

This is Eastern Michigan University's Career Corner, and welcome to season two: Finding Your Fit.

Welcome back to the Career Corner podcast. This is career coach Logan Dolan, back with my co-host for this week Brad Mitten. How are you doing, Brad?

I'm doing great, and glad to be back with you after a few weeks.

Glad to have you back. And, as we move on from your great conversation about personality with April in the last episode, this week our topic is all about a term that students hear about called transferable skills. However, so many of you are probably aware of the term but don't really have a grasp on what they are or why they're super important. So, with that being said, Brad, can you start us off with a little understanding as to what this term actually means?

Sure. So the term transferable skills essentially means any skills that are necessary to be successful in a job, but regardless of the profession. So those skills can transfer from one job to the next. So you might hear the term soft skills interchangeably used here, and that doesn't mean that just having transferable skills alone is going to lead to a successful career and that you're going to be hireable because there are still industries that require hard or technical skills that are exclusive for one job.

So let me break that down for a second. Let's take the skill of phlebotomy for a quick second here. So that's the act of drawing blood. So this is a technical skill that's used in several different areas of health and medicine, such as patient care technicians, nurses, paramedics, or similar type positions.

However, you can't really take that skill and move it or transfer it into a role like accounting. It really doesn't have any application there. However, when you think about other skills like customer service, problem solving, critical thinking, you can take a skill like that which is used in phlebotomy, or roles that use that particular technical skill. You can take those skills and actually transition them into a role like accounting.

I love that example. So basically, in a nutshell, a transferable skill is one that you can move over to another job in a similar or different industry where it still has application.

Now I know some of our listeners may be wondering what those skills actually are, and Brad and I are going to break down some of the top transferable skills, and it really all begins with the NACE Career Readiness Competencies. So the National Association of College and Employers, or NACE, surveyed hundreds of employers to see what they look for in talent and in potential employees. And from that

survey, we created a list of these top eight skills that college students need to have in order to be career ready in 2020.

Absolutely, and it's so important to remember that these eight skills came directly from the employers, from small and large companies all across the country. This is what they're looking for, and not having these skills can really reduce your chances of landing internships and full time positions. And it can actually set you back from being able to advance in your career the way that you'd like. So Logan, can you get us started off and take us through the first four of those career readiness skills?

Of course. So the first is critical thinking and problem solving. And this is the way you use reasoning and analytical thinking to really just make decisions and overcome those problems. So think, how well can you obtain, interpret, and use the information, the facts, and any data to come up with a resolution? That's critical thinking and problem solving.

Second is oral and written communication, which I'm sure we've all seen in every single job description ever written. And that's because employers want individuals who can clearly and effectively communicate to individuals their ideas and thoughts in many different forms and fashions, and still have that message be relayed in a way that it can be understood. So this also includes public speaking, editing, writing memos or letters, and even putting together some emails that are well-written.

Next is teamwork and collaboration. This is the idea of building those relationships that promote and welcome collaboration between colleagues and peers of diverse races, ages, gender, sexual orientations, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints.

And the fourth is digital technology, another one of those that you probably see in every single job description. And this is all about leveraging the existing digital technology efficiently and ethically to solve problems or tasks and really accomplish those goals. So usually someone who is highly proficient in this area is easily adaptable to new and upcoming technology.

So, Brad, can you take us through the last four career readiness skills?

Absolutely. So the first one is leadership, and this one's fairly self-explanatory. This is where you leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals. Use those great interpersonal skills that Logan just talked about to coach and develop other people. So your ability to assess and manage your emotions is critically important here, as well as being empathetic to the needs of others. By

providing this leadership, you're really going to be guiding and motivating and organizing others and delegating work.

The next is professionalism and work ethic. So in this particular skill, you're demonstrating that personal accountability to be able to effectively manage your work habits. For example, showing up to work on time, working productively, being able to work efficiently with others, manage your time load, and understand the impact of how you communicate with others and how that represents your work image. It's also showing integrity and ethical behavior, acting responsibly, and always keeping the interest of the larger community or the organization to which you're a part, in mind.

The next is career management. And this is about knowing your skills, your strengths, your knowledge, taking in that self-awareness that we've talked a lot in this podcast about, and being able to understand the types of career goals that you have in mind, and identify those areas of professional growth. Understand where the deficiencies are and how to mitigate those. So in career management you're able to navigate and explore different job options, and understand the steps necessary to pursue those opportunities and understand how to self-advocate for those opportunities in the workplace, and advance your career in a way that fits your goals.

So the last skill is global intercultural fluency, or, as I like to call it, multicultural competence. This is where you value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, gender, sexual orientations, and religions. This is your ability to show openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and your ability to interact respectfully with people from all cultures and backgrounds. And be able to understand and respect individual differences.

So, as you can see, these skills are needed and desired in every single industry in every position to varying degrees. So it's important that you are taking the time to really build these skills and address any areas of growth you might have. And these eight skills will greatly help you in the future by preparing you to land the jobs you want as well as to advance your career.

Absolutely, and the last thing that should be noted is that we cover the top eight skills based on the NACE Career Readiness Competencies. But there are certainly more that still are going to require attention. Also, these skills do evolve over time.

Interestingly, NACE is actually getting together right now and re-evaluating the current competencies and taking into account any modifications that need to be made post-pandemic.

So we hope this conversation was informative for you. Remember that the career coaches and

corporate relations managers here at EMU can meet with you anytime to help you get career ready. Stay tuned in for next week, where April and Barb are going to talk about strengths and how to use them for career development. Until then, remember--

We support your goals.