

# Recognising and building personal skills

Age range: 11-14 and 14-16



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Remember that you can refer to the guiding principles for establishing a safe learning environment in the Appendix section of the LifeSkills content guide. This includes suggestions for signposting students to further support. The content guide can be downloaded at: [barclayslifeskills.com/educators](http://barclayslifeskills.com/educators)



LifeSkills is pleased to have worked with The National Autistic Society to ensure the following lesson plan can be adapted to suit the needs of students with autism.

If teaching a lesson including students with autism, here are some key considerations when undertaking the following activities:

- Give concrete examples wherever possible, for example when discussing personal presentation, explain that this can refer to appearance, dress, choice of language
- Explain concepts clearly, such as honesty and integrity. Something like honesty may be difficult to grasp as often students with autism are always honest

Time needed: 30-40 minutes

## Key learning outcomes

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By the end of the activity students will be able to:

- Identify a number of key personal skills
- Explain how they already demonstrate these skills in their everyday lives
- Evaluate how they can build on these skills and adapt them to a workplace setting

## Resources

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- [Student Sheet 1.1: Using my skills](#) (one per student)
- [Student Sheet 1.2: Workplace challenges](#) (one per student)

## Activity steps

Note that the icons in these margins are not click-able.



Slide 1.1

### 1. Identify your personal skills and how to adapt them

- Ask students what they think personal skills are, and how these could benefit them in the workplace; encourage a brief initial brainstorm and encourage students to record their answers, write them on the board or a 'graffiti wall'. This will help establish the starting point in students' knowledge, measure progress and adapt the session if needed
- Reveal employers' top rated personal skills on PDF Presentation Slide 1.1 – do some of the skills they brainstormed match the slide, or any they think are similar? To read up about each skill in more detail, visit [prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/applying-for-jobs/what-skills-do-employers-want](https://prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/applying-for-jobs/what-skills-do-employers-want)
- Discuss how students might use each skill differently in a workplace context
- For example, what they wear to school is probably dictated by the uniform rules, but they must make sure they follow them. In the workplace, there may not be written rules but they will need to be aware of how other people dress and what their customers might expect to make sure they are dressed appropriately
- Remind students that the skills we gain from everyday experiences can also be useful for the workplace. These could include debating competitions, charity runs or playing football.
- If students have access to computers/laptops, load the 'Know your skills' interactive, ([barclayslifeskills.com/knowyourskills](https://barclayslifeskills.com/knowyourskills)) where they can identify a number of situations where they may use and develop key transferable skills to address everyday challenges



Sheet 1.1

### 2. Demonstrate your skills

- Hand out **Student Sheet 1.1** and ask students to select and rank their own top 5 skills and record these in the first two columns of the table
- Explain that it will be important to talk or write about these skills when they apply for jobs or college courses, and in interviews. However, it is not enough to simply claim they have the skills; they will need to demonstrate how they use the skills
- Ask the students to choose one of the skills and describe how they use it in real-life, perhaps at school, home, a club, or as a volunteer, and how they may need to use the skill differently in a job or work situation. Students can discuss in pairs or small groups. For example, how might they need to communicate and listen differently, and why? They should then use the third column on **Student Sheet 1.1** to record their ideas
- Explain that in a work situation an example could be a paramedic who uses listening skills to assess patients. They need to listen very carefully so they relay the correct medical information to doctors. How would this be different from the way they listen to their friends or colleagues?



Sheet 1.2



Sheet 1.1

## Extension idea: Match the skills to workplace challenges

- If you have time, hand out **Student Sheet 1.2** which includes a series of workplace scenarios, or, if students have access to computers/tablets, you can also load up the 'Workplace challenge' interactive ([barclayslifeskills.com/workplacechallenge](https://barclayslifeskills.com/workplacechallenge)) and use these scenarios instead for a more interactive session
- Using their ideas from **Student Sheet 1.1** and/or the 'Dictionary of skills' interactive ([barclayslifeskills.com/skillsdictionary](https://barclayslifeskills.com/skillsdictionary)), ask students to identify which skills will be most important for the challenge and explain how they would use each skill, giving as much detail as they can to share what they would do and why

## Summary discussion

- Ask students how confident they feel in using and explaining each skill
- Share ideas on how they might become more proficient and confident in describing and demonstrating their skills

## Using my skills

Student Sheet 1.1



Your personal skills help you to do your best and make the most of life.

The good news is that you use many of these skills already, but life at work is different to life at school. When you start a job you'll need to use each skill in new and different ways, especially your personal presentation.

Getting the job you want means showing an employer that:

- You can use these skills already
- You'll know to use them in the right way when you start the job

Here's a simple way to gather your ideas and practise:

1. The skill I have chosen

2. Importance ranking (1-5)

3. Where do I demonstrate this skill?


## Workplace challenges

Student Sheet 1.2



### It's your first day: make a great impression

It's your first day at a new job. You're going to meet your new boss and colleagues and take on your first tasks. How can you make a great first impression with everyone?

### It's the end of the day. You need to 'cash up'

You're in charge of the till and it's the end of the day. You need to sort and count the money in the till, check the total matches the till's records, bag up the money and take it to the bank

### Plan a staff rota and send it by email

You've just been promoted to supervisor. You've got a busy month ahead. You need to plan the rota for everyone's working hours, type it up and email it, making sure everyone understands they may have to do a little extra to help

### Think of great ideas for a launch party

Your employer wants to hold a party to celebrate the launch of some new products. She wants to invite your top customers to an evening event at the store. You and your colleagues must think of some ideas to make the party a success

### A customer is unhappy

An important customer is on the phone. They are unhappy with the service they received and want to complain. Your manager is away and you take the call. You need to make a record of what you both say and make sure the customer is satisfied with how you handle their call

### Help a new employee fit into the team

A new employee joins today. You've been asked to help them settle in. You also need to show them how to carry out some key tasks. You need to help them to become a good team member and fit in with their new company