



Psychology and the Skills Employers Want

What are employers looking for in potential employees? Bill Coplin's book, *10 Things Employers Want You to Learn in College*, identifies ten specific skills employers value. Read on and learn how a Psychology degree can help you become a more competitive applicant for just about any job.

Taking Responsibility

Are you self-motivated? Do you manage time well? Is your behavior ethical?

College students continually build responsibility by balancing competing demands such as:

- coursework
- personal health
- relationships
- employment
- family responsibilities

As a Psychology major, you will gain insight into different types of motivation and learn why some are healthier and more productive than others. Ethics are a key component of many Psychology courses as well.

Communicating Verbally

Do you have effective one-to-one communication skills? Can you give an engaging presentation? Employers want to know.

Your psychology studies will allow you to connect with classmates and faculty in a variety of meaningful ways. For example, many courses include making presentations that are enhanced by visual aids or presentation software.

Take advantage of opportunities outside the classroom to develop these skills, too. Join Psi Chi, the national Psychology honor society. Accept a co-op placement or internship. Engage in a research project with a faculty member. All of these experiences will strengthen your communication skills.

Communicating in Writing

Successful employees are proficient in writing, editing, and proofreading. They have the ability to use word-processing software and manage online communication effectively, too.

Psychology students complete writing assignments of varying complexity throughout their course of study, honing their editing skills as they go.

Clear, concise Internet-based communication is also practiced, especially by online students. Everyone will benefit from the use of e-mail, discussion forums, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, chats, and blogs. The EKU Psychology Department utilizes all of these communication formats to communicate and provide networking opportunities for students.

Problem Solving

Employers value the ability to identify problems, develop strategies, and implement solutions.

To be successful, you must also demonstrate adaptability, creativity, and optimism when solving problems.

Critical thinking assignments in your psychology courses will challenge you to problem solve and seek out innovative solutions. Service courses, peer tutoring, and faculty research teams are additional activities that build these skills.

Gathering Information

Many professions require you to find and evaluate information. In some cases, you may need to conduct interviews and surveys.

The ECU Psychology curriculum provides a solid foundation for research. Every student takes Information Literacy in Psychology and then further develops these skills through courses in research design and statistical analysis.

You can learn everything from how to search library holdings to how to compare the credibility of various sources.

Psychology courses also cover gathering information from individuals through interviews and surveys. Students who want to excel in this area might join a faculty member on a research project.

Working with People

Success involves building good relationships and working as part of a team, as well as teaching and learning from others.

Psychology majors demonstrate teamwork by completing group projects with their classmates.

There are additional opportunities to grow in this skill area by participating in a Co-Op, joining Psi Chi, serving as a peer tutor, completing a service course, and working on research team with a faculty member and other students.

This document is based on the book: **10 Things Employers Want You to Learn in College** (2012), by Bill Coplin

Influencing People

Networking, leadership and management are all forms of influencing people.

Group projects and opportunities outside the classroom such as Psi Chi, co-ops and service courses allow you to take on this role.

Give additional consideration to leadership positions found elsewhere on campus and in your community, too.

Asking and Answering the Right Questions

Critical thinking involves paying attention to detail, analyzing lines of reasoning, applying theories to the real world, and evaluating ideas.

Every course in the Psychology major challenges students ask and answer key questions through critical thinking assignments. By graduation, this will be your most highly practiced skill.



To learn more about studying Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University, call **859.622.1105**, visit www.psychology.eku.edu or e-mail the department chair, Dr. Richard Osbaldiston, at richard.osbaldiston@eku.edu. Online degrees are also available. Details at www.psycholine.eku.edu.

