

Evaluate your skills and strengths

Evaluate your skills and strengths to identify types of jobs for which you qualify, help you develop your résumé and prepare for an interview.

Understanding the skills and strengths you can offer a potential employer will help you identify a career path that is best suited to you. You will apply this knowledge as you select a career path, search for a job, and interview for specific positions.

In this exercise you will evaluate your skills and strengths, identify skills and strengths you want to develop and then develop strategies for how to talk about your weaknesses.

The difference between skills and strengths

Skill

Skills are abilities that come from specific training and can be learned in a course, workshop or self-study (education, software programs, languages, time management, people management, research, teamwork, planning, etc.)

Strengths are personal attributes that you have cultivated over time (flexibility, integrity, positive attitude, willingness to learn, dependability, friendliness, persistence, etc.)

List all your **skills** and put an * next to the five that you think are most relevant to your career goals.

Example from job or life

Strength	put an * next to the five that you think are most relevant to your career goals. Example from job or life



BONUS: Sometimes the job you are seeking has a skill or strength requirement that you don't have. List the skills or strengths that you would like to develop, including your current ability and then some ideas for how to develop it.

	Current ability 1(low) - 4 (high)	
Desired skill or strength	1(low) - 4 (high)	Ideas for how to learn or develop

Leveraging your strengths and skills in an interview

Often employers will ask you questions that give you the opportunity to share the ways your strengths and/or skills will benefit the company or support the responsibilities of the position.

Write a statement that includes two parts:

- 1. The strength or skill
- 2. A specific example of how this helped you to be successful in the past or how it will help you in the position you are seeking

Example: At my last job I had great success working with people from other departments. I was able to complete my projects ahead of
schedule due to the support I received from people outside my group.

Discussing your weaknesses in an interview

Just as employers want to know about your strengths, they will inevitably ask about your weaknesses. It is very important that you prepare yourself to address the issue head-on. You can either make a statement about a known weakness and how you are developing it yourself or you can address a skill that you are deficient in that your new position will give you the opportunity to develop.

Write a statement that includes two parts:

- 1. Give the weakness
- 2. The proposed development or solution

Example: Though I'm not as comfortable with Excel, I was able to learn PowerPoint on the job in my last position very quickly and I am confident that I can do the same in this position with Excel.