## 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

### 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

### 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

### 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

### Technical Skills
Competencies in position based activities.

- Adapted from: Lithgow, J. (2010). Functional skills; career development worksheets. Loyola University Chicago. Chicago: IL.
**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.