

Putting your parenting skills to good use in the working world

Time taken out for parenting should never leave you with a 'gap' in your CV. In fact, it is an opportunity to update your CV with all the fabulous new transferable skills you have gained!

Transferable skills are skills that can be used in more than one setting. Everyone has skills that can be used in a variety of settings. Five main areas have been identified as transferable skills and more specific skills are offshoots of these.

The following list contains some examples of transferable skills you may have both from your working life and your non-working life. Have a look through it and identify the ones that may apply to you.

Communication Skills

- Listen attentively
- Speak effectively
- Write concisely
- Express ideas
- Negotiate
- Provide effective feedback
- Persuade others
- Report information
- Describe feelings
- Interview

Research and Planning Skills

- Create ideas
- Identify problems
- Solve problems
- Gather information
- Identify resources
- Set goals
- Define needs
- Prioritise
- Analyse
- Develop evaluation strategies

Human Relations

- Listen actively
- Develop rapport
- Provide support for others
- Motivate
- Counsel

- Advocate for others
- Co-operate with others
- Delegate with respect
- Perceive situations
- Be assertive

Organisation, Management and Leadership

- Co-ordinate tasks
- Initiate new ideas
- Manage groups
- Coach others
- Promote change
- Influence others
- Manage conflict
- Delegate responsibility
- Supervise others
- Prioritise tasks

Work Survival

- Co-operate with others
- Be punctual
- Manage time
- Meet goals
- Diligent with detail
- Accept responsibility
- Be reliable
- Set and meet deadlines
- Make decisions
- Implement decisions

Once you have identified your transferable skills from the above list, think of some examples that will back up your claims. These examples may be from your past working days or your experience gained by parenting. Once you have done this, a Personal Skills and Competencies section can be added at the front of your CV, giving you a place to include these details.

The Personal Skills and Competencies section should be tailored to every job that you apply for; all the skills you set out should be relevant for the role you are targeting. This can be done by obtaining a copy of the position description or using the advertisement itself. Highlight any key areas, and identify the skill set required. Then match the skills required to the skills you have, easy!

Your CV is a very important marketing tool and to promote yourself in the most effective way, you need to be aware of all your skills both transferable and specific.

Most of the time, if you mention work and parenthood in the same sentence, it's because there's a clash of some sort. Late hours at the office, or emails on weekends, or the employer's favourite, parental leave, normally set up the two biggest parts of life in opposition to one another. But, in fact, the skills you learn in both are very transferable, and after taking leave to look after a new baby, you might find yourself coming back a whole lot better trained for your job than you were before. Here are 6 key skills that parenthood will teach you, which are irreplaceable in the workplace...

Time management

There was probably a time when showing up 5 minutes late didn't seem all that bad. But when there are kids involved, being on time is crucial. No matter how prone to tardiness you normally are, you can train yourself to be punctual. And all of sudden, you find yourself aware of every spare 5 minutes, and all the things you can squeeze into them. Forget frittering away time on social media sites; after becoming a parent you'll be an efficiency machine.

Multitasking

Sometimes there just aren't enough hours in the day to compartmentalise everything. Then, it's time to do the challenging feat of keeping several motors running at once. When you've got children running around, you're always doing more than one thing at once, because you never stop looking after them. And in the office, being able to manage more than one task at once isn't just a benefit, it's a necessity.

Working as part of a team

Whatever shape your family takes, as soon as there is more than one person in the equation, you become your own little team. To get anywhere, you need to make sure you're all on the same side. We all know persuading a child to cooperate is far more difficult than talking to a rational adult (most of the time...), so your parenting skills will put you in good stead for encouraging your colleagues to work together.

Staying positive

Children catch moods like they catch head lice, so if you show you're in a bad one, you can bet everyone will be having tantrums. But it's not only kids who respond best to a big smile – walk into the office with one, and you'll notice the difference. Then, once you start out the day in a good mood, you have to keep it up, and this can be a real challenge in itself. But if you can keep upbeat in the face of dropped ice-creams and wailing toddlers, you'll be able to handle a grumpy boss with ease.

Patience

There are very few skills more valuable or more challenging to learn than patience. But when there are children who can't wait one minute, let alone five, the happiness of the household depends on your ability to keep your cool. After you've patiently told your child not to do something for the fifth time, you may actually find them listening to you, and the same goes for your work-mates. Some results are slow to achieve, but waiting for them is worth it.

The power of sugar!

There's no magic like a full stomach for transforming someone into a better, agreeable mood. Give your kids an ice-cream and tears will turn to sticky grins. A Mr. Whippy might look out of place in the office, but a box of cupcakes from the local bakery certainly wouldn't – just see how much better the office runs as a result. If you have a proposition to make, or something to ask for, do it over lunch. And if you've got a problem to confront, discuss it over a cup of sugary tea. A little something sweet has a miraculous ability to set the world right again.

- ☐ Time management
- ☐ Conflict management
- ☐ Multi-tasking
- ☐ Patience
- ☐ Staying positive
- ☐ Working as part of a team
- ☐ Problem solving
- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Negotiation
- ☐ Budgeting and managing finances
- ☐ Project management

Personal Profile:

I am committed and hard-working person, who gives due attention to any task, big or small. Looking after a household with children, has given me the skills of budgeting, time management, weekly planning as well as providing support and continuity. Looking for job opportunity so my personal qualities can be used effectively. Ready, willing and able to play a key role in the workplace.

Or

Now my children are in full time education I'm looking forward to returning to work. As a parent I have developed lots of new skills to care for young children, for example, communicating, planning and organising. I'm highly motivated, work well as part of a team and have a caring personality with some excellent work experience gained by volunteering at the local Home-start. I'm now looking for a position in social care to develop a career.

Skills & Abilities:

- People person / excellent social skills
- Good communication skills used in every day life
- Friendly, confident, polite helpful manner with the general public
- Interested in new things and willing to learn new skills
- Comfortable with responsibility and able to use initiative
- Good organization and time management skills
- Motivating and being supportive of others
- Friendly and approachable manner
- Motivated, keen, flexible and adaptable
- Practical: gets a task done, finds easy solutions, adapts to different situations and picks up
- Able to work quickly, carefully and methodically

Filling in CVs is like jogging - you get to turn a tiny bit of pain into a whole lot of gain! OK, so you've got your lucky CV-busting sweatband on and you're ready for action, but what next? How do you go about saying nice things about yourself in a CV, especially if you've not had much work experience yet? Here's how:

Know your CV lingo: the difference between SKILLS and STRENGTHS

First off, skills and strengths are your personal qualities. Listing your skills and strengths in a CV helps employers see why they should pick you. Everyone has skills and strengths, including you. They mean slightly different things:

Skills: You learn *skills* through being taught or through experience, like handling money or being fluent in French or being proficient in software like Word, Excel or Photoshop.

Strengths: You have natural *strengths*, or they're qualities you've picked up over time. Your strengths on a CV might include 'organised' or 'good communication skills when serving customers or undertaking reception work'. These strengths are also known as [soft skills](#).

Where do skills and strengths go in a CV?

- Your skills and strengths fit smoothly in the 'key skills' section of your CV
- Doing them as bullet points like this makes them easier for employers to read!
- You can give examples of where you've displayed some of your skills, e.g. *"self-motivated and able to meet deadlines, as shown by completing my own project during my summer internship in 2014"*

You can also add a few key skills to describe you when filling in your personal statement. You know what a personal statement is in a CV, right? If you're not sure, it's the beginning part of the CV that says a little bit about you, your education so far and some idea about what you're looking for in career/education next steps.

13 examples of key skills and strengths for your CV

HOT TIP: Try giving examples of where you've shown your skills! *We've included some examples for you below in italics.* When you're brainstorming your CV you can remove these examples, or change them to make them true for you.

1. Problem solving skills
2. Numeracy skills
3. Written and verbal communication skills (*built up through essays, presentations and coursework during my time at school/college, and through replying to email queries during my office work placement*)
4. Strong customer service skills (*developed through retail work experience*)
5. Excellent telephone manner (*built up through work experience involving reception work and answering phones*)
6. Self-motivation and ability to take the initiative
7. Ability to work well under pressure
8. I.T. skills *including experience in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Powerpoint)*
9. Punctuality and time-keeping (*as displayed through good attendance when doing early shifts in a summer job*)
10. Able to take on responsibility (*given extra responsibilities at school in the form of co-ordinating school assemblies and clubs and helping out at lunchtime. Past babysitting work experience*)

required being in a position of responsibility, as did being given extra responsibilities at school like helping out at lunchtime)

11. Good organisation, with attention to detail (*organised a charity fundraising event*)
12. Teamwork skills (*worked well as part of a team in previous summer office experience*)
13. Quick learner, keen to learn and improve skills

Ask yourself a few questions. Which of these skills and strengths sound like you? If you were asked in a job interview to give an example of when you displayed your skills and strengths, which ones do you think you could give an example of?

Answering these questions may help you choose which skills and strengths to put down in your CV, and could help you when it comes to job interviews, too.

Remember, whatever your level of education or work experience, you've always got skills and strengths to brag about. Don't be shy - let your light shine!

Activities of daily living

Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) are not necessary for fundamental functioning, but they let an individual live independently in a community

- [Housework](#)
- Preparing meals
- Taking medications as prescribed
- Managing money
- [Shopping](#) for groceries or clothing
- Use of telephone or other form of communication
- Transportation within the community
- Care of others (including selecting and supervising caregivers)
- Care of pets
- Child rearing
- Communication management
- Community mobility
- Financial management
- Health management and maintenance
- Home establishment and maintenance
- Meal preparation and cleanup
- Religious observances
- Safety procedures and emergency responses
- Shopping