

# Are transferable skills the new experience?

As the world of work evolves, more people are using transferable skills as their ticket to a new role or industry.

You could even say that transferable skills – those key capabilities that could apply to any job or field, such as leadership or collaboration – are just as valuable as experience.

What this all means is the idea that you must have experience specific to the job is changing. It's not always essential to have the exact experience if you've got high-quality transferable skills to offer.

## **Adapting to new industries**

People have used their transferable skills to take up new opportunities for years now. Search engine optimisation (SEO) and data analysis roles are examples. When these jobs were created about 15 years ago, no-one had the exact experience needed. It was their transferable skills that created a foot in the door.

Ecommerce is another example. When companies first began selling products online, there were no courses or training opportunities for this exactly – people used their transferable skills from sales, marketing or IT to take on the new roles being created.

## **Automation is changing things**

Many industries are seeing automation arrive, but that can be a positive. Automation is another evolution of the tools we have available to us. Just as the internet brought with it an era of new jobs, new opportunities will arise as automation continues.

And as repetitive or monotonous tasks are increasingly done through automation, the focus for us is shifting to those uniquely human skills that technology can't provide. People who can demonstrate their leadership skills, people skills, problem-solving, creativity and other valuable transferable skills will likely find themselves well-equipped

to handle a changing job market.

## **Transferable skills go beyond the tech industry**

You don't have to be looking to get into emerging or hi-tech industries to make use of your transferable skills.

Robert Half's Andrew Brushfield sees many candidates who've sold their transferable skills as experience. He says teachers are a classic example – their expertise transcends many industries.

"We have had many ex-teachers go into recruitment and have done a great job," says Brushfield. "They are able to multitask, to handle time pressure, and are very competent at presenting and communicating in a manner that a lot of people understand. They can simplify potentially complex messages easily," he says.

Brushfield has placed many candidates from accounting backgrounds into software sales, highlighting their transferable skills as experience. Some, he says, start by selling accounting software because it's something they know, and then move onto selling other packages.

Check out this [transferable skills checklist](#) for more ideas of skills you can sell.

## **How to leverage your transferable skills**

If you want to make the most of your transferable skills in your resume and cover letter, then focus on what you bring to the role – not what you don't have. Tailoring the application to the job is always a must. Take a look at the job description and the key skills, and tie your transferable skills to those, Brushfield says.

The way you sell yourself is key to any application, and the more real-life examples of the benefits of your transferable skills, the better.

Whether it's in your application or in interviews, concentrate on these skills and how they'll benefit the new organisation, and how they could be used in the job. It may be as simple as having a positive attitude and a passion for people. You could sell those transferable skills to get a role in a totally different industry in a service or sales role. Data analysis is another good example. If you can analyse data, you can apply those skills to market research, financial planning, insurance and the recruitment to name a

few.

By showing how your transferable skills link to a new industry you also demonstrate that you've done your homework and thought about the role on offer.

Ultimately, you've worked hard for your transferable skills and it makes sense to leverage them. Look for the positives in the skills you've gained, whatever role or industry it was in, and sell this as your experience.

**You've got more skills than you know.** [Discover your hidden talents today and put your skills to work.](#)