



# INTENTIONAL SKILLS ATTAINMENT

## Employability Skills Inventory

### ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED



120 minutes/2 hours

### OVERVIEW

This session introduces your service year corps members to the 8 Employability Skills. In this session, you will ask pertinent questions that will help your corps members rate themselves on specific skills. This session will build upon the [A2: Training Session: Asset-Based Growth Assessment](#) by helping your corps members recall the assets, strengths, talents they bring into their service year in order to identify additional skills development they would like to gain during their service year

### LEARNING OUTCOMES



By the end of this session, your corps members will be able to:

- Leverage their existing assets, strengths, and talents to better understand and develop new skills
- Understand how to assess their existing skills and how to strengthen their skillsets during their service year
- Understand the Employability Skills Inventory and how to assess themselves on 8 employability skills

### TRAINING SESSION RESOURCES

Before getting started with this training session, you should review the Preparation section below as well as familiarize yourself with this guide's Session Outline & Script. There are two options for presenting this session – you can utilize the recorded webinar or present the session directly to corps members. Both options can be conducted virtually or in-person.

- **Recorded Webinar:** [S3: Recorded Training Session: Employability Skills Inventory](#)
- **Downloadable Presentation:** [S3 Training Session: Employability Skills Inventory](#)

The downloadable presentation includes speaker notes for program staff who are facilitating this session directly to corps members, making it easy for staff to walk through the presentations efficiently and effectively.

## PREPARATION

### Trainer Expectations

Throughout this training session, trainers will be asked to facilitate the group through small group discussions and full group discussions. Some of the topics may feel challenging for your corps members to engage with, and they may not want to engage in conversations on these topics at first. Part of fostering a belonging environment is making the space equal with corps members and program staff. Therefore, we recommend you, as the facilitator, prepare responses to the questions posed to the corps members throughout the session as a strategy to help spark conversation if needed. Before beginning this session, review the Session Outline & Script below and ensure familiarity with the content to be prepared to facilitate activities and answer potential questions from corps members. You'll notice in the Session Outline there are resources linked to provide background on the subject matters included in this training.

	<b>TIME ESTIMATE</b>
	<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>
	<b>VIRTUAL MODIFICATION</b>
	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
	<b>HELPFUL TIP</b>

### HELPFUL TIP



*For many younger populations, this may be their first experience assessing their existing strengths, skills, and talents. You will want to provide examples and discuss some of your personal strengths, skills, and talents to help them feel comfortable sharing their own assets.*

### Necessary Materials

- Pen and paper for journaling and beginning the Employability Skills Inventory
- One printed copy for each corps member:
  - The Employability Skills Inventory: [S3: Resource: Employability Skills Inventory](#)
  - [S0: Resource: Glossary](#)
  - Their Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool with the pre-assessment completed



### Virtual Modifications

If you plan to facilitate the training session in a virtual environment, we recommend the following modifications:

- Use a whiteboard that can be displayed on camera or share your screen and work in a word or google document
- If you have group break out sessions, set up the groups in advance via your video conferencing software
- Don't forget to send an email with any necessary handouts in advance of your remote session
- We recommend using an electronic version of the [S3: Resource: Employability Skills Inventory](#) and ask your corps members to email their completed version to the facilitator or a designated staff member

## SESSION OUTLINE

The following outline walks you through what to expect throughout this session and how to prepare. Even if you are planning to utilize the recorded webinar version of this training, we recommend you still use this Session Outline to prepare for the session.

### I. Introduction

This session is the beginning of the Intentional Skills Attainment curriculum. You will use this session to introduce the Employability Skills Inventory and the 8 employability skills detailed within. The goal is for the corps members to complete, or be close to completing, the Inventory by the end of this session.

- **Materials needed:** Each corps member should have a printed or electronic copy of the S3: Resource: Employability Skills Inventory at the beginning of the session. They will also need to bring their Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool with the pre-assessment completed.

### II. Proficiency Indicators

The corps members will be asked to use a scale of proficiency indicators to assess their competency level for each of the 8 skills.

### III. Skills Introduction and Questions to Consider

- **Prep required:** You should review the [S3: Resource: Employability Skills Inventory](#) and the question prompts included in this Session Script to ensure familiarity with these 8 employability skills:
  1. Work Etiquette
  2. Work Ethic
  3. Communication
  4. Organization and Attention to Detail
  5. Teamwork and Collaboration
  6. Customer Service-Minded
  7. Information and Technology Literacy
  8. Innovative Thinking and Problem Solving

### IV. Conclusion

Each corps member should have completed, or be close to completing, their inventory by the end of this session. You should give them an hour at the end of this session and prompt them to finish their inventory. You should collect their inventories and be prepared to discuss it with them during their first 1-on-1 with their supervisor.

## SESSION SCRIPT

The following script should be used for presenting this session directly to your corps members. It is recommended that you review this script before beginning the session. *Italicized prompts* are intended to be guidance for you as the trainer rather than part of the script you will communicate to your corps members.

### Slide #1

This training will provide an introduction to the Employability Skills Inventory. In this session we will discuss how to assess your existing skills, learn how to set goals for personal and professional development, and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory by examining the 8 employability skills we will use to assess ourselves throughout this year.

### Slide #2

Your Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool asked you to reflect on and rate your education and your experience. It also asked you to identify some skills that you may have learned and had the opportunity to use in the past. During this presentation, we will work on helping you connect the dots from what you learned about yourself in the Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool to this Employability Skills Inventory. Ultimately, we want you to think about not only your experience, what you have a talent for and what you most love to do, but also the skills you would like to develop or need to learn to be successful in your service year.

### Slide #3

As we work together today, you'll be filling out your Employability Skills Inventory. To prepare for check-ins and 1-on-1 meetings, keep a journal in order to describe your understanding of each of the employability skills and write down any questions, thoughts, or experiences you want to reflect upon and share later.

At the end of today's session, keep your inventory on hand. Make sure you have a copy of your completed inventory, as well as your journal notes, as you prepare to meet with your supervisor. You want to be clear about the skills you bring to the table and the skills you'd like to develop. At the end of your service, you will re-do this inventory and it will tell a story about everything you learned and did during your service year. That story could help you get a new job or go into a training or degree program. Let's dig in!

### Slide #4

These eight Employability Skills are the most common skills you will likely encounter in your service year and beyond. Many employers have shared that they prefer employees who have these types of employability skills when they enter their workforce. Building on these skills, employers can teach new employees the more technical skills they need to do their jobs. We hope this presentation will help you recognize skills you might not even know you have, and give you some ideas of how you could use those skills during your service year and in your future workplace, even if you still need to develop or hone them.

As you go through each of the skills you will be asked to rate yourself using the Employability Skills Inventory. There are no right or wrong answers and this is not an evaluation! This process is a chance for you to identify areas of strength and areas where you'd like to grow. Once you are finished, bring your ratings to give to your supervisor at your first 1:1 or check-in meeting.

### Slide #5

You will use these proficiency indicators to assess your own skills. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with these indicators, but, remember, this will not be perfect. You may think you are in between two indicators or you may just be unsure about where you fall. That's okay! Do the best you can and note any questions or confusion you may have in your journal.

*Pause & prompt for any questions before getting into the presentation.*

### Slide #6

Now we will further define the 8 Employability Skills, starting with work etiquette.

### Slide #7

Work etiquette varies based on the organization you are working for. The expected work etiquette if you are working in an office, for example, will probably look very different from the work etiquette expected in a job as a barista in a coffee shop.

To learn the appropriate work etiquette in your specific organization, it is important to be tuned into the environment you are in and the way people relate to one another in that environment. This includes, how they dress, how they greet each other (e.g. shaking hands, fist or elbow bumps, etc.), being mindful of their personal workspaces, and noticing social "norms," or spoken and unspoken agreements of that workplace.

It is also important to observe how people around you in your workplace present themselves to the public. What kinds of greetings are expected in person, on the phone, or through written communications? Finally, making sure you are showing respect to your colleagues by always arriving to meetings or the workplace on time and prepared – or making sure to alert the appropriate person if you will be late for any reason – is key. It is helpful to remember that everyone appreciates kindness and courtesy, so if you are not yet sure of all of the rules of etiquette in your specific service assignment, start with being kind and courteous and go from there.

### Slide #8

Additional work etiquette skills include possessing phone, email, and internet etiquette, like answering the phone in a professional manner, responding in a timely fashion, having out-of-office messages on, and knowing when to use your cell phone in a professional setting. Work etiquette also requires possessing appropriate meeting etiquette, like never arriving late, but if so, letting the right person know in advance.

### Slide #9

Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for work etiquette. As you rate yourself, consider the following: Do you consider yourself to be dependable and responsible? Do you show up to things on time and ready? Have you worked or served in environments where you had to answer the phone or respond to emails? Have you found it easy or challenging to respond in a timely manner?

### Slide #10

Some additional considerations as you rate yourself are: When you were expected to be somewhere at a certain time but could not make it, did you think to notify the people waiting for you? Have you gotten feedback on your ability to be responsible and dependable? What stands out for you in their feedback? Is there something you might have heard more than once? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for work etiquette and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

### Slide #11

The next employability skill is work ethic.

Work ethic is an attitude and set of values towards work. It is not just about “going the extra mile” on a job. It is a way of approaching work with honesty and integrity. It is about taking pride in your work and finding ways to motivate yourself to do your best, even on days when you might not be feeling particularly inspired. In other words, it is about actually caring about what you are doing and how you are doing it. Often, a good work ethic can be more highly valued by an employer than experience, education, or even specific skills! Skills can be taught, but a good work ethic comes from within each individual person. The good news is that we can cultivate and develop our own good work ethics once we understand what they are.

Additionally, ways of demonstrating a good work ethic often cross over with other skills that are highlighted in this session.

### Slide #12

When thinking about work ethic, some of the main skills include:

- Being honest and cultivating a personal work ethic.
- Handling confidential and sensitive information appropriately and respectfully.
- Keeping equipment safe.
- High levels of effort and perseverance
- A positive attitude towards work and service.

### Slide #13

Additional work ethic skills include:

- Considering the impact of decisions and actions on one's peers and community.
- Eagerness to learn new skills and improve upon existing ones.
- And the ability to work and serve with minimal supervision.

### Slide #14



Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for work ethic. As you rate yourself, consider the following: Based on how work ethic is described above, do you think you have a strong work ethic? If so, why? What experiences have you had that make you think that? If not, what experiences have you had that lead you to believe that you need to work on your work ethic?

### Slide #15

Some additional considerations as you rate yourself are: When working on something, whether it is for yourself, for your family, for school, or for work, what typically drives you to finish the task? What have people in your life told you about your work ethic? What stands out for you in their feedback? Is there something you might have heard more than once about your work ethic? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for work ethic and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

### Slide #16

The next employability skill, communication, has to do with how effectively you are able to interact with the people around you. This could include your friends, family, co-workers, supervisors, and others. If you really think about it, you will probably notice that you communicate a little differently with your friends than with your teachers or professors. In the next slides, we'll talk about how to be an effective communicator in any given situation. It is also important to remember that communication is a two-way street. Part of being a good communicator is also being an active listener. You can expect that communication in the workplace or during your service year will have certain rules and expectations that are more formal than other situations. This is also true of other forms of communication, such as texts and emails.

### Slide #17

Some communication skills include:

- Communicating clearly and effectively with peers, supervisors, clients, and stakeholders. This includes providing or presenting information by phone, email, written communication, or in person to individuals and groups.
- Writing emails and other forms of written communication clearly, and taking the time to check spelling and grammar.
- Listening actively to understand and asking questions to clarify or offer differing points of view.
- Acknowledging different communication and language styles and abilities, and adapting as necessary to communicate effectively.

### Slide #18

Additional communication skills are: understanding, interpreting, and following instructions in oral, written, or email form. Reading, analyzing, and interpreting written materials such as reports, emails, and documentation. And, sharing ideas for improvement to a process, product, or service through discussion or follow-up email.

### Slide #19

Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for communication. As you rate yourself, consider the following: How do you communicate currently in different settings? Do you find it easy or challenging to speak up about something? What do you prefer: to speak or to write? How easy or hard is it for you to get your point across in different situations or using different media (speaking, texting, emailing, etc.)?

### Slide #20

Some additional considerations as you rate yourself are: Do you consider yourself a good listener? What have people in your life told you about your ability to communicate? What stands out for you in their feedback? Is there something you might have heard more than once about your communication skills? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for communication and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

### Slide #21

The next employability skills, organization and attention to detail, may not seem particularly important in our personal lives. There are, however, some daily activities that require a high level of both. Do you knit, crochet, or sew? If so, you know that dropping a single stitch can unravel your project. Or maybe you like to cook or bake? If you leave out an important ingredient or add too much sugar or salt it can really impact the final product. These scenarios represent the importance of attention to detail in our daily lives. Sometimes beginning to use a calendar and focusing on time management is all we need to increase attention to detail in both our personal and professional lives.

### Slide #22

Some organization and attention to detail skills in the workplace or at your service site include:

- Conducting and completing assignments and projects with a consistent standard of high quality, or taking pride in one's work.
- And ensuring that materials, files, manuals, etc. are organized and easy for anyone to find.

### Slide #23

Additional organization and attention to detail skills are: Interpreting and reporting any errors or miscalculations found in planning documents, data generation, technical reports, and other documents. They also include time management for planning, setting goals, prioritizing, completing tasks on time and accurately, and communicating when you or your projects will be late.

## Slide #24



Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for organization and attention to detail. As you rate yourself, consider the following: Do you consider yourself to be an organized person? If so, why? What experiences have you had that make you think you are organized?

If not, what experiences have you had that lead you to believe that you are not organized? How easy or hard is it for you to focus on details? Do you miss things when you are reviewing something or do you feel like you see everything?

## Slide #25

Some additional considerations as you rate yourself are: What have people in your life told you about your ability to be organized or focus on details? What stands out for you in their feedback? Is there something you might have heard more than once about your organizational skills? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for organization and attention to detail and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

## Slide #26

Onto the next employability skills: teamwork and collaboration. Teamwork and collaboration have to do with looking inward toward your peers and co-workers. It is important to be able to look at the big picture when thinking about teamwork and collaboration. What is the goal your team is working towards and how can you best contribute to that goal?

While teamwork and collaboration is not about you, it is helpful for you to have a sense of what your own strengths and talents are when collaborating in a work or service situation so you are able to step up and fully contribute to the project.

## Slide #27

As we move forward with teamwork and collaboration some of the main themes you'll encounter include: Collaborating well with others and promoting a teamwork environment; and embracing, supporting, and elevating good ideas from others on one's team towards shared outcomes.

## Slide #28

Effectively interacting and communicating (online and in person) with others to convey progress, highlight challenges and share understandings toward multiple purposes and outcomes. Learning from and contributing to the learning of others for shared purposes and outcomes and in a wide range of environments.

**Slide #29**

Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for teamwork and collaboration. As you rate yourself, consider the following: have you had experiences being on teams? Experiences could include working on a group project at school, working with your siblings to complete a task at home, being on a sports team, or working at a job where teamwork was needed.

How easy or hard is it for you to collaborate with others? What are some of the things you find easy and what are some of the things you find challenging?

**Slide #30**

Some additional considerations are: what have people in your life told you about your ability to be a team player? What stands out for you in their feedback? Is there something you might have heard more than once about your collaboration skills? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for teamwork and collaboration and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

**Slide #31**

Oftentimes when we hear the words “customer service” we think of the old saying, “the customer is always right.” This saying is often misunderstood to literally mean that the customer is really always correct.

What this employability skill actually means is that even if a customer is behaving badly, it is often the responsibility of the person representing the business to be the bigger person and remain steadfastly patient and polite. Staying calm in the face of an angry customer is an important skill to have. Often when one is kind and patient in the face of aggression, the aggressor has no choice but to settle down because there is nothing to fight against if nobody is fighting back. Being customer service-minded is not just about resolving conflict. People who are great at customer service love to make people feel welcome, and like they belong. They are focused on making the customer experience fun and efficient. Most of all, they are able to see the big picture and know it is not just about them, but instead about reflecting the best version of the business or organization they represent.

**Slide #32**

Some skills associated with being customer service-minded include: responding to questions from peers, supervisors, clients, and the general public appropriately based on the situation; asking clarifying questions when needed to fully understand a request or task; and discussing problems and resolving conflict calmly and patiently with peers, clients, stakeholders, and others.

**Slide #33**

Additional customer service-minded skills are:

- Communicating with different departments or partners of an organization to understand their roles and needs.
- The ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures, communication styles, and abilities.
- And the ability to understand one’s role in a community and the society at-large through active involvement and participation in an organization for the welfare of that community.

### Slide #29



Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for customer service-minded. As you rate yourself, consider the following: Have you had jobs or experiences that are customer service-oriented? Were they good experiences or challenging ones? How easy or hard is it for you to remain calm when confronted with a challenging customer? What is your initial response?

If you haven't had direct experience in customer service, imagine a situation where someone is asking you for something that you need time to prepare. But they want you to address their concerns immediately.

How would you answer the previous questions in that situation? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for customer service-minded and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

### Slide #35

Texting, gaming, and other general uses of the computer are all good grounding for being fluent in Information & Technology Literacy, another of our employability skills. The more you engage with technology, the more intuitive it becomes. Additionally, in our age of virtual communication, it is useful to have some familiarity with popular management tools like Slack, Google Suite, or Microsoft Teams, as well as common conferencing platforms like Zoom or WebEx, and of course the ever-present Microsoft Office Suite which contains Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, among other tools. Although in many jobs you will have the opportunity to learn these various platforms, it is useful to at least be familiar with them and to take every opportunity to learn more about them. While technology literacy is critical, it is also important to be able to discern between reliable media sources and those that might purposely try to mislead folks, especially if you are doing any sort of research for your job – that's where information literacy comes in.

### Slide #36

Some important elements of information & technology literacy include:

- The ability to effectively use technology to access, evaluate, create, and communicate information.
- The ability to locate and incorporate relevant media sources.
- The ability to recognize when specific information is needed to enhance or deepen a product or document
- And the ability to locate the necessary information.

### Slide #37

Additional aspects of information & technology literacy include: the ability to present information in a variety of ways using multiple methods; knowledge of specific tech skills like Microsoft Word, Google Suite, Dropbox, and Zoom, and project management tools like Slack.

### Slide #38



Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for information and technology literacy. As you rate yourself, consider the following: How often do you use computers and smart devices (tablets, phones, etc)? For what purposes? Do you consider yourself someone who is super comfortable with technology? Do people in your family, school, or work come to you for technology help? If so, what kinds of things do they ask you to help them with?

### Slide #39

Some additional considerations are: How do you study? Do you use the internet to research or go to the library? How do you know if the information you have found is accurate or solid?

Do you use Google Docs or Microsoft Word to create documents? Are you comfortable with software like PowerPoint or Excel? What about other software programs? What programs are you most comfortable using? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for information and technology literacy and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

### Slide #40

For our final employability skill, let's discuss innovative thinking and problem solving – this is where your creativity and ability to work well with others can really shine! It is also connected to several other skills on this list, such as organization and attention to detail, teamwork and collaboration, information literacy, and work ethic. The kinds of qualities you want to cultivate with innovative thinking and problem solving are, for example, the ability to identify challenges within your team or organization, then to research possible solutions. From there, it's important to collaborate with your colleagues to hone those solutions, and then to be able to communicate what you have learned effectively back to your organization. Also, included in this skill is the ability to self-advocate. Part of self-advocacy is feeling confident enough to speak up, express an idea or point of view, and back up those ideas with sound logic and research from reliable sources. With this skill comes risk – taking chances and getting it wrong is part of innovative thinking and problem solving. When that happens, it is important to learn from critical feedback and receive it with grace and resilience so you can try again.

### Slide #41

Innovative thinking and problem solving include the following concepts:

- Thinking creatively and developing ideas and approaches to design challenges;
- Researching, analyzing and determining causes of issues and deciding the best way to solve them;
- And supporting one's claim/position with substantial evidence and logical reasoning. Generating questions, making connections, identifying patterns, and evaluating information to aid problem solving and solution finding.

**Slide #42**

Take a few minutes now and fill out your Employability Skills Inventory for innovative thinking and problem solving. As you rate yourself, think about the following: Do you consider yourself to be a creative person? Creativity could mean artistically creative as well as being someone who has a lot of ideas for how to solve a problem? Do people in your family, school, service year, or work come to you for help solving their own problems? Do you find that your friends and family come to you for help to figure out something?

**Slide #43**

Some additional things to consider include: when you have ideas or creative solutions, do you feel confident in expressing them? If your answer is sometimes – when are you comfortable and when are you uncomfortable? What needs to happen for you to feel comfortable?

Have you gotten feedback on your ability to problem solve or share innovative ideas? What stands out for you in that feedback? Is there something you might have heard more than once? As you reflect on these questions and fill out your inventory, take notes in your journal about experiences you have had or feedback you have gotten on this skill.

*Give corps members 2-3 minutes to fill out their inventories for innovative thinking and problem solving and write in their journals, then move to the next slide.*

**Slide #44**

That was a lot, but you got through it! We have now gone through the eight employability skills, and hopefully you've made some progress on your own Employability Skills Inventory. We'll spend the rest of our skills attainment sessions digging into each of these skills and learning how they resonate with you and your abilities.

**Slide #45**

If you have yet to complete your Employability Skills Inventory, let's take an hour now so you can finish it up, hand it in to your supervisor, and be prepared to discuss it at your first check-in with your supervisor.

To prepare for these meetings, review your journal notes from today's session, and highlight questions you may have about this process. You want to be clear about the skills you bring to the table and the skills you'd like to develop. At the end of your service, you will re-do this inventory and it will tell a story about everything you learned and did during your service year. That story could help you get a new job or go into a training or degree program.

*Prompt corps members to take time to complete their Employability Skills Inventory. At the end of the hour, be sure to collect the inventories from corps members and be prepared to discuss them in your first individual check-in.*

**HELPFUL TIP**

*Program staff should feel free to use this time as planning time while corps members complete their inventories.*

**Slide #46**

Thank you for completing this Employability Skills Inventory!