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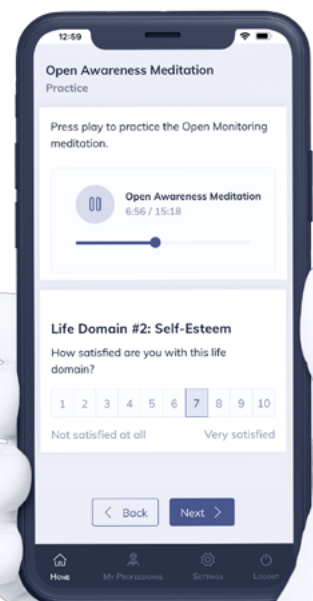
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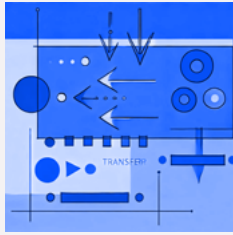
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Warm regards,



Hugo Alberts, Ph.D.
Co-Founder of Quenza





Discovering Your Transferable Skills

Topic: Performance • Type: Exercise • Duration: 15 mins



Background

This exercise is grounded in career development theory and research on transferable skills. The concept of transferable skills has been widely studied in career counseling and vocational psychology (Akkermans et al., 2013). Research has shown that identifying and articulating transferable skills can enhance career adaptability and employability (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). The process of self-reflection used in this exercise aligns with the principles of narrative career counseling, which emphasizes the importance of personal meaning-making in career development (Savickas, 2012). Furthermore, the categorization of skills into physical, mental, and interpersonal domains is supported by Holland's RIASEC model of vocational interests (Nauta, 2010). Recent studies have also highlighted the increasing importance of transferable skills in the modern labor market, particularly in the context of rapid technological change and job market volatility (Bridgstock, 2009).



Goal

The goal of this exercise is for clients to develop a systematic approach to identifying their transferable skills by analyzing their everyday activities and experiences. Through this process, clients will learn to recognize the broader applicability of their skills across various professional contexts, enhancing their career adaptability and self-awareness.



Advice

- This exercise is suitable for a wide range of clients, including career changers, recent graduates, and those seeking to re-enter the workforce.
- Some clients may struggle to identify skills beyond the obvious ones related to their chosen activity. Encourage them to think broadly about all aspects of the activity, including planning, execution, and reflection.
- Clients might have difficulty seeing how their skills could apply to different job contexts. Help them brainstorm diverse applications of each skill.

- If clients choose an activity with limited skill variety, suggest they also consider a secondary activity to broaden their skill identification.
- Be prepared to provide examples of transferable skills that clients might overlook, such as time management or problem-solving.
- Some clients may undervalue their skills. Offer positive reinforcement and help them see the significance of their abilities in professional contexts.
- Encourage clients to repeat this exercise with different activities to build a comprehensive understanding of their transferable skill set.
- If clients struggle with the categorization of skills, provide additional examples and explain the distinctions between physical, mental, and interpersonal skills.



References

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Discovering Your Transferable Skills

Introduction

Welcome to this exercise on identifying and leveraging your transferable skills. Transferable skills are abilities you can use in various jobs and careers. They're often called "functional" skills because they're things you do, like gathering information or working with people or things. These skills form the foundation of knowing what you love to do and are crucial in finding your dream job.

What Are Transferable Skills?

Transferable skills are the secret weapons in your professional arsenal. They're the abilities you've developed throughout your life that can be applied to a wide variety of situations and jobs. Think of them as your career superpowers – they go with you wherever you go, ready to be deployed in new and exciting ways.

What exactly are transferable skills? Transferable skills, also known as "functional" skills, are the abilities you use to accomplish tasks, regardless of the specific job or industry. They're the foundation of what you love to do and how you do it. For example, the ability to prioritize multiple requests is a transferable skill that's valuable in almost any job.

Examples of transferable skills include communication (written and verbal), problem-solving, time management, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, critical thinking, creativity, organization, and emotional intelligence.

Three Types

These skills can be categorized into three main types:

1. **Physical skills** (working with Things): Skills that involve physical activities, coordination, and working with objects or nature.
2. **Mental skills** (working with Information/Ideas): Skills that involve cognitive activities such as problem-solving, analyzing data, and generating ideas.
3. **Interpersonal skills** (working with People): Skills that involve interacting with and understanding people, such as communication, teamwork, and empathy

Example

Let's look at a concrete example: Skateboarding. While it might seem like just a fun hobby, it actually develops several transferable skills:

- Physical skills: hand-eye-foot coordination, agility, balance
- Mental skills: split-second decision-making, risk assessment
- Interpersonal skills: teaching others, teamwork (if part of a skateboarding team)

These skills could be valuable in careers as diverse as a surfing instructor, a lumberjack, or a search-and-rescue crew member.

Importance

Why are transferable skills important?

1. **Versatility:** They allow you to adapt to different roles and industries. The ability to answer phones professionally, schedule appointments, or conduct meetings can be applied in a manufacturing plant, a college admissions office, or a doctor's office.
2. **Career Transitions:** For career changers, transferable skills are your bridge to new opportunities. A teacher's communication and presentation skills, for instance, can be valuable in public relations or sales.
3. **Value to Employers:** The more transferable skills you have, the more value you bring to a company. Employers appreciate candidates who can wear multiple hats and adapt to new challenges.
4. **Job Satisfaction:** Understanding your transferable skills helps you identify roles where you can use your strengths, increasing your likelihood of job satisfaction.
5. **Lifelong Learning:** Recognizing your transferable skills encourages continuous learning and development, as you see how skills from one area of life can benefit another.

In this exercise, we'll help you identify your unique set of transferable skills. Remember, most jobs rely on just four to seven main skills. By understanding your best transferable skills, you'll be better equipped to find work you love and excel in any career path you choose.

Instructions

1. Begin by thinking about a specific activity you enjoy. This could be a hobby, a sport, or a task you perform regularly.
2. List the skills you use while engaging in this activity and divide your identified skills into three categories: Physical, Mental, and Interpersonal.
3. For each skill you identified, think of jobs where this skill could be useful.

Take, for example the activity "composing music using a piano"

Physical skills (working with Things):

1. Technical proficiency with the piano
2. Coordination (using both hands independently)

Jobs where these skills could be useful:

- Pianist
- Music teacher
- Occupational therapist
- Surgeon
- Massage therapist

Mental skills (working with Information/Ideas):

1. Creativity (coming up with original melodies and harmonies)
2. Attention to detail (fine-tuning notes and rhythms)
3. Time management (structuring a piece of music)
4. Problem-solving (working out musical challenges)
5. Analytical thinking (understanding music theory and structure)

Jobs where these skills could be useful:

- Composer
- Sound engineer
- Project manager
- Software developer
- Marketing strategist
- Financial analyst

Interpersonal skills (working with People):

1. Emotional intelligence (conveying feelings through music)
2. Adaptability (adjusting your composition based on feedback)

Jobs where these skills could be useful:

- Music therapist
- Counselor
- Teacher
- Sales representative
- Customer service manager
- Team leader

Now it's your turn.

Activity:

Physical skills (working with Things):

Jobs where these skills could be useful:

Mental skills (working with Information/Ideas):

Jobs where these skills could be useful:

Interpersonal skills (working with People):

Jobs where these skills could be useful:

End of Exercise

Great job on completing this exercise! While we've focused on one specific activity, the real power of this exercise lies in the process you've just learned. The goal wasn't to create an exhaustive list of all your transferable skills, but rather to teach you a method for self-analysis that reveals valuable information about your skills.

By examining a single activity you enjoy, you've learned how to:

1. Identify the various skills you use in that activity
2. Categorize these skills into physical, mental, and interpersonal domains
3. Recognize how these skills can be applied in diverse job settings

This process is a tool you can now apply to any activity, hobby, or past experience in your life. Each time you do this, you'll uncover more transferable skills and potential career paths where these skills could be valuable.

Remember, your transferable skills are constantly evolving. As you gain new experiences and tackle new challenges, you're developing new skills and refining existing ones. Regularly engaging in this type of self-reflection can help you stay aware of your growing skill set and open your eyes to career opportunities you might not have previously considered.

By understanding how to analyze your activities for transferable skills, you're better equipped to articulate your value to potential employers, identify roles that align with your strengths, and navigate career transitions with confidence.

Keep practicing this skill of self-analysis. The more you do it, the more insights you'll gain about yourself and the vast array of professional possibilities open to you. Your transferable skills are your unique toolkit - now you know how to recognize and leverage them for your career success!