

JOB HUNTING DURING LOCKDOWN




PART 3 - HOW TO DEMONSTRATE YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Even at this stage of lock-down, there are roles and vacancies available. Ordinarily, they may not be exactly the type of role you would go for - and you may be thinking "I don't have any experience that I can demonstrate for the vacancies that I have seen". If this is the case, you need to focus on what skills you do have that are relevant to some of these vacancies.

Of course you can't suddenly gain a required professional or technical qualification, but there will be many vacancies for which you will have strong transferable skills so it is important that you emphasise these throughout your application, on your CV and during your interview. These skills can go a long way to persuading a potential employer that you are a fit for their company, even if you don't necessarily have the experience.

WHAT ARE TRANSFERABLE SKILLS?

Transferable skills, sometimes called portable skills, are a core set of skills and abilities, which can be applied to a wide range of different jobs and industries. These are core skills that all employers' value, examples are;

-  People skills - ability to engage, motivate and lead a team, successfully coach or train people or contribute to team collaboration.
-  Technical skills - knowledge of popular software programmes, project management methodology, databases
-  Communication skills – written and verbal presentations, report writing, slide decks, brochures, and guides

Think of your most recent role and how much of it was solely concerned with the industry sector. Unless you're a specialist working at a high level, it's likely that much of what you did could easily be applied elsewhere. You usually develop these skills over time, gained from previous positions, charity or voluntary work, your hobbies, or even just at home. These skills can go a long way to persuading a potential employer who is hiring rapidly, that you are a fit for their company, even if you don't necessarily have the experience.

So what transferable skills are likely to be in most demand at the moment?

TEAM WORKING ABILITY

The ability to work collaboratively, especially in the current situation whilst working in virtual teams remotely, or in a way that observes social distancing rules, is a valuable skill. Demonstrate your experience by highlighting where you've worked on projects, where you've achieved success by helping others to succeed. Give sizes of teams you've been part of or led, highlight where these teams have been in multiple locations.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Even businesses who are hiring rather than downsizing are facing new challenges. If you can demonstrate your experience of solving problems this will help your application to stand out. Give examples of when you've faced barriers and overcome them. Describe a market, people or product challenge you've faced and how you dealt with it. Explain how you've tackled barriers that prevent goals from being achieved.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

In the current context many business will be managing unique, complex logistical and planning challenges. Although we are living through an extraordinary set of circumstances, make sure your reference any other challenging or complicated issues you've been involved in. Explain the specific tasks required the steps you took and the outcomes you achieved. Explain how you controlled stress and managed to maintain resilient and calm throughout.

Give examples of maintaining or increasing productivity, or minimising risk, by your effective planning and organisation. Explain how you managed or participated in projects under pressure, prioritising effectively and delivering results when times were tough. Employers need this type of experience right now.



LEADERSHIP AND TEAM MANAGEMENT

Great leadership and management skills have never been in higher demand. Now is the time to ensure that on your CV you draw out your specific experience of giving direction, moving at pace and motivating and supporting others to achieve goals.

Describe specific situations where you have led during a period of challenge or uncertainty. Give examples of how you led effectively when dealing with ambiguity, limited resources, unrealistic deadlines or declining revenues. Try to reflect some of the leadership challenges businesses are currently facing when you describe your experience.




COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Being able to communicate well is a fundamental employability skill. Of course when you speak to the hirer you can demonstrate your verbal communication skills but during the application process the quality of your written communication will be clear to judge.

Make sure that your CV is clear, succinct and highly relevant to the [role](#). Give examples of your ability to prepare reports, explain specific information about products, services or operations and lead or participate in team communications. The majority of written communications are created to encourage the reader to take some form of action, so be mindful that this is also the purpose of your CV. Make sure you demonstrate your ability to write persuasively and engage the reader so that you get the outcome you want – an interview.

Get in touch with your Personal Career Manager to discuss the support that we can provide at this time. Keep an eye out for next weeks article - 'How to adapt your approach to CVs and interviews'.

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