

## Tables of Professional Skills and Behaviours

Employers have consistently identified **10 professional skills** as most desirable in new graduates.

<b>Personal skills</b>  Initiative Responsibility	<b>Interpersonal skills</b>  Leadership Teamwork Conflict management
<b>Communication skills</b>  Written communication Oral communication	<b>Thinking skills</b>  Decision making Problem solving Critical thinking

The following Tables expand each of the four quadrants above, and add example behaviours to help you understand some of the actions that demonstrate each skill.

<b>Personal skills and behaviours</b> <i>Employers want people who show <b>initiative</b> and are <b>responsible</b></i>	
Skill	Examples behaviours
<b>Initiative</b>	You exercised personal initiative when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● took action that went beyond requirements in order to achieve objectives</li> <li>● demonstrated a readiness to try new things</li> <li>● implemented new ideas or potential solutions without prompting</li> <li>● introduced improvements to the way things are done</li> <li>● used feedback to improve your performance</li> <li>● looked for opportunities to improve your work practices</li> <li>● anticipated potential problems and took action</li> <li>● took immediate action when confronted with a problem</li> </ul> You also demonstrated initiative with others when you exercised <b>leadership skills</b> .
<b>Responsibility</b>	You exercised responsibility independently when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● planned ahead and managed your time/resources to achieve goals</li> <li>● accepted responsibility for mistakes/wrong decisions</li> <li>● followed through on deadlines and commitments</li> <li>● remained self-motivated even when things went wrong</li> </ul> You exercised responsibility with another person or in a team when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● showed accountability to the team and followed through on your commitments</li> <li>● agreed to workload division</li> <li>● took advice and acted on it</li> <li>● came to team meetings prepared and on time</li> <li>● completed your share of the work in a timely manner</li> <li>● did a fair share of the work</li> <li>● did work that was complete and accurate</li> </ul>



### Interpersonal skills and behaviours

*Leadership, teamwork, and conflict management are examples of interpersonal skills, i.e. the ability to get along with others*

Skill	Example behaviours
<b>Leadership</b>	You exercised leadership skills when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● took responsibility for the direction and actions of a team</li><li>● introduced improvements to the way things were done</li><li>● provided constructive feedback to others on the team</li><li>● motivated others on the team to do their best</li><li>● made sure that everyone on the team understood important information</li><li>● made sure that everyone was helping with the project</li><li>● helped the team to plan and organize its work</li><li>● delegated tasks and responsibilities that leveraged others' strengths</li></ul>
<b>Teamwork</b>	You facilitated teamwork when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● shifted between a leading and supporting role to help team dynamics and goals</li><li>● responded constructively and respectfully to the opinions/ideas/differences of others</li><li>● worked effectively with different personalities in a team</li><li>● collaboratively adjusted to changing requirements/goals/deadlines</li><li>● collaborated by sharing information virtually/in person that supported the success of the team</li><li>● helped improve communication among team members and facilitate the exchange of ideas</li></ul>
<b>Conflict management</b>	You managed team conflicts when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● listened carefully to the arguments of both parties and assessed the logic of their reasoning</li><li>● negotiated differences of opinion so all parties felt respected and heard</li><li>● listed all the issues important to both sides and identified the key concerns</li><li>● distinguished between points that could and could not be compromised</li><li>● understood any outside forces that were affecting the problem</li><li>● used tact and diplomacy to defuse tensions</li></ul>

### Communication skills and behaviours

*Communication skills are critical to interacting with others. These include **written** and **oral** forms of communication*

Skill	Example behaviours
<b>Written communication</b>	You communicated in writing when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● clarified your thoughts and the purpose of your communication before you started writing</li><li>● communicated ideas clearly, concisely and persuasively</li><li>● wrote and edited documents using appropriate grammar, punctuation, and structure</li><li>● decided on a logical order for what you had to say</li><li>● wrote in a style appropriate to the audience</li></ul>
<b>Oral communication</b>	You communicated in speaking when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● clearly expressed your thoughts orally to persuade and hold the attention of an audience</li><li>● varied your tone, pace and volume to enhance the communication and encourage questions</li><li>● listened actively and asked questions to understand other people's viewpoints</li><li>● reflected back what the speaker said in other words to clarify understanding</li><li>● encouraged the speaker to elaborate and to define their problems</li></ul>



## Thinking skills and behaviours

*These skills are a type of higher order thinking, i.e. "thinking about thinking", which include decision-making, problem solving, and critical thinking*

Skill	Example behaviours
<b>Decision-making</b>	You made a decision when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● clarified the nature of the problem before deciding a course of action</li><li>● collected and summarized the information you needed to make a decision systematically</li><li>● produced a list of all the courses of action you could think of</li><li>● formulated clear decision criteria</li><li>● differentiated between practical and impractical solutions</li><li>● evaluated each of your shortlist of options, considering its advantages and disadvantages</li><li>● evaluated options by considering implications and consequences</li></ul>
<b>Problem solving</b>	You solved a problem when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● examined a problem from a variety of perspectives</li><li>● clarified the nature of a problem</li><li>● defined the desired objective of solving a problem</li><li>● broke down a problem into smaller, more manageable, parts</li><li>● decided on further information to be gathered before taking action</li><li>● evaluated solutions to a problem through feedback/reflection to make improvements</li><li>● adapted decisions and created contingencies to adjust to changing requirements</li></ul>
<b>Critical thinking</b>	You thought critically when you... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● synthesized and organized information from a variety of sources, perspectives and/or frameworks</li><li>● identified key concepts/ideas/assumptions and provided evidence to support or refute them</li><li>● compared and contrasted to make connections between new and existing information</li><li>● considered the context of sources when analyzing and evaluating information</li><li>● evaluated and applied new information/ideas to a different situation/context</li><li>● sought out and considered alternative explanations</li><li>● distinguished between weak and strong evidence</li><li>● distinguished fact from opinion</li><li>● assessed your assumptions/those of others to determine whether those assumptions were based in sound reasoning and evidence</li></ul>

