

Generic / Transferable Skills Applicable to the Volunteering or Mentoring Context

Below are four sets of skills which can be developed through voluntary work or mentoring. You can use this sheet as a guide to help you record effectively which skills you have gained during the course of your voluntary work or mentoring.

1. People Skills:

Interpersonal skills

Able to interact successfully with a wide range of people.
Knows how to express feelings warmly and sensitively.
'Hears' what is being said and implied.

Oral Communication Skills

Presents information and ideas clearly and concisely, with content and style appropriate for the audience.
Presents opinions and ideas in an open, objective way.
Able to 'think on feet.'

Public Speaking Skills

Able to make formal presentations.
Maintains poise in public situations.

Mentoring Skills

Gives appropriate advice in a persuasive way.
Gives feedback in a constructive way.
Helps others to increase their knowledge or skills.
Works and communicates with others to satisfy their needs and expectations.

Teaching/Training Skills

Able to help others gain knowledge and skills.
Able to motivate people to learn new things and to perform well.
Able to adjust content and teaching style to the audience.
Able to create an effective learning environment.

Client Service Skills

Able to build a relationship of mutual trust with clients.
Able to understand or perceive clients' needs.
Helps individuals develop more positive attitudes.
Develops ways (tailored to individual needs) to help people reach personal goals.

2. Mind Skills:

Critical Thinking Skills

Able to review different points of view or ideas and make objective judgements.
Able to examine underlying assumptions
Able to formulate a question, analyse a problem or define a situation with clarity, accuracy and fair-mindedness.

Problem Solving Skills

Able to clarify the nature of a problem, evaluate alternatives, propose viable solutions, and determine the outcome of the various options.

Planning Skills

Able to plan projects and events.

Able to determine the need for action.

Able to lay out a step by step process for achieving a goal.

Able to establish objectives and needs.

Able to analyse all the requirements of a situation in order to accomplish specific goals.

Able to establish realistic timetables and schedules.

Organisational Skills

Able to organise information, people or things in a systematic way.

Able to break down an activity into component tasks and co-ordinate resources.

Able to establish priorities and meet deadlines.

Able to understand the inter-relationship between the parts of a whole.

Monitors progress and effectiveness.

3. Applied/Practical Skills:

Advanced Writing Skills

Able to communicate in writing for maximum impact.

Able to select, interpret, organise and synthesise key ideas.

Able to edit a written text to ensure that the message is clear, concise and accurate as possible.

Research Skills

Able to define the scope of a topic.

Knows how to find and collect relevant background information for a piece of work.

Able to summarise information and write it up.

Attention to detail and observational skills.

4. Adaptability Skills

Capacity to adapt to new situations and settings and to tolerate change well.

Ability to work in a changing environment.

Flexibility to adapt to the needs of the moment.

A positive attitude towards change (i.e. seeing change as a challenge and even an opportunity.)

(Adapted from The Canadian Volunteers Skills Zone)