Using Your Skills to Guide You to the Right Job

by Karen Knipschild

What comes naturally to you? What do you love to do? It may surprise you, but these characteristics are actually skills. And skills are often valued by many prospective employers.

Skills can also be considered your talents or even areas of expertise. Specifically, a skill is something you can do well and can be taught and learned. There are actually three types of skills: Personal, Transferable and Job Specific.

Personal skills are used every day to get by and are an innate part of our personality such as reliability, honesty and integrity. Transferable skills are useful across different types of jobs. They can include planning, writing or helping. Job Specific Skills are those we think of first when asked about our skills and are related to a specific job. These can include planning events, writing speeches, or designing websites.

When it’s time to start internship/job hunting, make sure you carefully read the required skills section of the job description. Think it through carefully and identify the required skills that match yours. The more of your skills that match up to the job description, the more qualified you are for the job!

Contact me for more information in identifying your skills or job hunting in general.

Karen Knipschild is the UW-Madison English, Philosophy and Comp Lit. Departments Career Advisor.

End-of-Semester Reminders

Do you feel this Fall semester rushed by exceptionally fast? I do! Before you barricade yourself in the library or your room to study and write, here are a few things you might want to note.

Graduation checks: December is a great month to do grad checks for your May 2014 graduation. If there is a gap or a problem, it will be significantly easier to catch and fix now. April of next year may be too late. Please make an appointment to see me. If my regular hours are full, let me know and I’ll schedule extra hours. When making an appointment, please make sure you can come. Please do not make it at the same time your class gets out; you need time to get to my office. Thanks to those of you who contacted me when you found out you couldn’t make an appointment.

Incompletes: If something has recently occurred—illness or a family problem—and you are considering asking for an Incomplete, take these factors into account: You must already have a passing grade, you must have a legitimate and documented reason for not completing final work or an exam, and you must discuss this with your professor as soon as possible before the end of the semester. If you are granted an Incomplete, your work is due by the end of the 4th week of the Spring 2014 semester.

Advising over the semester break: I will be taking some time off over the holidays, but will not be gone for long periods. Feel free to e-mail questions or check my schedule for an appointment.

What to remember as you study for exams and write final papers: You are a UW-Madison student and an English major. Therefore, you are intelligent, articulate, and creative. You will do fine at least and very well at best!

Dr. Karen Redfield is the UW-Madison Undergraduate English advisor.

For appointments: WisCal Scheduler