



The skills that employers want in the modern workplace

Focus on these employability skills during your studies – and talk about them in interviews – to land yourself a great job with prospects

The Chartered Management Institute (CMI) recently undertook **research with students, employers and universities** to find out more about employability skills for the current world of work. Employability skills are those core behaviours and skills that make a real difference when you're applying for and progressing in a job. Over and above the technical requirements of the role, these are the attributes that employers want to see.

More on these in a minute.



What else will you need to succeed?

CMI's latest thought leadership report, [Work-ready Graduates: Building Employability Skills for a Hybrid World](#), highlights the importance of employers and educational institutions connecting to equip students with the employability skills required for the world of work:

- According to the research, nearly **80%** of employers believe that current graduates do not arrive fully equipped with the skills they need to be work-ready.
- The report also finds that employers are increasingly looking for skills that support working in a hybrid environment.



Okay, back to the skills you'll need

It's a weird job market right now. There are lots of opportunities out there, but many graduates find themselves doing jobs that are medium or low-skilled.

This is where employability skills come in. These are the behaviours and skills that make you more likely to gain high-skilled employment and be successful there. So if you want to increase your chances of success in work, we recommend that you **focus on developing** these skills – and be sure to tell your future or current employer that you've got capabilities in the following areas:

- Team-working
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Communication
- Self-management
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Initiative and self-direction
- Digital skills
- Resilience
- Emotional intelligence
- Innovation and creativity
- Entrepreneurial skills.

Of these, the top three skills that employers say are critical to employability, and where students most need training, are: **team-working** (58% of employers said this); **critical thinking and problem-solving** (54%); and **communication** (52%). So bear these in mind when you're doing any personal development – and, again, let interviewers know about any experiences that have helped you develop these skills. That time when you got past a road bump in a project – that's how you built problem-solving skills. That college task that you achieved as a group – that's evidence of team-working. Don't be shy about highlighting them!

DEVELOP THESE SKILLS WITH CMI

CMI's Career Development Centre is here to help you develop your employability skills and advance your career. CMI members can access resources including instant CV checker, AI-based interview feedback, application and interview tips, and a large range of self-development programmes – including the Employability Award, designed to transform your employability.

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Remember, you'll be working in a new, hybrid world

Employers also told us that graduates need new skills to work in a digital environment. You may not get regular face-to-face time with a line manager, or indeed have in-person job interviews. So bear in mind these aptitudes, which employers highlighted as being important for new graduates:

- **Ability to build bonds with colleagues in digital environments** from the start of a career;
- **Awareness of how to become more 'visible'** in organisations, in a context of remote working;
- **Motivating themselves** to work remotely, rather than among people.

Good luck for the future!

We hope this has been useful insight and we wish you best of luck – whether you're trying to land a first job or progress in your current role.

You're already on the right track – our research shows that nearly two-thirds of graduates with CMI-accredited degrees are employed in highly skilled roles at 15 months; the average salary was £27k for those on CMI-accredited degrees!

If you're not already, we'd love you to stay part of CMI's community. Find out the options and benefits available to you [here](#).



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