

SECTION ONE: THE LABOUR MARKET

“EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS”

ACTIVITY: Lecture, followed by Team Skills Group Activity and Pair Interviews.

TIME: 1 hour

LEARNING OUTCOME: Participants will understand the three categories of general skills in demand in the Canadian labour force and will have practised working as a team.

DESCRIPTION:

- ❑ Place the Employability Skills Profile on the overhead (Overhead 3, Participant Workbook **page 23**).
- ❑ Explain to participants that while specific skills are needed for specific jobs, these are the skills that are deemed to be highly valued by most Canadian employers.
- ❑ Go through the Employability Skills Profile with them. Explain that there are three categories: Academic Skills, Personal Management Skills and Teamwork Skills.
- ❑ Explain that teamwork skills are considered very important yet are often the most difficult to acquire and articulate.
- ❑ Ask participants to think about the qualities they believe a person must possess to be an effective team member. Give them three minutes to list these qualities on **page 21** of their workbooks.
- ❑ Each person then ranks the items on his/her list according to the perceived importance of each quality (with 1 representing the most important quality of an effective team member).
- ❑ When the participants have finished their rankings, divide them into four groups.

SECTION ONE: THE LABOUR MARKET

“EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS” (CONT’D)

- ❑ The members of each group share their lists and the rationales for their selections and then attempt to reach consensus on the five most important qualities of an effective team member. If consensus cannot be reached within ten minutes, the group members may vote to determine the group’s list of qualities.
- ❑ A volunteer from each group reports on the group’s top five qualities. Facilitator records on flip chart.
- ❑ Debrief: Can they identify anyone in their group who:
 - took on a leadership role?
 - said something that helped the group make a decision?
 - expressed his/her opinion clearly and confidently?
 - acted in a positive, constructive manner?
 - asked someone else for his/her opinion?
 - praised someone?
- ❑ Place Overhead 4 – Characteristics of Effective Team Members – on the projector. Are the traits they chose on the list?
- ❑ Organize participants into pairs for a role-playing exercise. Instruct participants to choose an interviewer and an interviewee. The interviewer should use the list of questions on **page 22** of their workbooks. Explain that the person who is responding should try to use some of the characteristics of an effective team member that we have just identified in their responses – while remaining honest about their own skills. Instruct participants to reverse roles.

Debrief:

- ❑ Was everyone able to describe at least one situation in which they worked effectively as a member of a team?
- ❑ Did knowing the characteristics of effective team members help them to describe their role in a team situation?
- ❑ Why are teamwork skills so important in engineering?

*The Employability Skills 2000+ Profile was created by the Conference Board of Canada

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS 2000+ PROFILE*:

Fundamental Skills

The skills needed as a base for further development

Communicate

- read and understand Information presented in a variety of forms (e.g. words, graphs, charts, diagrams)
- write and speak so others pay attention and understand
- listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others
- share information using a range of information and communication technologies (e.g. voice, e-mail, computers)
- use relevant scientific, technological and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas

Manage Information

- locate, gather and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems
- access, analyze and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (e.g. the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities)

Use Numbers

- decide what needs to be measured or calculated observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools and technology make estimates and verify calculations

Think & Solve Problems

- assess situations and identify problems seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of problem
- identify the root cause of a problem
- be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think,
- gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions
- evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions
- implement solutions
- check to see if a solution works and act on opportunities for improvement

Personal Management Skills

The personal skills, attitudes and behaviours that drive one's potential for growth

Demonstrate Positive Attitudes & Behaviours

- feel good about yourself and be confident
- deal with people, problems and situations with honesty, integrity and personal ethics
- recognize your own and other people's good efforts
- take care of your personal health show interest, initiative and effort
- be responsible
- set goals and priorities balancing work and personal life
- plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals
- assess, weigh and manage risk; be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group; be socially responsible and contribute to your community

Be Adaptable

- work independently or a part of a team
- carry out multiple tasks or projects
- be innovative and resourceful: identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done
- be open and respond constructively to change
- learn from your mistakes and accept feedback
- cope with uncertainty

Learn Continuously

- be willing to continuously learn and grow
- assess personal strengths and areas for development
- set your own learning goals
- identify and assess learning sources and opportunities
- plan for and achieve your learning goals

Work Safely

- be aware of personal and group health and safety practices and procedures, and act in accordance with these

Teamwork Skills

The skills and attributes needed to contribute productively

Work with Others

- understand and work within the dynamics of a group
- ensure that a team's purpose and objectives are clear
- be flexible: respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group
- recognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences and perspectives
- accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner
- contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise lead or support when appropriate, motivating a group for high performance
- understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions
- manage and resolve conflict when appropriate

Participate in Projects & Tasks

- plan, design or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined objectives and outcomes
- develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise and implement
- work to agreed quality standards and specifications
- select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project
- adapt to changing requirements and information
- continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAM MEMBERS

Effective team members:

- support, protect and defend both the team and the team leader
- act in a positive, constructive manner
- provide appropriate feedback
- accept ownership for team decisions
- participate voluntarily
- express opinions, for and against
- ask questions
- encourage others to express their ideas fully
- listen to the other team members
- consider and build on other members' ideas
- state problems, along with alternative solutions/options
- make their own needs known
- maintain confidentiality
- give praise and recognition when suitable
- criticize ideas, not people
- view criticism as an opportunity to learn
- avoid defensiveness when fellow team members disagree with your ideas
- stay focused on the team objectives
- avoid disruptive behaviour such as side conversations and inside jokes
- attend meetings regularly and promptly

**THE LABOUR MARKET:
EFFECTIVE TEAM SKILLS**

Use the space provided below to list the qualities you think makes a person an effective team member.

In your group, try to reach a consensus on the top 5 qualities of an effective team member.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

BEHAVIOUR DESCRIPTION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe a recent example of a time when you worked as a member of a team.

- What was the purpose of the team?
- What was your role on the team?
- What strengths did you bring to the team?
- What challenges did the team experience?
- What do you enjoy about working with others?
- What do you dislike about working with others?

2. Describe how you have contributed to strong morale and team spirit in an organization.

- What was the spirit like before?
- How did you work to maintain it over time?

3. Give an example of a situation in which you have successfully built and maintained a good relationship with a team.

- What was your approach to team building?
- What were the obstacles you faced in building/maintaining the rapport?
- What made your approach successful?