Skills employers are seeking in candidates

As a student at ASU, you are constantly building new skills, experiences and competencies that contribute to your overall personal growth and professional development. Many of these skills and experiences can be used to help you be career ready even before graduation. Below are eight career competences that employers are seeking, and highly qualified candidates often possess. Career competencies were developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) that works to promote career readiness in students. Career and Professional Development Services has made it easy for you to ensure you are making strides in each of these areas.

**Career & self-development**

Proactively develop oneself and one’s career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one’s organization.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Develop plans and goals for your future career.
- Establish, maintain, and/or leverage relationships with people who can help you professionally.

**Critical thinking**

Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem.
- Multi-task well in a fast-paced environment.

**Teamwork**

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals; while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting.
- Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.

**Leadership**

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

**Sample Behaviors:**
- Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
- Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust.

**Equity & inclusion**

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Keep an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking.
- Demonstrate flexibility by adapting to diverse environments.

**Communication**

Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Employ active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills.
- Ask appropriate questions for specific information from supervisors, specialists, and others.

**Professionalism**

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Demonstrate dependability (e.g., report consistently for work or meetings).
- Show a high level of dedication toward doing a good job.

**Technology**

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

**Sample behaviors:**
- Manage technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making.
- Quickly adapt to new or unfamiliar technologies.

Career readiness means that you have experience and skills in each of the career competencies and are capable of navigating the job search and interview process and have the skills and knowledge to be successful in the career of your choosing.

Adapted from NACE Career Readiness for the New College Graduates
Putting career competencies in action

Now that you are familiar with these career competencies, let’s take a look at which ones you have most developed and which you would like to develop further. Employers are going to not only seek out these competences, but want to see evidence on how you apply them. Fill in the section below to summarize your most developed competencies.

**Skills developed:**

1. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

Now that we have looked at what competencies you are strong in, what about the ones that you would like to develop further? Employers are going to want to address a variety of different competencies and might hit on ones that you are not so strong in. Why not work on developing some strategies to strengthen them? Start with listing four competencies you would like to get more experience with and what activities and steps you can take to develop them. You can ask for suggestions from friends, mentors, advisors if you can’t think of activities yourself.

**Skills to be developed:**

1. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________
   Comments: ________________________________________________