

# Common Employability Skills for the Energy Industry



# OVERVIEW

In a recent CEWD poll of its member companies, nearly 83% of the respondents replied that high school and community college graduates are not prepared for energy careers. The lack of preparation falls into two main categories: employability and technical skills.

There is significant consensus on where potential employees can gain technical skills, including short-term bootcamps, certificate programs, company technical training, or formal education. On the employability front, however, it's a different story. Many believe these skills are not "teachable" but rather gained through experience and work history. It doesn't seem to make sense that the same skills that keep applicants from gaining a job are primarily learned on the job.

The National Network of Business and Industry Associations (NNBIA) has created a Common Employability Skills (CES) Framework that establishes a vivid, unifying description of the requisite Applied Knowledge along with Personal, People, and Workplace Skills needed to gain employment. CEWD is a sponsor of the CES, along with other leading industries, including Manufacturing, Retail, IT, and Transportation. These skills directly align to the Energy Industry Competency Model. There are a few industry-specific areas, such as engineering and technology, hand and power tools, and some more advanced math concepts, which are part of the CEWD version of the Model.

# CES AT A GLANCE

## PERSONAL SKILLS

- Integrity
- Initiative
- Dependability & Reliability
- Adaptability/Flexibility
- Professionalism

### **Energy Specific Skills**

- Reputation
- Ability to Learn
- Self-Development

## PEOPLE SKILLS

- Teamwork
- Communication
- Respect

## APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics
- Science
- Information Technology
- Critical Thinking

### **Energy Specific Skills**

- Engineering

## WORKPLACE SKILLS

- Planning/Organizing/Scheduling
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Business Fundamentals
- Customer Focus
- Working with Tools & Technology

### **Energy Specific Skills**

- Ethics
- Following Directions

# PERSONAL AND PEOPLE SKILLS

## CES Personal Skills

### INTEGRITY:

Treating others with honesty, fairness, and respect

- Demonstrate respect for company's time and property
- Accept responsibility for one's decisions and actions
- *Report unethical behavior demonstrated by others*

### INITIATIVE:

Demonstrating a willingness to work and seek out new work challenges

- Take initiative in seeking out new responsibilities and work challenges, increasing the variety and scope of one's job
- Pursue work with energy, drive, and effort to accomplish tasks
- Establish and maintain personally challenging, but realistic, work goals
- Strive to exceed standards and expectations

### DEPENDABILITY & RELIABILITY:

Displaying responsible behaviors at work

- Behave consistently, predictably, and reliably
- Fulfill obligations, complete assignments, and meet deadlines
- Follow written and verbal directions
- Comply with organization's rules, policies, and procedures
- Demonstrate regular and punctual attendance
- *Do not attend to personal business while on the job*
- *Ensure the job is done safely, accurately, and completely*

### ADAPTABILITY/FLEXIBILITY:

Displaying the capability to adapt to new, different, or changing requirements

- Be open to learning and considering new ways of doing things
- Actively seek out and carefully consider the merits of new approaches to work
- Embrace new approaches when appropriate and discard approaches that are no longer working
- Effectively change plans, goals, actions, or priorities to deal with changing situations
- *Identify logical stopping points in work*
- *Quickly learn new assignments and refocus attention*

*Note: Items in italics are energy-specific.*

## PROFESSIONALISM:

Maintaining a professional demeanor at work

- Demonstrate self-control by maintaining composure and keeping emotions in check, even in difficult situations
- Maintain a professional appearance by dressing appropriately for the job and maintaining personal hygiene
- Use professional language when speaking with supervisors, coworkers, and customers
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Take ownership of one's work

## REPUTATION:

*Maintaining a high degree of personal ethics and behavior*

- *Is free from substance abuse*
- *Demonstrate financial responsibility*
- *Maintain an acceptable grade point average if in school*
- *Has not embarrassed oneself through Internet postings*
- *Maintain a good driving record*

## ABILITY TO LEARN:

*Incorporating classroom and on-the-job training into work performance*

- *Understand and use material taught in the classroom and on-the-job training in work situations*
- *Apply information provided in training to work tasks*
- *Demonstrate and show willingness to learn new assignments, procedures, and technologies*

## SELF-DEVELOPMENT:

*Demonstrating a commitment to self-development and improvement*

- *Identify goals and career interests*
- *Seek opportunities to learn new skills and tasks and to refine current skills*
- *Develop personal career plan that includes goals, objectives, and strategies*
- *Identify industry credentialing requirements*
- *Maintain career portfolio to document knowledge, skills, and experience*
- *Evaluate and compare employment opportunities that match career goals*
- *Identify and exhibit traits for retaining employment*
- *Identify opportunities and research requirements for career advancement*
- *Research the benefits of ongoing personal development*

## CES People Skills

### TEAMWORK:

Demonstrating the ability to work effectively with others

- Establish a high degree of trust and credibility with others
- Interact professionally and respectfully with supervisors and coworkers
- Develop constructive working relationships and maintain them over time
- Use appropriate strategies and solutions for dealing with conflicts and differences to maintain a smooth workflow

### COMMUNICATION:

Maintaining open lines of communication with others

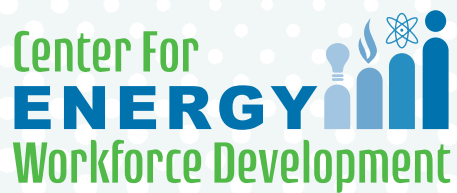
- Demonstrate sensitivity and empathy
- Listen to and consider others' viewpoints
- Recognize and interpret the verbal and nonverbal behavior of others
- Speak clearly, in precise language, and in a logical, organized, and coherent manner

### RESPECT:

Working effectively with those who have diverse backgrounds

- Demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the opinions, perspectives, customs, and individual differences of others
- Be flexible and open-minded when dealing with a wide range of people
- Value diversity of approaches and ideas

Formed in March 2006, the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD) is a non-profit consortium of electric, natural gas, and nuclear utilities and their associations—Edison Electric Institute, American Gas Association, American Public Power Association, Nuclear Energy Institute, and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



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