

# Chapter 4: Skills

## Objectives

- Understanding three kinds of skills.
- Seeing the importance of skills at work.
- Discovering and using your best skills.
- Improving your skills.

## Working Vocabulary

- **Skill:** A skill is something you do well.
- **Communication:** Communication occurs when ideas are shared and understood.
- **Foundation:** A foundation is the base on which to build.
- **Opportunity:** An opportunity is a situation that can assist you in advancement.
- **Associate:** To associate is to make a meaningful, mental connection.

## For Discussion

If you have never worked for a business or if it has been a long time since you worked, you might not recognize your skills. What is a skill? A skill is something you have the ability to do. Your skills represent the tasks or jobs that you can do well or better than the average person.

It is important that you take this opportunity to really look at your skills. Staying on a job is much easier if you do what comes more easily and naturally to you. It is fine to try jobs that require you to learn new skills or improve weak skills. But as you start out, using skills you already have will give you a good foundation and allow you time to adjust to the working environment. Take a moment to think about your best skills and the kinds of jobs you could do with them.

## Presentation Suggestions

### *Use with Pages 56–61*

Ask students to turn to pages 56–57. Allow them three to five minutes to read the list of skills and check any skills that apply. It might be necessary to explain several categories, depending on the reading levels of students. Examples might include

- **Bookkeeping:** Keeping track of money.
- **Clerical:** Filing records, answering phones, taking messages.
- **Conflict resolution:** Solving people's problems.
- **Delegating:** Assigning duties.
- **Facilitating:** Helping with meetings and conventions.
- **Nurturing:** Being caring and supportive.
- **Programming:** Computer programming.
- **Verbalizing:** Putting thoughts into words.

Ask students, "When you stopped to think about your skills, did you come up with more than you thought you had?" Discuss responses as a whole group. Then write the three types of skills on the board or overhead:

- **Performance skills** are "I can" skills—things you can do.
- **Interpersonal skills** are skills you have working with people.
- **Transferable skills** are skills that can be transferred easily to various kinds of jobs.

Ask students to reread the definition of each type of skill as stated on page 58. Ask them to complete the Stop and Think exercises on pages 59–61.

To further define the three types of skills and to allow students to explore their own skills further, use the activity "**Three-Part Harmony**".

### ***Use with Pages 61–68***

Write the words "NATURAL" and "LEARNED" on the board or overhead. Explain that a natural skill is a skill you were born with and a learned skill is one that you are taught. Direct students to complete the Stop and Think on pages 61–62. Ask "Why would you want to spend time trying jobs that would require skills that are difficult for you?"

Focus attention on the Example on page 63. Ask students to think of people in their own lives who turned a natural ability into job success. It is a good idea to have a few stories of your own in case students are reluctant to share theirs. Ask students to complete the Stop and Think on pages 63–65 individually.

Have a student read the Example on page 66 aloud. Then solicit more examples from students. Have students complete the Stop and Think on pages 66–68.

### **Use with Pages 68–76**

Have students complete the Stop and Think on pages 68–69. Go on and assign the Stop and Think on page 70.

Draw two charts with these headings on the board or overhead:

<b>Word Associated with Your Natural Skill</b>	<b>Field of Work</b>	<b>Specific Job</b>
<b>Word Associated with Your Learned Skill</b>	<b>Field of Work</b>	<b>Specific Job</b>

Invite a student to read the instructions at the top of page 71 aloud but do not have students fill in the page on their own.

Using the charts on the board, ask students to follow the example and fill in the chart. Call on students individually to come to the board or overhead and write responses, or have them respond orally as you fill in the charts.

When students have completed both charts, allow a few minutes for them to copy their favorite responses onto page 71.

*Hint: Don't prenumber the chart spaces on the board or overhead. Number as you go. This way students will more likely give you more than six responses. They won't feel confined by a preset number of responses and will answer more freely. This will in turn provide more choices for students to use when they fill in page 70.*

Have students complete pages 72–74 either individually or in groups. To help your students understand how their skills can be applied to their job search or job success, have them complete the activity “**Job Frame-Up**”.

Review natural and learned skill types and their definitions. Call on random students. Have the class complete the Stop and Think on page 75.

Invite a student to read the suggestions on page 76 aloud. Ask students to write on the backs of their yellow folders the three improvements they feel they are able to make.

### **Until Next Time**

What jobs are you interested in that will make use of your best skills? Check the classified advertisements or a job search Web site to get some ideas about what is available.

Now think about your dreams, your goals for the future. How would any of these jobs help you to reach those goals?