

# The 10 Skills: Society and You

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## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will show how the application of a skill can vary across industries, occupations, and situations.

Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Applying Skills in Different Situations
  - a. The Anatomy of a Job
  - b. Work Environments
  - c. Our Personal Attributes
2. Other Considerations
  - a. Available Resources
  - b. Societal Impacts of a Decision



## BEFORE YOU START

Think about a job you've held, past or present. Try to classify that job based on each of the categories in the table below. Several examples are provided. (If you haven't been employed, you can think about a role you've played, like being a student, parent, or friend.)

How would applying your technology skill be different for each job listed? What about your innovation skill?

Job Title	Job Type	Type of Company	Type of Industry	Location
Blog writer	Food and beverage	Content development	Marketing	Portland, Maine
Gardener	Residential	Landscaping	Service	Lodi, California
Physician's assistant	Pediatrics	Family health practice	Healthcare	Biloxi, Mississippi

## 1. Applying Skills in Different Situations

There is an untold number of ways to apply the 10 Skills. It would be impossible to identify every application! However, it pays to understand some of the different attributes that can affect situations in the workplace.

### 1a. The Anatomy of a Job

In the warm-up activity, you got a glimpse of the anatomy of a job. Jobs can vary by job title, job type, company, industry, and location. These factors alone can have a big influence on how you apply the 10 Skills. Would a landscape architect approach innovation or technology in the same way as a stockbroker on Wall Street? Likely not. It becomes obvious that the anatomy of each job dictates how skills get applied.



#### DID YOU KNOW

The application of a skill can also vary between school, work, and home.

Imagine a lawyer who gets results by commanding the courtroom during a high-profile lawsuit. That same lawyer will likely take a softer and more caring approach when she drives toward results with her family at home. Discussing her children's grades or the family finances is much different than reaching a verdict in the courtroom, even though the required skill set in both situations might be the same.

### 1b. Work Environments

How our work is structured and where it takes place also impacts how we apply the 10 Skills. The following table shows just some of the variation that can exist in the workplace. But this list is just the beginning. What other categories or variables can you think of?

Category	Variables
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• geographical location</li> <li>• climate</li> <li>• job site (e.g., indoor or outdoor)</li> <li>• work position (e.g., standing or sitting)</li> <li>• level of risk</li> <li>• level of physical effort</li> </ul>
Daily activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activity type (e.g., physical or mental)</li> <li>• work pace</li> <li>• level of stress</li> <li>• travel considerations</li> </ul>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role (e.g., team member or supervisor)</li> <li>• degrees, certifications, and licenses</li> <li>• available tools, equipment, and resources</li> </ul>
Employment model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct hire vs. contractor</li> <li>• part-time vs. full-time</li> <li>• short-term vs. long-term</li> </ul>
Work relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• size of team</li> <li>• team diversity</li> <li>• level of interactivity</li> <li>• management philosophies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• company culture</li> </ul>
Company structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• type of business</li> <li>• ownership (e.g., public or private)</li> <li>• date of establishment</li> <li>• affiliations</li> </ul>

Read the following example. Then think of an answer to the question beneath it.

➞ **EXAMPLE** Juanita just received her degree in food engineering. Her first career job is at a startup facility that processes cheese and other dairy products. Right now, the facility is empty, so Juanita has been tasked with both designing the plant layout using computer-aided design software and purchasing the capital equipment. Once the plant is up and running, she will move into her permanent role as production supervisor, overseeing a team of 10 employees.



TRY IT

Many variables in Juanita's job are going to change as she transitions from startup to production. Which of the 10 Skills do you think will be most impacted by the changes and how?



There are many correct answers to this question. If you thought of any of the following, then you're headed in the right direction!

- **Innovation.** Juanita will move from generating creative ideas about facility design to finding new ways to improve food production.
- **Problem-Solving.** Juanita will move from solving design problems with the aid of a computer to improving team dynamics as she guides and mentors her staff.
- **Relationship-Building.** Juanita will move from primarily working alone to developing innovative ideas with her group of direct reports.

### 1c. Our Personal Attributes

Our personal goals, cultures, experiences, **biases**, and abilities also impact how we apply the 10 Skills. It goes without saying that no two people are alike, therefore no two applications of a skill will be alike either.



➞ **EXAMPLE** Devin manages a small group of financial advisors at a bank in a downtown highrise of a large city. He has planned an outing for his team to boost their relationship-building skills with one another. They'll be doing a high ropes course in a state national forest an hour's drive away. Devin received word that one employee, Kylie, is afraid to participate. He incorrectly assumes that Kylie is afraid of heights. After talking with her, Devin learns that Kylie is apprehensive because she has never set foot near a lake or forest.

In this example, Devin had good intentions, but his **social awareness** needed some fine-tuning. He incorrectly assumed that people have similar backgrounds when it comes to their skills development. After his discussion with Kylie, Devin learned that Kylie has lived her entire life in the city with limited access to private transportation. She has never seen a lake or woods in person, and the thought of it was causing her anxiety.

Whether working in teams or leading them, it's important to recognize that there is power in diversity of thought, experience, and culture. Different perspectives help to achieve great accomplishments. But it takes strong communication skills, social awareness, and **empathy** to learn how to be mutually respectful and navigate solutions for the benefit of everyone.



#### TERMS TO KNOW

##### **Social Awareness**

The ability to interpret your environment, recognize the perspective of others, and act appropriately in a variety of contexts.

##### **Bias**

Favoring one thing over another, sometimes in a way that is perceived as unfair.

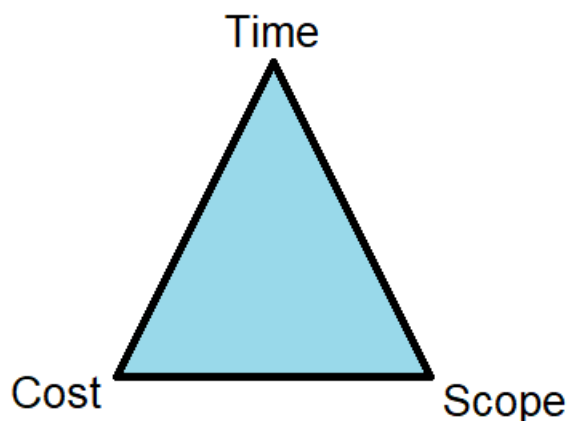
##### **Empathy**

## 2. Other Considerations

There are other parameters to consider when it comes to applying the 10 Skills, such as our available resources and the lasting consequences of our decisions.

### 2a. Available Resources

When we set out to complete a task, we are bound by several related factors: time, cost, and the scope (or size) of what we want to accomplish. How we apply the 10 Skills is bound by the same factors. According to Project Manager (2021), the relationship can be represented using a triangle:



Changing one of the factors has an impact on the other two. When we choose one option at the sacrifice of another, it's known as a **trade-off decision**. Let's see how this works with one of the 10 Skills: Communication.

➦ **EXAMPLE** Luca is in charge of Information Technologies (IT) at a small company. To improve communication across the company, he decided to publish a quarterly newsletter to help staff stay current on all the latest computer technologies. The newsletter was a hit! People became so invested in the information that they requested a newsletter *every month*. Although Luca wanted to please the masses, he knew that the time and cost needed to make a newsletter every 31 days would be too high an investment, and his other departmental work would suffer.

In the example, Luca was asked to increase the scope of his communications project, but such a decision would inflate costs and take up too much of his department's time. Luca determined that the trade-off would not be beneficial to the company.

When applying the 10 Skills, be aware of resource limitations such as time and cost. This list shows some of the costs that you might encounter. Can you think of any others?

- People/Labor
- Tools
- Equipment (e.g., computers)

- Raw materials
- Facilities
- Building supplies
- Software
- Database management systems
- Communication devices (e.g., cell phones, radios, pagers)
- Vehicles
- Work clothing
- Packaging materials
- Marketing supplies
- Safety supplies



#### TERM TO KNOW

### Trade-Off Decision

When we choose one activity as more valuable than another.

### 2b. Societal Impacts of a Decision

Lastly, we must take an **ethical** approach when applying the 10 Skills, always weighing the impacts of our decisions on the economy, environment, and the people in our communities, present, and future. Read through the following question:



#### THINK ABOUT IT

Your results-driven skill is the ability to act with a sense of urgency and focus to reach outcomes and goals without compromising integrity and quality. Think of a situation where driving toward results too quickly might conflict with the best interest of the economy, environment, or community. For your situation, what controls might someone put in place to protect the best interests of society from a hasty decision?

Answers to this question will vary, but here's one possible answer:

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is the regulatory body for all newly-developed drugs and medicines. Their job is to oversee effective and safe remedies for numerous infections and diseases. The agency must act responsibly and always put safety and testing ahead of efficiency and driving too quickly toward results in order to protect our society.



#### TERM TO KNOW

### Ethical

Relating to guiding moral principles.



#### SUMMARY

In this lesson, you discovered how the attributes of a situation often determine **how we apply the 10 Skills**. The **anatomy of a job**, **available resources**, and the **work environment** are only a few of the variables that shape the implementation of the 10 Skills. Since no two people are alike, our **personal attributes** also have a heavy influence on how the skills lead to successful outcomes. Finally, we must consider the consequences of our decisions, or **societal impacts**, surrounding the 10 Skills for the

greater good of our communities and environment.

## REFERENCES

*Project Management.* (2021, July 20). ProjectManager.Com.

[www.projectmanager.com/project-management](http://www.projectmanager.com/project-management)



## TERMS TO KNOW

### **Bias**

Favoring one thing over another, sometimes in a way that is perceived as unfair.

### **Empathy**

The ability to identify with the feelings of someone else.

### **Ethics**

Relating to guiding moral principles.

### **Social Awareness**

The ability to interpret your environment, recognize the perspective of others, and act appropriately in a variety of contexts.

### **Trade-Off Decision**

When we choose one activity as more valuable than another.