

The Skills Employers Want

Top 10 Competencies Employers Seek in Job Candidates*

(And How To Recognize/Get Them)

1 Communication Skills

Spoken, comprehension, written, listening skills, languages, etc.

- Assume leadership roles
- Attend and participate in class
- Use proper language and grammar (U.S. English)
- Class/Group Presentations - Basic Speech (COM 1010) or Debate (COM 2110)
- Language Courses (ARB, CHI, FRE, GER, ITA, JPN, SPA, etc.)
- English Courses (ENG 1010/1020)
- Write Research Papers, Resumes, Reports, Letters; Keep a Journal
- Electronic – Practice proper online etiquette/posting policies; adopt business writing style

2 Critical Thinking

Ability to obtain, process, and apply information/knowledge including Analytical skills, Decision-making, Problem-solving, Reasoning, Creativity, and Research.

- Critical & Analytical Thinking General Education Competency Requirement (CT): BA 1010, COM 2110 or PHI 1050
- Science (CHM, PHY), Math (MAT), Statistics (STA), and Economics (ECO) Courses
- Reading and Research, Trial, Error and Evaluate; Practice Objectivity

3 Teamwork

Ability to collaborate and work professionally with diverse groups while attempting to achieve a common goal.

- Form Study Groups
- Join a Student Organization
- Class and group projects
- Become a community volunteer

4 Technical Skills/Computer Literacy

Specific knowledge related to the job, field, and industry, including at a minimum, basic computer skills.

- Computer Courses (CSC 0900/1000)
- Lab Courses (BIO, CHM, GEL, NFS, PHY, PSY, etc.)
- Volunteer/Work Experiences
- Free Online Tutorials (www.careerthoughts.com/learn-online)
- University Libraries Computer Labs (www.lib.wayne.edu)
- Practice, Practice, Practice

5 Interpersonal Skills

Ability to relate to others including multicultural awareness; ability to influence, negotiate and network to build and maintain relationships.

- Communication (COM 2170/2200) and Ethics Courses (PHI 1100/1120/2320)
- **Active Listening** – the process of listening and responding to others with focus that improves mutual understanding
- **Empathy** – sense of true personal identification and understanding of others
- Be flexible, proactive; adapt to change; observe/learn unspoken rules; practice good manners



6 GPA/Academic Credentials

Demonstrated proficiency in both a broad liberal education and a specific field of study; willingness to learn/professional development.

- Attend and participate in class; Study!
- **Advising** – 1600 UGL, 577-2680, www.advising.wayne.edu Be sure to know which classes will meet your general/major requirements!
- **Academic Success Center** – 1600 UGL, 577-3165; www.success.wayne.edu Don't wait until you are struggling. Ask about tutoring and improve your study skills now!
- **Supplemental Instruction** - Free program for selected 1000-2000 level courses consisting of group study sessions lead by an SI Leader who has already taken the class and received at least a B in that course and is hired to attend the lecture again and help students who are currently enrolled.
- Develop and maintain your professional career portfolio

7 Organization/Planning

Time management; ability to prioritize and manage multiple assignments/tasks; adaptability to changing conditions.

- Maintain personal schedule; balance work, school, activities, relationships
- Academic Success Center Time Management Workshops (www.success.wayne.edu/studyskill-presentations.php)
- Volunteer; plan, coordinate and implement programs/events
- University Libraries Assignment Planner (www.lib.wayne.edu/services/instruction/calculator)
- Be proactive/detail oriented



8 Work Experience

Hands-on, practical experience in field of study with particular emphasis on global knowledge, commercial awareness, and community involvement.

- **Student Employment** – Career Services program. Offers part-time employment to students with job postings for On-campus Student Assistants, Financial Aid College Work Study awardees, Summer Employment opportunities and off-campus positions. Contact 577-3390 or visit www.careerservices.wayne.edu.
- **Internship** (sometimes called Field Study) – Are generally one-semester work experiences related to a student’s major and offered through the academic department. Students usually receive academic credit. The assignment may be paid or unpaid.
- **Cooperative Education** (Co-op) – Academic/business strategy that combines on-campus study with practical, paid work experience. Students enrolled in cooperative education programs alternate between periods of study in school and periods of employment in business, government or non-profit organizations. Both types of learning experiences are planned and supervised to contribute to students’ education and employability.
- **Volunteer** – Volunteer positions, by definition, are not paid. They can be internships through education curricula, posted by the hiring organization or initiated by the candidate. Many fields of study do not historically pay for these learning positions, but volunteering students can still obtain valuable experience and industry exposure.
- **“Tweeners”** – All work experiences help you to build skills. If you can’t get the job you want now, get a job that will help you and allow you to develop the skills you will need in the future.



9 Motivation/Initiative

Self-motivated with a positive attitude and performs with energy/passion; ability to work with little or no supervision.

- Self Assessment, Goal Setting and Action Planning
- **Free** Career Planning workshops and resources - contact 577-3390 or visit www.careerservices.wayne.edu.
- Take on additional responsibilities
- Strive for diversity in your college, work and life experiences
- Develop/demonstrate self-confidence



10 Leadership Abilities

Ability to take charge, inspire, motivate, and manage others toward a specific goal.

- Find your passion and get involved!
- Student Organizations (Dean of Students, 577-1010, www.doso.wayne.edu)
- Create your own interest group
- Volunteer in your community
- Class/group projects

5 Hot Personal Characteristics Of The Competitive Candidate

Professionalism - Acts fairly and responsible in all personal and work activities; welcomes and acts upon constructive feedback; possesses self-awareness of personal strengths/unique identity; and demonstrates self-confidence/ self-management in developing/working a career plan toward personal goals.

Ethics/Honesty - Possesses high level of personal integrity; demonstrates ethical judgment in connecting choices and actions to consequences; behaves morally according to the standards of proper conduct.

Dedication/Tenacity - Hard-working; demonstrates strong work ethic with clear enjoyment of the job; strong sense of diligence/determination to sort and solve problems to get the job done right.

Flexibility/Adaptability - Adjusts easily to new situations/conditions; open to new ideas/concepts; able to work within a team and independently to complete multiple tasks and projects.

Dependability/Reliability - Timely and consistent attendance at work; demonstrates loyalty to the job/organization; accepts responsibility for actions.

*Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers *Job Outlook* surveys 2000-2013 (<http://www.naceweb.org>)

Additional References

Hansen, R. S. and Hansen, K. “What Do Employers Really Want? Top Skills and Values Employers Seek from Job-Seekers” Retrieved August 12, 2013 from http://www.quintcareers.com/printable/job_skills_values.html.

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