UMUC CAPL 398A – Skills and Self-Assessment

In addition to an assessment of your values and career interests, a thorough skills analysis is a critical component of the career-planning process. Skills are the currency used by job seekers. In the job market you receive pay in exchange for the value of your knowledge and skills combined. Skills may be divided into three types:

1. Content or Knowledge specific to a field
2. Functional skills that may be applied in various fields
3. Self-management or behavioral traits

Employers value content skills, but they tend to favor candidates with strong functional and self-management skills. **Employers report that when hiring someone, 30% of the decision is based on an applicant's content knowledge and 70% of the decision is based on an applicant's functional and self-management skills.**

Content Skills --- What you KNOW, CAN DEMONSTRATE, and CAN TEACH OTHERS. You usually acquire them through education and work experience. Examples of content skills include:

- Creating and updating a spreadsheet.
- Writing a technical report in a particular subject.
- Designing a Web page or software program.
- Delivering a presentation on a topic.
- Performing a budget analysis.

Functional Skills --- are skills that expedite tasks in any job situation. Examples of functional skills include:

- Communicating to develop a team.
- Teaching a class.
- Analyzing information.
- Sorting and/or collating documents.
- Repairing electronic devices and/or troubleshooting software.

Self-management Skills or behavioral traits --- are command words that describe your strongest personality traits and characteristics. Examples of self-management skills are:

- Being organized in your work process
- Patience with team members, when under time pressure
- Thinking analytically, problem-solving
- Customer-focused prioritization
- Sense of humor

Every year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys large numbers of hiring managers from across the country on what skills they plan to prioritize when recruiting new college graduates. In 2015, NACE listed 10 skills (ranked in order of importance) that employers said they would be looking for when hiring. Consider which of these skills you have and how you might work these skills into your resume.

Extremely Important

Very Important

Somewhat Important

1. Ability to work in a team structure.
2. Ability to make decisions, Ability to solve problems (tie).
3. Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization.
4. Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work.
5. Ability to obtain and process information.
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data.
7. Technical knowledge related to the job.
8. Proficiency with computer software programs.
9. Ability to create and/or edit written reports.
10. Ability to sell and influence others.