

Functional Skills: Knowing Your Strengths

Functional skills are competencies that are transferable to many different work settings. Developing a list of functional skills you have and most enjoy using can help you focus on positions that would fit your talents and provide more satisfaction.

Communication

Exchange, convey, and express knowledge and ideas.

- Write
- Edit
- Summarize
- Verbal communication
- Listen
- Facilitate discussion
- Consult
- Teach
- Train
- Sell
- Promote
- Use languages
- Interview
- Ask questions
- Make presentations
- Negotiate
- Think on one's feet
- Conversational ability
- Entertain/Perform host
- Deal with public
- Public speaking
- Teamwork

Information Management

Arrange and retrieve data, knowledge, and ideas.

- Math skills
- Organize information
- Manage information
- Keep records
- Tend to details
- Logical ability
- Develop systems
- Categorize
- Summarize
- Streamline systems
- Monitor

Physical

Use hands, tools to build, repair and invent.

- Build
- Invent
- Operate equipment
- Repair
- Restore

Organization Management

Direct and guide a group in completing tasks and attaining goals.

- Solve problems
- Time management
- Make decisions
- Lead
- Meet deadlines
- Supervise
- Motivate
- Recruit
- Resolve conflict
- Mediate
- Initiate projects
- Organize
- Coordinate
- Handle logistics
- Put theory into practice
- Delegate
- Give directions
- Assume responsibility
- Determine policy
- Interpret policy
- Apply policy
- Set priorities
- Strategize

Research and Investigation

Search for specific knowledge.

- Analyze ideas
- Analyze data
- Research
- Investigate
- Read for information
- Interview for information
- Gather data
- Evaluate
- Critical thinking
- Synthesize information
- Observe
- Outline
- Formulate hypothesis
- Develop theory
- Calculate
- Compare

Human Service

Attend to physical, mental, or social needs of the people.

- Interpersonal skills
- Group process
- Sensitivity to needs
- Empathize
- Counsel
- Advocate
- Use Intuition
- Coach
- Provide Care

Design and Plan

Imagine the future and develop a process for creating it.

- Anticipate problems
- Plan
- Conceptualize
- Design
- Display
- Layout
- Format
- Design programs
- Anticipate consequences
- Brainstorm new ideas
- Think visually
- Improvise
- Compose
- Adapt
- Create images

Technical Skills

Competencies in position based activities.

Success Inhibitors

Success inhibitors are characteristics that if present, can stall or sometimes even stop a career. They are most often related to issues of self-management and can keep a leader from fully leveraging his/her strengths. The following listing of possible success inhibitors are written in a negative tone, as it is the presence of the negative that is to be assessed. The extent to which the derailer is present will aid in the approach to combat.

Poor Attention to Detail

- Fails to show due attention, consideration, or thoroughness.
- Not rigorous or meticulous resulting in errors or omissions.
- Lacks order or a methodical approach.

Overly Competitive

- Overly motivated by ambition; strives solely for victory or superiority.
- Demands a position of distinction or merit, especially when unjustified.
- Displays antagonistic behavior resulting in opposition or resistance.

Lacks Poise or Self-confidence

- Lacks composure in stressful situations.
- Reacts defensively when challenged.
- Conveys a state of uneasiness, apprehension, or insecurity.

Does Not Foster Trust

- Fails to adhere to promises, obligations, or allegiances.
- Engages in evasive behavior; intentionally vague or ambiguous.
- Inconsistent in communication and action.

Lacks Personal Accountability

- Fails to accept responsibility or hold oneself responsible.
- Not willing to admit failures; displaces blame.
- Claims to be solely following directives from upper management.

Narrow Focus

- Lacks breadth of view; narrow-mindedness.
- Lacks foresight; fails to plan prudently for the future.
- Easily engrossed in one line of thought or action.

Inflexibility

- Resists change; stubbornly adheres to an opinion or course of action.
- Fails to adjust interpersonal style or adapt to novel situations.
- Not willing to make concessions; uncompromising.