

Know Your Skills

Skills

A skill is something you can do well right now. Everyone has skills. What are yours? Here are some ways you can identify your skills.

1. Skills Inventory: Use a skills inventory to help you recall experiences and associated skills. As you spot a skill you have used before, you should be able to remember when you used it. Run through the inventory, checking off skills as you go. Write down stories or notes related to each skill to help you remember later when you are writing your resume and cover letter. See a full list in the **Skills Inventory** worksheet.

Skill	Time you used this skill
<i>Example: presenting/public speaking</i>	<i>Example: I gave solo presentations twice in my 2nd year business class</i>

2. Skills from personal achievements: describe an experience that made you feel good about what you did and satisfied with your behavior by your own standards, not anyone else's. You can try something small.

Example: I wrote a short song for my friend on her birthday celebrating her talents. This skill with words and music and sensitivity to an individual's traits illustrates an ability to express myself creatively.

What is an example of a personal achievement for you? What skill(s) did it involve?

3. A happy role you've occupied: try remembering any position or role you held that made you feel reasonably satisfied with yourself. Boy Scout leader, organizer of the kitchen on camping trips, editor of the social section of your school paper - any role has its attendant skills that enable you to perform the role successfully.

What is a position or role that you held that made you feel satisfied? What skill(s) did it involve?

4. A peak experience: a peak experience doesn't need to be a high-level accomplishment. When was the last time you laughed really hard? Which single moment of the past few weeks would you most like to repeat? Whom did you meet recently who sticks in your memory?

What was a peak experience for you? What do you think this says about you? Are there any skills or strengths of yours that this moment highlights?

5. Ask Your Friends: Your family, friends and acquaintances see attributes in you that you may overlook in yourself. They will probably tune in to many of your adaptive as well as functional skills, because they are receivers of your personal traits every day.

What skills do your friends and family say you have?

“Weaknesses” Can Actually be Strengths

Many interviewers will ask “what are your strengths and weaknesses?” Rather than listing what you believe your weaknesses are, could you talk about your weaknesses as strengths? (Also see the **Preparing for a Job Interview** worksheet).

If you have a disability, try to think about how you can see the symptoms of your disability as strengths or abilities.

List some things you think might be weaknesses, and think about how they could be seen as strengths instead:

Perceived Weakness	How it is actually a strength
<i>Example: I am bad at multitasking</i>	<i>Example: I am very good at focusing on one task for a long period of time</i>
<i>Example: it takes me a long time to absorb the information while reading.</i>	<i>Example: I completed an undergraduate degree that required a lot of reading, demonstrating that I am very good at facing challenges, overcoming obstacles, persevering, and finding solutions.</i>