

BECOME A SKILL SEEKER



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How to Develop Skills Sought By Employers

Year after year, regardless of job market conditions, employers have a similar wish list for candidates' skills and qualities. Below is a list distilled from employer surveys published by eminent national associations, universities and research groups.¹ Listed below each skill are some opportunities to explore and develop that particular skill or behavior. Use these suggestions to create your own powerful set of skills while at UNCW-- in and out of the classroom. A strong set of these skills and behaviors will increase your marketability for internships, jobs and graduate school.

The number one way to develop any of these skills is through becoming a student leader or peer educator on campus!²

1. Communication Skills- oral & written

- Write stories, advertisements, press releases or newsletters for Student Media, or a campus or community organization
- Enroll in an academic class that is writing intensive, or includes presentations or speeches
- Work in a campus office; i.e. at an information desk, or in an operations or program assistant position
- Improve the way you listen to others; use empathy and self-control when diffusing disagreements
- Refine your job search materials (resume, cover letter, interview preparation) at the Career Center
- Act with a theater group, film or broadcast production
- Do fundraising for charities or nonprofit events; volunteer to work on a political campaign
- Help in a literacy or conversational English program

2. Interpersonal Skills- relates well to others, self-confident, tactful, friendly, outgoing, sense of humor

- Engage in discussions with people different from you
- Participate as an active team member in class, a campus organization, or at a job
- Live in a group living environment (on or off campus)
- Conduct interviews with people to gather information for a class project, organization or personal goal
- Volunteer for a telephone hotline, women's shelter, after school program, hospital, nursing home, etc.
- Work as a tutor, coach, camp counselor, mentor, literacy or conversation partner, or teacher
- Work as wait staff, info desk assistant, office or retail staff, recreation assistant, customer service staff, etc.
- Become a personal assistant for an individual with disabilities
- Develop interpersonal skills in classes that emphasize human relationships or intercultural issues

3. Teamwork Skills- works well with others, flexible, adaptable

- Lead a project team or committee in class, a student organization or job
- Use an internship, study group, class or research project to help turn a group of people into a team with common goals
- Help a new team develop through the stages of forming, storming, norming and performing
- Join a musical group or act in a play
- Participate on intramural team or sports club, coach Little League, become a summer camp counselor or recreational leader
- Contribute as a valuable member of a team focusing on team goals more than personal goals

4. Initiative- strong work ethic, risk-taker, entrepreneur

- Identify a campus or community need and proactively find and implement solutions
- Select a skill which you would like to improve, and seek out experiences which help you achieve that goal
- Appropriately balance academics, co-curricular activities and employment
- Solicit strong instructor/supervisor references from academic, co-curricular or employment activity
- Take pride in your work
- Study abroad; interact with other cultures
- Start your own business while in college

5. Analytical Skills- problem-solver, detail-oriented, organized, creative, strategic planner

- Participate in undergraduate research with a faculty member
- Work as a lab assistant with computers, science or language
- Organize a campus event, including volunteer staff, budget, publicity, etc.
- Seek opportunities to evaluate data to support decision making
- Manage your time well; meet deadlines
- Take a topic you are passionate about, and research the opposing view
- Read an article in an academic area different from your own and develop implications for your area
- Develop a decision tree for an upcoming purchase, researching all relevant information (brand, model, size, etc.)
- Develop a three-year strategic plan for a student organization
- When considering a difficult decision, appraise your choices realistically and seek professional advice when appropriate

6. Leadership Skills- communicate vision, action orientated, influence/motivate others, enthusiastic

- Gain leadership education and experience through the Office of Student Leadership & Engagement, the Cameron School of Business or a Leadership Studies minor
- Run a campaign for student government or campus issue; or get involved in local or state politics
- Be an active officer or committee chair of a campus organization
- Identify a campus or community need and proactively find and implement solutions
- Facilitate group discussions in class or in a campus organization
- Organize and manage an intramural sports team, camp or recreation group
- Lead children's programs, tutor kids in a local school, or coach a children's sports team
- Get an internship in an area of career interest; consult with the Career Center and your department's internship coordinator
- Train new campus organization members or employees at your job

7. Technical Skills- utilize computer software & hardware, web and financial resources

- Work as a student network or computer lab consultant with Residence Life or ITS
- Design or maintain web sites for a student or community organization, campus office or yourself
- Design a brochure, advertisement or newsletter using desktop publishing software
- Assist community agencies with databases, statistical analyses, financial or service reports
- Keep budgets or financial records for campus or community organizations, or work in a billing office
- Design PowerPoint presentation for class or a campus organization
- Work as a tech or projectionist in Campus Life
- Sell computer hardware or software, or start a web-based business
- Work in the studio or control room of a radio or TV station
- Learn computer and technical skills in classes and workshops that focus on software programs and applying technology

¹ Sources include the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE), Michigan State University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Hart Research Associates, CareerBuilder, US News & World Report, World Future Society, American Society for Training & Development and the U.S. Department of Labor.

² Campus leadership and peer educator positions include Resident Assistant, Orientation Leader, Ambassador, Seahawk Link, ACE, Fraternity & Sorority Life, SGA/GSA, Office of Student Leadership & Engagement, CARE/Crossroads, Health Promotion and the University Learning Center.

For More Information

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Student Organizations
Jobs & Internships

<http://www.uncw.edu/career/documents/beaskillseeker.pdf>

<http://uncw.edu/studentorgs/>

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