

TOTAL PACKAGE
**(From the 2002-2003 Recruiting Trends Report compiled by the Collegiate Employment
Research Institute at Michigan State University)***

THE ENTIRE PACKAGE: What do employers want to see when they begin evaluating college candidates for employment? The entire package! Extracted from responses to the question, "What are the five most important skills or competencies that a candidate needs to possess in order to be considered for employment?" The "total package" that candidates should possess includes these skills:

The Total Package: Candidates need to be academically prepared in their discipline as it pertains to their employment -this is considered a given by employers. Plus,

1. Communication skills (228 comments) that demonstrate solid verbal, written, and listening abilities. The capstone is presentation skills that include the ability to respond to questions and serious critique of the presentation material.
2. Computer/technical aptitudes (124 comments) based on the level required for the position being filled. Computer ability is now perceived as a given core skill; right up there with reading, writing, and mathematics. The ability levels (expectations) for computer knowledge and application continue to rise.
3. Leadership (82 comments) -the ability to take charge or relinquish control (followership) according to the needs of the organization; closely aligned with possessing management abilities.
4. Teamwork (70 comments) -working cooperatively and collaboratively with different people while maintaining autonomous control over some assignments.
5. Interpersonal abilities (80 comments) that allow a person to relate to others, inspire others to participate, or mitigate conflict between co-workers.
6. Personal traits. The shape of the above competencies are molded by a combination of personal traits, specifically demonstrate initiative and motivation; flexible/adaptable to handle change and ambiguity; hard-working (work ethic) and reliability; honesty and integrity; and ability to plan and organize multiple tasks. Emerging as a key personal trait is an individual's ability to provide "customer service" -anticipating customer needs and the demeanor to respond positively to customer concerns.

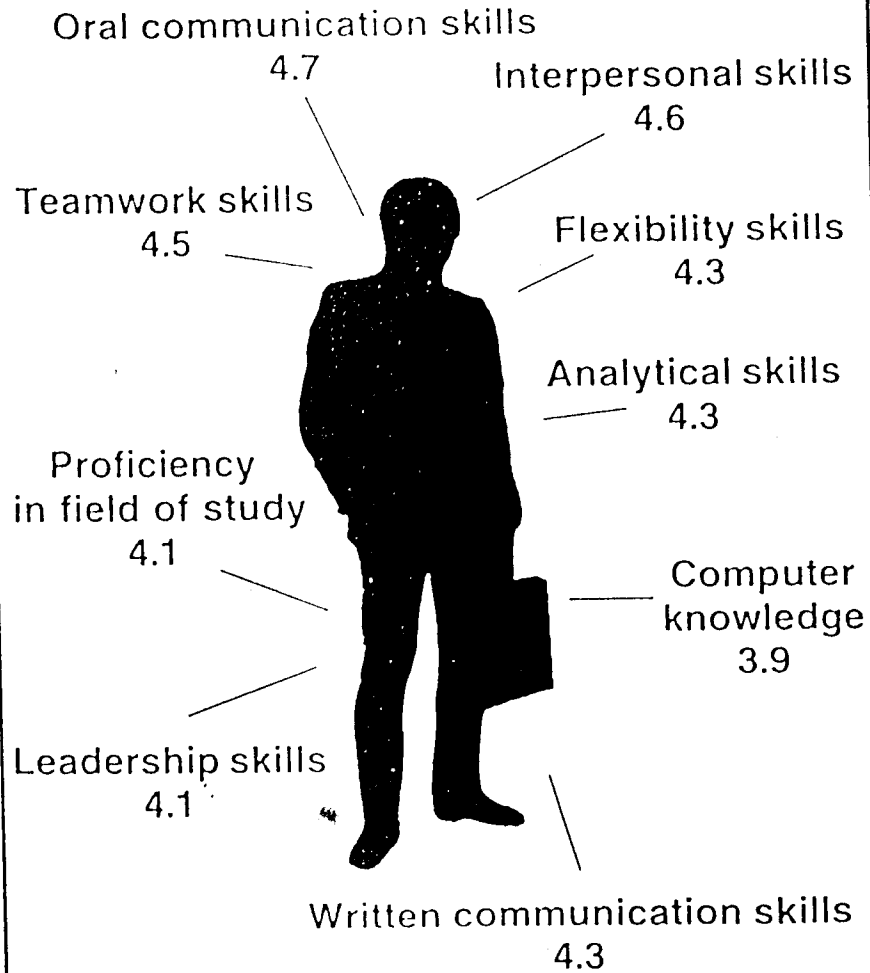
The Wrapping: Several skills or experiences bind the package and are essential to holding it together. Without these skills, a candidate may not be able to deliver the package.

1. Critical thinking/problem solving -the ability to identify problems and their solutions by integrating information from a variety of sources and effectively weigh alternatives.
2. Intelligence and common sense.
3. Willingness to learn quickly and continuously.
4. Work related experiences that provided an understanding of the workplace and served to apply classroom learning.

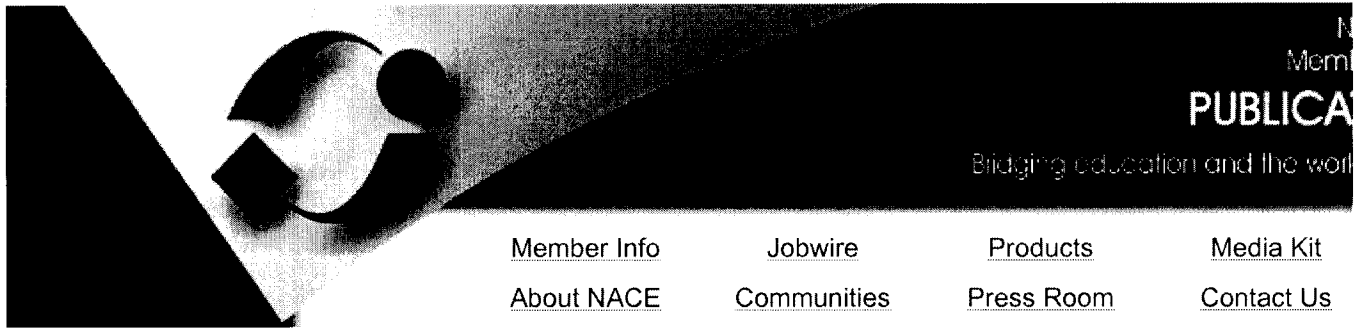
This list should be no surprise to anyone -these skills and competencies have been bantered about since the new economy began to emerge in the late 1980's. Why this section needs our attention is the context in which many employers expressed their qualifications. Because the economy is moving so quickly, candidates must enter their position already demonstrating their command of these competencies. There is neither time nor the luxury of training a highly qualified academic candidate in these skills. Employers demand that the "total package" be delivered at graduation.

*Results are based on the responses of 376 employers from around the country.

Skills Desired by Employers



Numbers are average ratings on a 5-point scale of importance.



- Members Only**
- Information Center
 - Online Directory
 - Online Publications

Feature **ARTICLES**

A Blueprint for Building an Online Career Portfolio *(continued)*

Employer Feedback

Online Publications

- *Job Outlook*
- Journal Online
- *Salary Survey*
- Spotlight Online
- Syndicated Content
- Two-Year Articles

The task force sought employer validation of the Career Portfolio in two areas: 1) Had the task force identified the skills that were important to employers who recruit college candidates? 2) Would employers use the Career Portfolio to augment their recruiting methods?

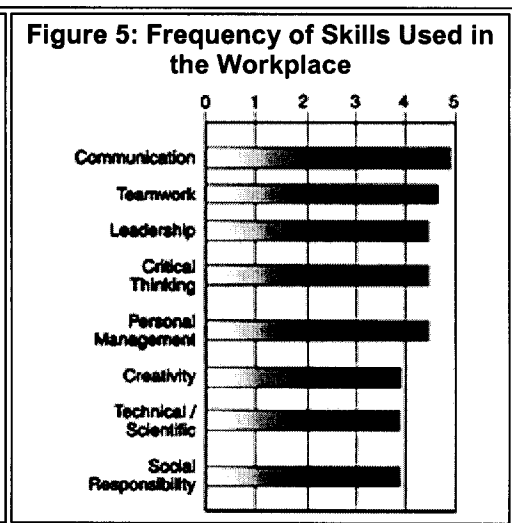
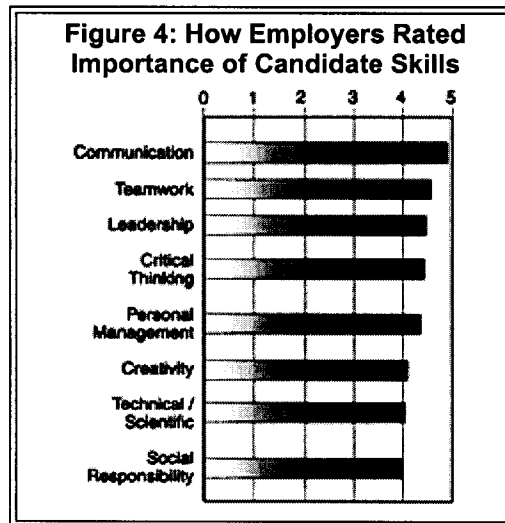
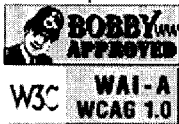
To obtain answers to those questions, the task force conducted two surveys of employers who recruit FSU students. The first survey, conducted in fall 1999, asked employers to rate eight general employability skills with regard to 1) how frequently certain skills were used in their organization, and 2) how important each skill was to becoming successful in their organization. The skills rated by 246 employers coincided with the skills included in the Career Portfolio. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was "not important" and 5 was "very important," the skills were identified as either "important" or "very important." (See *Figure 4.*) When evaluating frequency of use, each skill was evaluated to be used "frequently" to "very frequently" within each organization. (See *Figure 5.*)

- Reprint Information

Related Links:

- History of Development
- Goals and Objectives
- System Features
- Student Feedback
- Employer Feedback
- Integration and Implementation

Sitemap



Coincidentally, *Job Outlook 2001*, a survey of the National Association of Colleges and Employers, yielded similar results.² In response to that survey, employers rated the importance of 18 student candidate skills on a five-point scale. Seven of the eight skills that the task force had identified as important were included on this list and each received high marks.