

Competencies define the abilities, skills and knowledge that lead to better performance or are needed to be successful in a job.

Soft skills are often referred to as personal skills or personal competences, transferable skills, talents or strengths. The soft skills are related to the person's mindset or attitude and are more profound in the trait of the person. Soft skills do not belong to the contexts; they exist by themselves, and it is possible/recommendable to transfer them to other situations/contextes.

Examples of important soft skills: Communication, teamwork, cooperation, problem-solving, independence, flexibility, empathy, helpfulness, active listening, presentation, speaking, time-management.

Transitional skills defined by UNESCO, 2016 has 6 domains a which are demanded skills in the present and future job market.

- Critical and innovative thinking
- Inter-personal skills (e.g. presentation and communication skills, organisational skills, teamwork, etc.)
- Intra-personal skills (e.g. self-discipline, enthusiasm, perseverance, self-motivation, etc.)
- Global citizenship (e.g. tolerance, openness, respect for diversity, intercultural understanding, etc.)
- Media and information literacy such as the ability to locate and access information, as well as to analyse and evaluate media content

Soft skills are different from professional skills, which are directly relevant to the job that you would like to work with.

Professional skills are often referred to as hard skills, qualifications, abilities or competencies. Professional skills can be acquired through formal training, working, or other experiences from voluntary work, helping the family etc.

Examples: Customer service, translation, teaching, programming, accounting, negotiation, driving, language, reading, mathematics, calculation.

The list below highlights examples of soft skills that the facilitator can present to the participants. The facilitator can also ask the participants to research for some others, and also work in their definition, context, tasks, where they can be useful.

(It is also relevant to help participants understand that they can use the knowledge they gained about themselves in this activity to highlight and improve their professional self-image when applying for jobs.)

Skill	Definition
Adaptive flexibility	Ability to adapt, adjust, transform in situations of change
Assertiveness	Ability to establish your own rights and express thoughts, feelings and convictions in a direct, clear, and honest manner, without using aggression
Autonomy	Ability to make a decision for yourself, to act on your convictions and resources based on the information available; Do not try to please others
Coping with stress	Ability to maintain the level of performance in stress situations
Creativity / innovation	Ability to produce something new (a product), which is accepted as useful, and / or satisfactory by a significant number of people; to have original ideas, to be imaginative
Curiosity (relates to critical thinking)	Ability to inquire, to explore, to investigate; Desire to know more; Desire to see or know something hitherto unknown
Decision-making	Ability to recognize that an action must be taken, and for this it selects an option of action, among several alternatives
Easiness of integration in work teams - Teamwork	Ability to insert and be accepted into a team; Collaborate with others towards a common goal
Energy/ motivation	Ability to initiate, direct and persist in a behaviour towards the achievement of certain objectives; dynamism; vitality
Initiative	Ability to initiate tasks spontaneously, without being asked
Interpersonal sensitivity / empathy	Ability to establish relationships with people around us; Ability to put yourself in the other's shoes
Leadership	Ability to organize, manage and mobilize a group of people and their collective efforts to achieve a common goal
Oral communication	Ability to express orally with argumentation easily
Organization and planning	Ability to plan an action - establishing a prior, logical and detailed plan - and achieve the appropriate means to execute it in the stipulated time, in order to achieve the intended objectives
Perseverance	The ability not to give up easily; Be persistent; Try several times or in different ways until you reach the expected result, even in the presence of obstacles
Persuasion, negotiation and influence	Ability to influence the behaviour of the other; Induce someone to accept an idea, an attitude, or take action; To convince, to influence
Problem-solving	Ability to use methods, in an orderly manner, to find solutions to specific problems
Responsibility / Internalization of the professional role	Ability to take on the consequences of your actions; To behave in a cautious and balanced manner
Self-confidence	Ability to believe in oneself (in his/her value), to believe that one is capable of being or accomplishing something; To have confidence in own abilities
Self-control / Emotional balance	Ability to control emotions and desires; Can delay the immediate satisfaction of his/her needs or desires