

# Building a Skills Inventory

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# What Are Skills

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Skills are what we can do

- They can be job specific or general

Skills take time to develop

- We build up competence with practice

Skills are not the same as knowledge

- Knowing about something and being able to do it are not the same
- Think about learning to swim, reading books is not enough

# Skills are important

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Skills are some of your key assets

- Skills are one of the building blocks of your CV
- Used in matching job roles and candidates

Recruiters look for skills and achievements when making decisions

- Interviewers use competency frameworks to probe for skills
- You need to be able to back everything up with examples

Skills need to be specific

- *“Good communications skills”* is not very helpful to a recruiter
- *“Able to give clear instructions for accounting task”* is more specific
- *“Deliver clear presentations to customer”*

**Top 10 most over-used CV phrases that are likely to put employers off:**

1. Can work independently (47%)
2. Hard worker (42%)
3. Works well under pressure (39%)
4. Good communicator (36%)
5. Enthusiastic (35%)
6. Team player (32%)
7. Good listener (28%)
8. Excellent written communication skills (24%)
9. Proactive (22%)
10. Problem solver (19%)

# We all have more skills than we realise

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## Core Skills

- The things that make you competent at what your job

## Unconscious Skills

- Things you do so frequently and easily you don't think of them as skills

## Unsung Skills

- Things you know you can do but feel they are of little value
- Often these are skills from outside the work domain

## Unpolished Skills

- Things you can do OK but have not taken to the next level

## Undeveloped Skills

- Activities you know something about, but are not competent at

# The Movie Clip Exercise

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Imagine the film of your life - What would you put in the trailer to grab people's attention?

We are going to put together one scene from this trailer

- Zoom in as tight as possible
  - Keep it short – Focus on no more than one day, preferably less
- Use slow motion
  - Reveal the action through what you did and how you did it
- Have a good screenplay
  - Make sure the scene conveys a message about your skills or overcoming obstacles
- Keep the star in shot
  - Make sure this scene is about the hero – you
- Have a happy ending
  - End with an achievement or a skill revelation

# Structure of the clip

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## Title and Introduction

- Setting the scene

## Opening shot:

- Framing the problem

## First step

- How did you start

## Main action

- The main part of your story

## Ending

- The moment of triumph

# Today's Exercise

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Each person comes up with a “scene”

We talk through our scene in turn

We all listen and make a note of the skills used

At the end we feed back all the skills we have spotted

# STAR

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This is a variation on the **STAR** way of describing achievements

**S**ituation

**T**ask

**A**ction

**R**esult

# Key Actions

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Capture the stories of your achievements

- Make sure they are short, clear and positive
- Practice telling them to others

Know for each story what skills they illustrate

- Be able to talk about where and when you have used them

Build up the list of your skills

- Write them down
- Make sure you include the “obvious” ones

This will help with application forms, cover letters and especially at interviews