



The Conference Board of Canada

communicate, manage information, use numbers, think & solve problems, demonstrate positive attitudes & behaviours, be responsible, be adaptable, learn continuously, work safely, work with others

Developing your

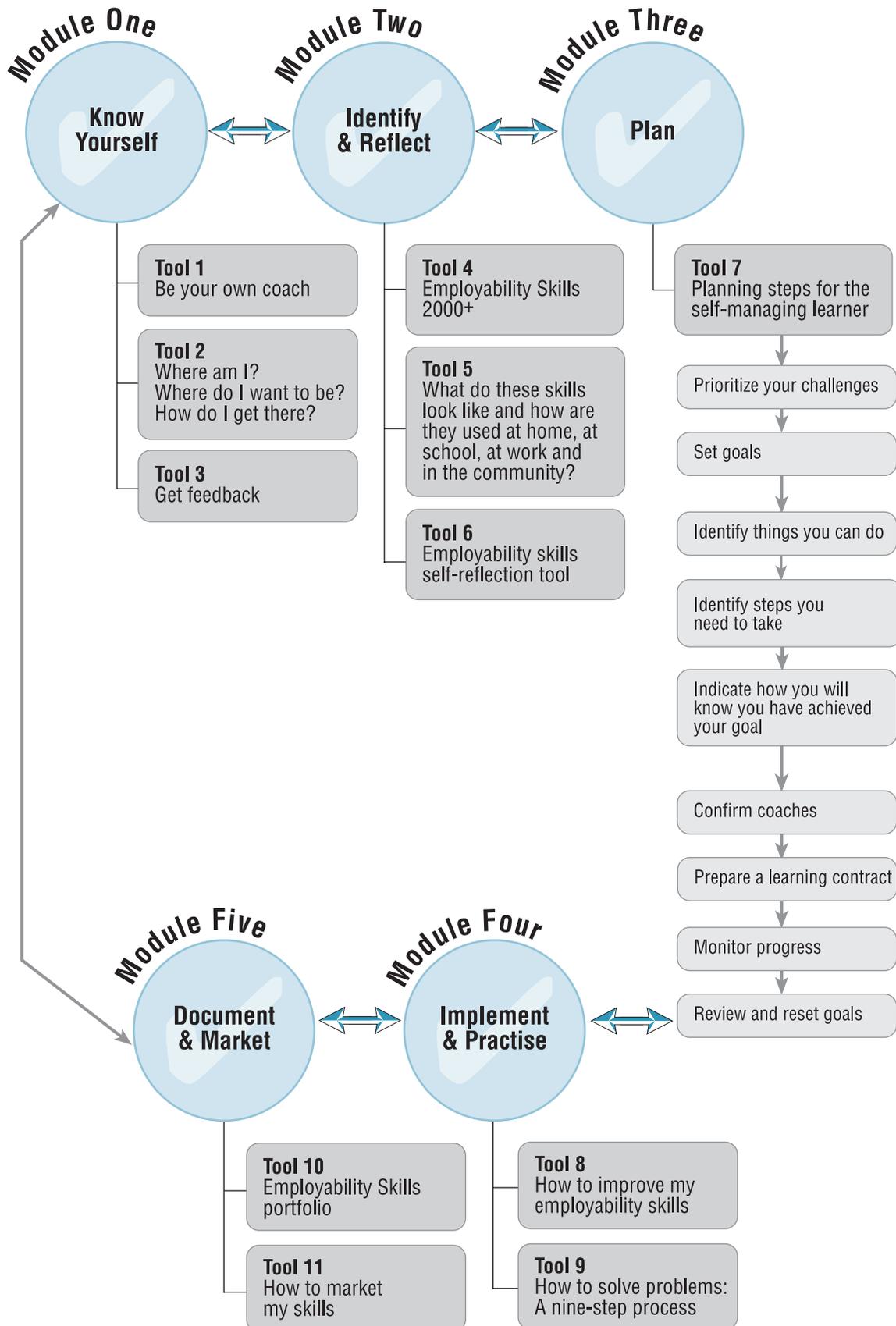


EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS **Toolkit**

*for the
self-managing
learner*



The Employability Skills Toolkit for the Self-Managing Learner





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Module One



KNOW

Yourself

*Help yourself
enter, stay in and
progress in the
World of Work*



Tool 5

Employability Skills 2000+

1. More detail: “What these skills really mean or look like”
2. Demonstrated Examples: “How these skills are used at home, at school, at work, and in the community”

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS: More detail about what these skills look like and examples of Demonstrated Behaviours . . .

Employability 2000+ Skill	More detail about what these skills look like	You can demonstrate examples of these skills at Home by . . .
<i>Communicate</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand information presented in a variety of forms (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the general context of a document • Be able to summarize the information presented and understand the main points while recognizing important details • Follow directions or instructions • Evaluate what you read • Review for accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Following instructions to load software onto the computer ✓ Putting together a piece of furniture or a model from a kit ✓ Reading a recipe to determine equipment, ingredients and results ✓ Following the instructions and taking your medication on time ✓ Using the phone book as a reference to call someone in a different time zone ✓ Following the instructions for setting up a VCR or TV ✓ Understanding how to read and complete a lease agreement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write and speak so others pay attention and understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your ideas focused • Record information completely and accurately • Know your audience, to write or speak so they understand you • Use appropriate presentation tools and technologies • Recognize the cultural diversity of your audience, and prepare a suitable presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Answering the telephone and taking an accurate message ✓ Saying something a different way when your parents don't understand ✓ Writing clear notes so your parents know where you'll be ✓ Negotiating with your parents for an extension on your chores or a raise in your allowance ✓ Explaining to a younger brother or sister how to do a math problem ✓ Returning an item to a store and explaining why you don't want it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay attention and respond appropriately • Respect the opinions of others • Ask questions to clarify ideas you don't understand • Seek to understand the background or context of an issue • Rephrase what you have heard to check your understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Watching and discussing the news with family members ✓ Listening to all points of view in an argument ✓ Seeking clarification on medication from a doctor or pharmacist

Employability 2000+ Skill	Demonstration of skill
Think & Solve Problems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess situations and identify problems 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of a problem 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the root cause of a problem 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement solutions 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement 	<p><i>I demonstrate this skill by...</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I haven't yet demonstrated this skill</p>



PLANNING Steps

Tool 7 Planning steps for the self- managing learner

For the self-managing learner, planning is about helping yourself to get from point A to point B. It is about taking pride in your strength and being honest about your challenges. Being a good planner is also about reframing your challenges as skill-building goals. It means being able to map out the steps you need to take to turn your goals into achievements. It also means being able to identify and locate the resources and support you need. Think about what you do or can do to map out an achievable skill-building plan for yourself.

Step 1—Climb every mountain

- Prioritize your challenges
- Picture your challenges as opportunities for growth
- Reflect on how overcoming your challenges will make your life better
- Write your challenges as goals

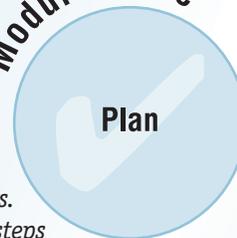
Step 2—Choose your route

- Identify things you can do
- Identify steps you need to take to achieve your goals
- Indicate how you will know when you have achieved your goals
- Anticipate problems that may arise
- Indicate how you will deal with these problems
- Identify who or what can help you achieve your goals
- Make sure you give yourself enough time to achieve your goals
- Refine your goals and solutions

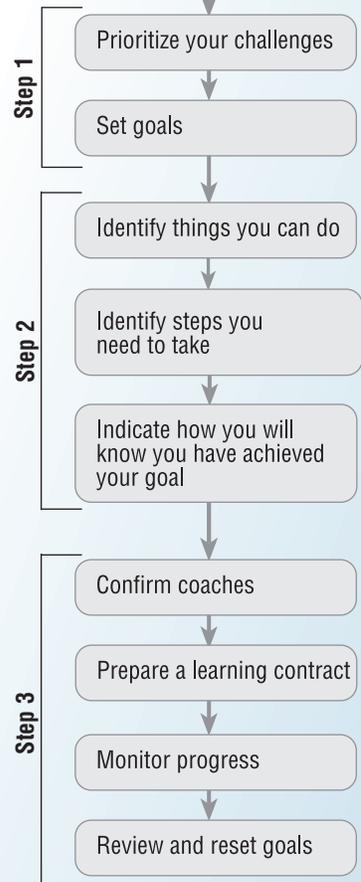
Step 3—Check in, check your equipment, check out

- Confirm coach(es)/line up resources you need
- Prepare a learning contract
- Monitor progress
- Review and reset goals

Module Three



Tool 7
Planning steps for the self-managing learner



Step 1

Climb every mountain

Prioritize your challenges

You've done some thinking about who you are. Your self-confidence has bloomed as you've discovered strengths you didn't know you had. But you've also realized you have some challenges to meet if you are to get where you want to go. Turning these challenges into opportunities is the theme of this section.

Your first task will be to set priorities—in other words, to decide which skill areas need your immediate attention. Take another look at the challenges you identified in Tool 6. Review the feedback from others. Use your self-confidence to help you turn your challenges into positive goals.

Select only *three* challenges you can turn into opportunities—starting today—to make yourself more successful in what you do.

What are the three challenges you have selected as priorities to build on?

1. *Being late for everything*

2.

3.

Picture your challenges as opportunities for growth

- Now that you have narrowed down your list of challenges, you'll probably want to remind yourself what's in it for you.

Reflect on what overcoming your challenges will do for you

- The easiest way to do this is to reflect on how overcoming your challenges will make your life better.

Write your challenges as goals

- Now you are ready to write your challenges as goals that will have a payoff for you.

Step 1

Prioritize your challenges



Set goals

**How life will
be better**

My challenges

My goals

Think of the top of the mountain as how life will be when you have reached your goals. Start your climb with your goals in mind. As you climb, deal with the challenges. You will know you have reached your goals when your life changes for the better.



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Module Four



IMPLEMENT & **Practise**

*Help yourself
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progress in the
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Tool 9

How to solve problems: A nine-step process

Problems are a fact of life. They occur at home, at school and in the world of work. Your ability to solve them efficiently (and, since they often involve other people, without hard feelings) will not only make your life easier but give you an advantage in the eyes of an employer.

This tool is basically a process for solving problems. The nine steps provide a framework for breaking a problem into bite-sized chunks that you can deal with in sequence. Approached this way, a problem looks less scary, and a solution begins to seem possible.

As you use this method, you will find that you can adapt it to different problem situations. In some cases, you won't need all nine steps; in others, you will be able to modify or combine steps. In all cases, though, the order of the steps will stay the same: that's the secret of Tool 9.

The toolkit gives you some examples to show you different ways the steps can be applied. In each case, the example begins with a three- or four-sentence description of the problem situation. It then proceeds through as many of the steps as are required to come up with a solution.

The examples are all from real-life workplace situations, and the solutions show the steps taken by real people to solve real problems. The toolkit also supplies a sample problem for you to practise on and a worksheet that you can copy to help you work through some of the problems you encounter in your own world.

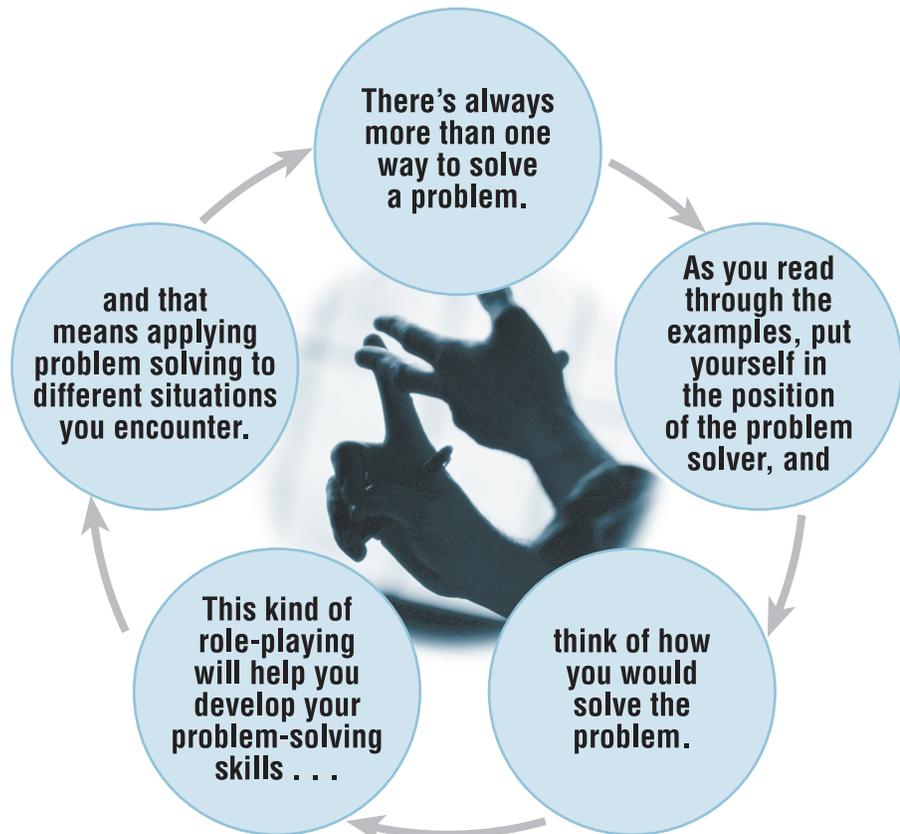
Module Four

Implement & Practise

Tool 8
How to improve my employability skills

Tool 9
How to solve problems:
A nine-step process

Remember . . .



The Problem: (3 or 4 sentences)

The Problem-Solving Process:**1. Assess situation and identify problem:**

2. Seek different points of view:

3. Recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of a problem:

4. Identify the root cause of a problem:

5. Be creative and innovative:

6. Use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions:

7. Evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions:

8. Implement solutions:

9. Check to see if a solution works:

A problem of your own**Using this template:**

1. Write a three- or four-sentence description of a workplace or other situation that you have experienced or know of that required the use of problem-solving skills.
2. Using the nine problem-solving skills outlined below, go through the process of solving the problem you have described. Be creative. You may think of three or four ways to solve the problem. Talk with other people and get their ideas. But remember—you're in charge.

Think & Solve Problems:

- Assess situations and identify problems.
- Seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts.
- Recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of a problem.
- Identify the root cause of a problem.
- Be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions.
- Readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions.
- Evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions.
- Implement solutions.
- Check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement.



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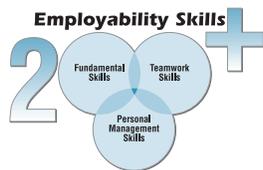
Module Five



DOCUMENT & **Market**

*Help yourself
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Example of a TEAMWORK Employability 2000+ Skill

“Be flexible: respect, be open to and be supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group”

Instructions

1. Use the template below to document your development in a skill that’s important to you. Write it down.
2. Reflect on the various strategies you identified in Tool 7 to help you develop this skill in different contexts (e.g., schoolwork, extracurricular activities, summer job, sports, volunteering, clubs, lessons). Write down the strategies that worked best for you in the box marked “Effective Strategies.”
3. Write down how you have developed this skill, giving examples, in the box marked “My achievement.”
4. Ask a person who supervised your activities to comment on your skill development, and sign their statement.

Example

Skill

Be flexible: respect, be open to and be supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in the group.

Effective Strategies

- Participate actively in group discussions
- Act upon my leadership strengths
- Recognize the strengths of others
- Encourage others to use their strengths
- Combine my own strength with those of others
- Motivate others when necessary and also take a “back seat” when necessary
- Keep the team focused to achieve desired results
- Be flexible to accommodate group dynamics

My Achievement

When we started out, lots of people had good ideas, but everyone wanted to run the show. People weren’t co-operating and were trying to raise money by themselves, and they weren’t getting very far. I thought that if we shared our ideas and talked about the problems we were having, we could come up with one plan to co-ordinate everyone’s fundraising projects. We had a meeting, and people were going off in different directions. I suggested that we brainstorm ideas using a flipchart to capture everyone’s ideas—we just needed to team up and share the work. We ended up raising all the money we needed, and everyone got to raise money the way they wanted to.

Supervisor’s Statement

When I saw how much trouble the kids were having working together to raise money, I wondered what had happened to my team. When Jeremy Fisher called the meeting, I was skeptical, but he convinced me that it was worth a try. When things started to fall apart at the meeting, as I expected them to, Jeremy came up with the idea of brainstorming. It seemed simplistic and I didn’t think it would work, because the kids were getting unruly. But Jeremy was able to capture everyone’s interest by writing everything down and not allowing the kids to shoot down each others’ ideas. Then, the students were able to talk about each idea and come up with a plan that incorporated their best ideas. All of a sudden, I had my old team back!

Signature: Jock Q. Sawhorse

Getting ready for an interview

Do your homework before you go in for a job interview:

- Write out the skills the employer or client is looking for.
- Make the connection for yourself between what you do or can do and the skills you have.
- Help your prospective employer or client to see the ways you are a good fit for the job or task by matching examples of skills and how you have demonstrated them at home, at school, at work or in the community against the employer’s or client’s skill needs.

To help you organize your thoughts, use the following matrix, which gives you a way to match the achievements you documented in Tool 10 (your Employability Skills Portfolio) with the needs of employers or clients. You may find it useful to review Tool 6, your Employability Skills Self-Reflection Tool, for more examples of your skills achievements.

Employer’s skill needs (from job ad)	My activities	My skills	Examples of how I have demonstrated my skills
Good organizational skills			
Good interpersonal skills			
Good communications skills			
Ability to work effectively under pressure with assigned deadlines			
Ability to operate personal computer			
Good grammar, spelling and punctuation skills			
Ability to work with minimal supervision			
Ability to maintain confidentiality			