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LEARN HOW TO IDENTIFY AND VERBALISE YOUR SKILLS

Why?

The ability to identify and describe your skills has a major impact on your employment prospects. It is vital that you are able to describe your skills when you are looking for a job. The identification of skills also helps you understand your career options: by describing what you are good at, you will gain a better understanding of the kinds of roles you could be suited for.

There are many ways to categorise skills. Different categorisation models can help you identify and describe your skills. The use of different models will also help you look at your competence areas from a broader perspective, allowing you to identify a wider range of skills.

How?

Look at the models that illustrate different areas of competence (models 1 and 2) and write down your thoughts:

- Consider what skills you have developed in your studies. For example, take a look at your transcript of studies and the courses you have taken. What skills you have gained? What keywords could you use to describe your skills?
- How would you describe the skills you have accumulated in your studies to a prospective employer or to someone from a completely different field?
- Make a list of skills that you use in other areas of your life, e.g., in your employment, volunteer work, positions of trust, hobbies or some other domain of life. What have you learned? What kind of feedback have you received? What have you enjoyed doing? Also take into account the skills gained through activities in organisations, volunteer work, traineeship, student exchange and other time spent abroad. What else does your sphere of life include? What activities have allowed you to increase your knowledge and skills?
- What new skills do you want to acquire, or which existing skills do you want to improve? How could you do this?

You have now listed many different kinds of skills. The next step is to rank them in order of importance: which skills do you think are the most important and which do you want to use in the future? These key skills form your personal competence profile, which you can use as your CV summary, for example.



Model 1. (figure)

COMPETENCE AREAS



Adapted from: Eric Carver: Humanisti valmis työelämään – oppiaineiden ja työntekijien näkökulmia työelämävalmiuksien kehittämiseen humanistisessa reaaliaikakoulutuksessa
 Arja Haapakorpi: Nörtti, pömo ja yleismiesjantunen – akateemisten urat ja toimenkuvat

Model 2.

Substance-specific expertise/specialist skills such as the understanding and subject-specific expertise of the phenomena, questions and theories in your field acquired through work, studies, hobbies and elected positions

Transferable academic skills such as argumentation, analytical thinking, critical thinking, research methodology expertise, information seeking, the ability to see the bigger picture, academic writing, public speaking

General working life skills such as language skills, problem-solving, project management, time management, organisation, business skills, public speaking, multidisciplinary interaction and communication, leadership and workplace skills, technical and digital skills, media literacy, ethical considerations, value awareness

Self-leadership and self-management skills such as reflecting on your own experiences, identifying and developing your skills, continuous learning, tolerating uncertainty, having self-compassion, ensuring wellbeing, prioritising, setting and working towards goals, career planning