



# TRANSFERABLE SOFT SKILLS



Technology, automation, artificial intelligence—the world of work is changing, rapidly and dramatically. Set yourself up for success by developing transferable skills and soft skills.

Met any wheelwrights lately? How about blacksmiths, switchboard operators, VCR repairmen? Jobs evolve, they always have and always will. Thanks to technology, jobs are changing faster than ever before. But while some jobs are disappearing, others are evolving and still others are being created. One report expects the Canadian economy to add 2.4 million jobs by 2022, all requiring a mix of new skills.

So, what are these ‘new skills’ everyone keeps talking about? One of the best ways to describe them is ‘human skills’—things machines and technology can’t do. Here’s a rundown of the top 5 . . . drumroll, please:

Communication. Adaptability. Work Ethic.  
Critical Thinking. Problem-Solving.

Anti-climatic, isn’t it? Your teachers have probably mentioned these skills to you a few (dozen) times. They’re usually called transferable skills or soft skills. ‘Transferrable’ and ‘soft’ skills aren’t quite the same thing. Soft skills are interpersonal skills—things like listening, getting along with others and empathy. Transferable skills are skills you can apply in different situations or careers, like critical thinking and problem-solving.

So, let’s throw the net wide and call them transferable soft skills. Here are 3 of the most important; have your teachers or parents talked to you about them?

## People Skills

The ability to work with people requires 3 key competencies:

- **Emotional Intelligence** – the ability to perceive, assess and manage your own emotions well as the emotions of others.
- **Cognitive Intelligence** – the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience.
- **Social Intelligence** – the ability to connect with others, sense reactions and stimulate desired interactions.

## Resilience

Sometimes called ‘grit.’ Resilience means you’re able to maintain a positive attitude in all kinds of situations. Resilient people are more flexible in dealing with change. They’re able to maintain emotional balance in stressful situations, and they’re less resistant to change and more accepting of risk.

## Information-seeking

This is more than searching for and finding information. It’s the ability to make sense of what you find, so that you can make your own decisions rather than be led by the crowd. This is a learned skill; you don’t have to be born with it, you build this skill throughout your life.

## Skills Toolbox According to...

Canada’s Advisory Council on Economic Growth	World Economic Forum	Plus, Essential Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration/teamwork</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Functional knowledge</li> <li>• Problem-solving</li> <li>• People skills/relationship building</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Analytical capabilities</li> <li>• Creative/innovative thinking</li> <li>• Industry-specific knowledge and experience</li> <li>• Technological literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex problem-solving</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• People management</li> <li>• Coordinating with others</li> <li>• Emotional Intelligence</li> <li>• Judgment and decision-making</li> <li>• Service orientation</li> <li>• Negotiation</li> <li>• Cognitive flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Numeracy</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• Document Use</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Digital</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Continuous Learning</li> <li>• Thinking</li> </ul>

## Skills Translations

What you hear.	What it means.
<b>Computational thinking</b>	The ability to translate vast amounts of data into abstract concepts; to understand connections across digital systems.
<b>Cross-cultural competencies</b>	The ability to operate in different cultural settings.
<b>Design mindset</b>	The ability to represent and develop tasks and work processes for desired outcomes.
<b>New media literacy</b>	The ability to critically assess and develop content that uses new media forms and to leverage these media for persuasive communication.
<b>Novel &amp; adaptive thinking</b>	Proficiency at thinking and coming up with solutions and responses beyond the usual or rule-based.
<b>Sense-making</b>	The ability to determine the deeper meaning of what is being expressed.
<b>Transdisciplinarity</b>	Literacy across multiple disciplines; the ability to understand concepts.
<b>Virtual collaboration</b>	The ability to work productively, drive engagement and demonstrate presence as a member of a virtual team.

Source: [iftf.org/futureskills](http://iftf.org/futureskills)