

GLC2O Unit 1: Personal Management

Activity 5: Essential Employability Skills

Overview

In this activity, you will begin to connect essential school skills to the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. You will reflect on your own personal use of essential skills and steps you can take to improve your use of essential skills.

Lesson

Understanding Essential Skills

As we continue, it is important to understand the concept of essential skills. These are the skills that you develop as you move through life. At this stage in life, while you are in high school, the interactions that you are having in your courses are developing aspects of these essential skills.

The skills that you are developing and perfecting right now will actually help in the workplace long after you have finished high school. So while you are earning credits to graduate, the approaches and interactions in the classroom are really helping you develop skills that you will be able to transfer into the workplace later on.

Essential skills are:

- the skills people use to carry out a wide variety of everyday life and work tasks.
- not the technical skills required by particular occupations but rather the skills applied in all occupations. For example, writing skills are required in a broad range of occupations. The complexity and frequency of writing varies, of course. Some workers fill out simple forms every day, while others write daily or monthly reports.
- enable people to do their work. For example, repair persons may have to read and understand written work orders before they can do the repairs.

Essential Skills are enabling skills that:

- Help people perform the tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life.
- Provide people with a foundation to learn other skills.
- Enhance people's ability to adapt to change.

There are 9 Essential Skills:

Reading Text

- refers to reading material that is in the form of sentences or paragraphs
- generally involves reading notes, letters, memos, manuals, specifications, regulations, books, reports or journals.

Document Use

- refers to tasks that involve a variety of information displays in which words, numbers, icons and other visual characteristics (eg., line, colour, shape) are given meaning by their spatial arrangement. For example, graphs, lists, tables, blueprints, schematics, drawings, signs and labels are documents used in the world of work.

Numeracy

- refers to the workers' use of numbers and their being required to think in quantitative terms.

Writing

- refers to writing texts and writing in documents (for example, filling in forms)
- non-paper-based writing (for example, typing on a computer)

Oral Communication

- pertains primarily to the use of speech to give and exchange thoughts and information by workers in an occupational group.

Working with Others

- examines the extent to which employees work with others to carry out their tasks. Do they have to work co-operatively with others? Do they have to have the self-discipline to meet work targets while working alone.

Continuous Learning

- examines the requirement for workers in an occupational group to participate in an ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge.

Thinking Skills

- differentiates between five different types of cognitive functions. However, these functions are interconnected.

Computer Use

- indicates the variety and complexity of computer use within the occupational group.

Assignment

1. What are essential skills and why are they important?
2. For each of the 9 Essential Skills, provide an example of how that skill would be used in the workplace.
3. In the table below, rank the essential skills in order from your strongest to your weakest (10 being the strongest and 1 being the weakest).

Essential Skills	Ranking (1 to 10)
Reading text	
Document use	
Numeracy	
Writing	
Oral communication	
Working with others	
Continuous learning	
Thinking skills	
Computer Use	

4. Write a **brief statement** about **why** you consider the top skill to be your **greatest strength**.
5. List your **2 weakest skills** and come up with at least **2 strategies to improve** them.

Weak Skills	Strategies to improve these Essential Skills
1.	
2.	