

Skills Matrix

No matter what field you have worked in, your skills will be as relevant as your experience and knowledge when it comes to identifying positions of interest to you and marketing yourself to a potential employer. While it is important to demonstrate WHAT you know, it is vital that you are able to articulate the SKILLS you possess, the VALUE you added in previous positions, and the positive OUTCOMES you achieved through your work.

Whether you gained skills through work, volunteer positions, or extra curricular activities, your ability to show your best qualities on your resume and cover letter and in interviews will set you apart from those you are competing with. We know from discussions with employers that they are looking for some key skills. By demonstrating skills gained through experiences accompanied by a solid knowledge base and positive outcomes, you are providing an employer every reason to want to consider you as a potential candidate.

Determining your own skills can take a great deal of time and self-reflection. To perform the exercise efficiently, you should not rely only on your most current work or volunteer experiences. Reflect upon the positions you have held, the activities you have engaged in, the barriers you have overcome, the teams you worked with in all of your past experiences, and what you enjoy doing to gain a clear picture of the value you can bring to a prospective employer.

- Employment background
- Accomplishments
- Training and education
- Special assignments, responsibilities, or positions
- Performance appraisals
- Publications, products, or research
- Presentations made to key individuals
- Honors/awards within the past three years

Sample Skills – this list will give you a starting point to develop your list of skills.

Analytical Thinking	Problem-Solving	Goal Oriented	Interpersonal
Leadership	Decision Making	Cultural Sensitivity	Risk Taking
Creativity	Information-Gathering	Implementation	Enthusiasm
Flexibility	Ability to Delegate	Communication	Organization
Mentoring	Strategic Thinking	Capacity to learn	Quantitative

The Skills Matrix

The skills matrix will help you identify the essential elements you need to develop bullet statements for your resume as well as provide examples for you to cite in cover letters and interviews. By formulating statements which contain each of the essential elements, you are answering the questions employers will have about how you can best meet their needs. You are directly marketing what you have to offer to match the needs of their position which is the objective of an effective resume, cover letter, and interview.

Create your own matrix. You should provide multiple examples for each skill so that you will have many different examples of your skills to use in different ways. Consider experiences you have had through work as well as volunteer or extra-curricular activities.

SKILLS MATRIX FORMAT

CURRENT CAREER GOAL: Seeking a role in project management and/or events coordination.

SKILL	WHAT did you do? Focus on task/function. (S/T)	HOW did you do it? Focus on skills/method used. (A)	WHY did you do it? Focus on value added. (A)	What was the RESULT? <i>Focus on positive outcome.</i> (R)
Written Communication	<i>Wrote customer service manual for startup client</i>	<i>Researched industry standards, assembled data into clear and concise format, and customized text</i>	<i>To provide SOP for new CS reps and document policies and procedures for job specs</i>	<i>Increased quality and consistency of customer service efforts, reduced complaints, and increased customer satisfaction by 30%</i>
Written Communication	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>
Written Communication	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>
Project Management	<i>Example #1</i>	<i>Example #1</i>	<i>Example #1</i>	<i>Example #1</i>
Project Management	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>
Project Management	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>
Implementation	<i>Example #1</i>	<i>Example #1</i>	<i>Example #1</i>	<i>Example #1</i>
Implementation	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>	<i>Example #2</i>
Implementation	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>	<i>Example #3</i>

After you have completed your matrix, you can begin selecting the best examples to fit the position to which you are applying to draft your resume, cover letter, and interview preparation. Because you will change your resume to market your experience to each specific position, this matrix should provide you with ample examples to offer. As you gain more experience and develop your skills, you can add to your matrix over time. In this way, you will continue to develop self-marketing statements which will set you apart from other candidates by clearly demonstrating what you have to offer an employer.

*Developed by: Sarah Minnis—Mays School of Business/Texas A&M University

**Customized for students at University of Kentucky

