

Your skills

Your skills are the things you can do well. It is a good idea to identify your skills and write a list of these before you apply for jobs and write your CV. If you know what you can do well, you will find it easier to promote yourself to prospective employers.

What skills are important?

The skills you need will depend on what kind of job you want to do.

Technical skills are the specific skills you need to do the job. Personal skills are useful to a range of jobs. Generally, employers in New Zealand are looking for both technical skills and personal skills.

Find out more here

- ▼ www.careers.govt.nz/plan-your-career/start-to-plan-or-change-your-career/what-are-skills/#cID_7727

Personal skills are also referred to as interpersonal skills, or as transferable skills – for example communication, customer service or management.

Identifying your skills

One thing that you will use many times in your job search is a list of all the skills you have. Once you have this list, you can use it show how you can meet the skill requirements of jobs that you are applying for.

Take some time to do an inventory of your own skill set, experiences and aspirations.

- ▼ Make a list of everything you have done as work – both paid and unpaid (volunteer, community, family, etc.) and the particular skills you gained as a result.
- ▼ List your educational achievements and qualifications.
- ▼ Make a list of the positive aspects of your personality – get help from your friends and family for this one if you need to!

This page shows you a step by step process to help you identify your skills:

- ▼ www.careers.govt.nz/plan-your-career/start-to-plan-or-change-your-career/figure-out-your-skills/

It is a good idea to check what skills employers are looking for in the kind of job you'd like. Look through job advertisements to see what employers are asking for.

You will find additional relevant skills information if the role is contained in the Job Profiles section of the CareersNZ website.

Do you need to develop skills to get the jobs you want?

If you are missing some key skills that employers are looking for, think about whether you could gain them through part time work, volunteering or further study.

You may also be able to develop some skills by taking an active role in clubs and societies on and off campus.

Match your skills to the jobs you apply for

When you edit your CV for a job application, you should make sure you give examples of the skills you have that match the job requirements. Don't be tempted to write all your skills down - focus on what the employer is asking for, and give the most recent examples of situations in which you used these skills.

Employer comment

"We want to know what you would be like to work with. Your priority should be to get some work experience in New Zealand. We are not concerned about the type of work you did in your part time job - it doesn't have to relate to your studies. We want to know that you will show up, follow instructions, work hard and ask for help when you need it."

Mike Doyle, General Manager, Carac Group, Eltham, Taranaki



International student experience

When Cindy applied for jobs, she would adjust her cover letter and CV to focus on what the employer wanted - "that's something I learned - every job application I need to change the cover letter and the CV."

Cindy Nuong Nguyen,
Massey Graduate

Writing about your skills

When you say that you have a skill, you should add some information about what you have done that proves you have the skill. Recent examples of how you have used the skill are the best.

Here are two examples of how someone could write about their communication skills. The examples are written differently, but they both include how the person has used the skills.

Communication - in my role at Ray's Takeaways I interacted with customers including taking their orders face to face and by phone, checking back to ensure orders were correct, and finishing the transaction.

Communication

- Replied to and solved customer enquiries
- Wrote monthly newsletter for community organisation
- Gave presentations to team to familiarise them with new product features

Check this link for more information:

- ▼ www.careers.govt.nz/job-hunting/cvs-and-cover-letters/how-to-describe-skills-in-your-cv/

The CareersNZ website also has some examples of CVs with skills listed on them. You can find these at the link below (look for the CV examples on the list).

Look at how skills are described on these CVs for ideas about how you could describe your own skills:

- ▼ www.careers.govt.nz/job-hunting/cvs-and-cover-letters/templates

International qualifications

If you have an international qualification (above high school level), the NZQA can assess it and compare it to a New Zealand qualification level. This will help New Zealand employers to understand the skills and knowledge you have gained before coming to New Zealand.

Find out more at this link to the NZQA website:

- ▼ www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/international-qualifications/international-qualification-assessment-iqa/



International student experience

One of Pratik's first moves in New Zealand (after signing up for Old Boys Cricket Club) was to get an International Qualification Assessment (IQA) of his Indian degree from NZQA.

Pratik Bhavsar, WITT Graduate