to take on the world. From now on you may have to take responsibility for your own development and move on your chosen career path. However, you probably have quite a number of useful skills already. If you don't practise these skills, you will get rusty. If you don't currently have a chance to use them, why not explore other places where you could use them? Lifelong learning is an important part of your career, so developing your transferable skills is a strategy that will make other people aware of what you are capable of.