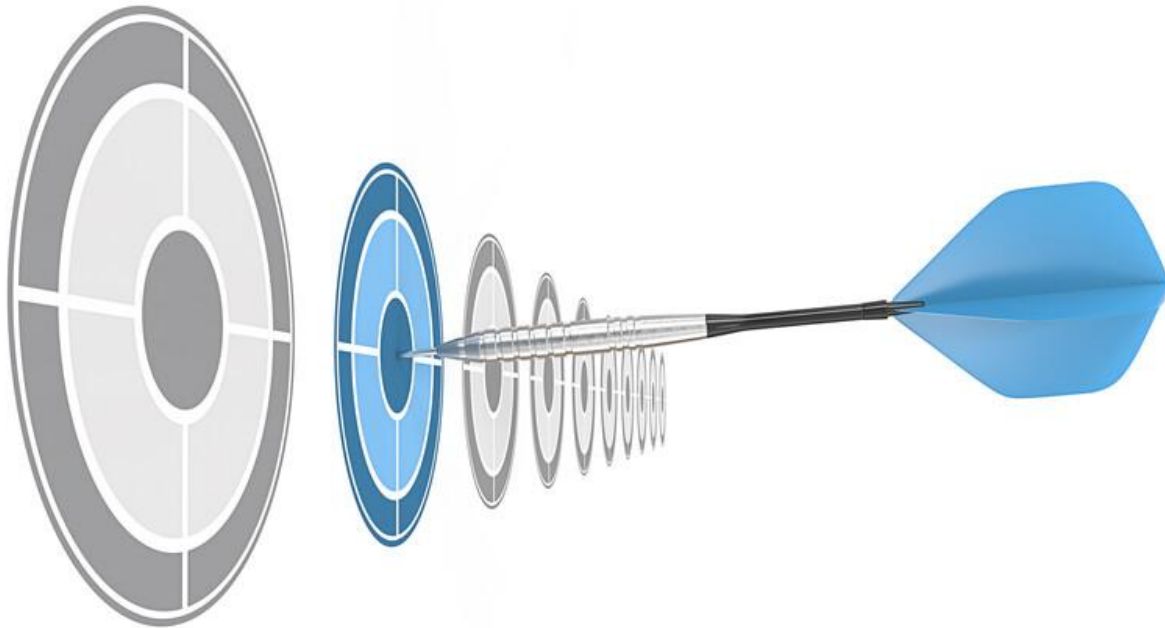


# COMPETENCY: TECHNICAL SKILLS



**Competence is demonstrating our ability to perform a task well.** This can include skill sets needed to complete a job, how we interact with others, and life skills. People respect those who do their job with excellence, which makes way for greater responsibilities, opportunities, and influence.

## **Technical Skill Competency**

Technical skills have to do with the mechanics, processes, or practical knowledge needed to complete tasks. It's clear in the bible that God gifts people abilities and aptitudes to develop technical competencies. Bezalel, Oholiab, and the craftsmen involved with the Tabernacle and its accessories are an example. "Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you..." (Exodus 31:1-6)

King David, a warrior-poet, said, "Blessed be the LORD, my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle." (Psalm 144:1) And "In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall." (Psalm 18:29, NLT)

When opportunity is present, the mastery of a skill will open doors for their use. Proverbs 22:29 says, "Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men."

As mentioned in the Calling section, not any one person possesses all of God's creative attributes- or aptitudes for developing specific skill sets. People have different interests, skill sets, aptitudes,

Baton Exchange

opportunities, and so on. He distributed these things across humanity to for the fulfilment of His Cultural Mandate command in Genesis to cultivate the earth and develop its latent potential.

### **Aptitude, Attitude, Knowledge, and Skill**

But even those who have a natural aptitude for a skillset must develop that potential through a lot of hard practice. Hard practice requires a determined attitude and motivation. Of course they must practice the *right* things in the *right* way to become a master. Depending upon the skill, it may require hundreds or even thousands of hours to master. And there are some things that no matter how much you practice, even practicing it properly, you'll never master. Your positive attitude would never get you to the point of mastery. No matter how much I could practice being a world class sprinter, I would never become a master at it: I simply don't have the physical tools necessary. Coaches tracked my sprinting time with a sun dial. Time for me to move (slowly) on to something else. It's also important to recognize that knowledge and skill aren't the same thing. You can watch a video to gain knowledge about how to do something. You develop a skill by applying the knowledge over and over, building those neuropathways in your brain.

### **Technical Skills for the Office**

Some practical technical office skills that employers sometimes get annoyed by when they are lacking in an employee (especially in an office setting) are basic reading comprehension, proper use of office equipment, organizational skills, note taking, answering phone calls, assembling documents in a neat and orderly fashion, etc.. Every occupation will have basic technical skills for which you must become proficient. Learn what those are, practice and master them.

Zippia, a Career Services website, said that the most common hard skills that you want to develop for an office setting are:

- Data entry, 27.7% office workers have this skill on their resume.
- Administrative tasks, appearing on 22.0% of resumes.
- Powerpoint, appearing on 18.2% of resumes.

For more basic office skills, check out their article, 15 Essential Office Worker Skills For Your Resume And Career, <https://www.zippia.com/office-worker-jobs/skills/>.

### **Aptitude for Skills Building: Discerning Direction**

Try to build excellence in the technical skills of your job by watching someone who does those skills well. Get additional training as you need it. Persevere with patience and lots of proper practice. Always be improving. If it becomes clear after an honest effort that you simply don't have the aptitude or potential for developing a particular skill set, you've learned something about yourself, and that's ok. If there are a lot of skill sets required for a job that you just can't seem to build sufficiency in, it could be an indicator to move on to a different job. Many people give up way too soon. Getting wise advise can help you to discern when to persevere in practice and when to move on. Invite God into your daily work life, asking him to give you insight and perseverance in building your skills. Eliminate distractions and increase focus as you work on practicing a skill.

If you are an entrepreneur in the early phases of your business, you know that you likely must do a wide range of tasks that require skills for which you don't naturally have aptitude or interest. This can be frustrating and exhausting. The tendency will be to not do the tasks. The last thing you will feel inclined to do is work in areas of your weaknesses. Until you can hire an employee or outside service, you'll have to buckle down and do it. Schedule the tasks as part of your routine. Streamline as much as you can what needs done by eliminating what doesn't have to be done or utilizing processes, relevant software services, and apps designed for those tasks. When you can afford it, pay someone to take care of sets of tasks in which you are weak.

Baton Exchange

## Keeping Sharp

One of the consequences of the Fall after Adam and Eve's disobedience to God is that we and creation were corrupted. Work became more difficult and the fruit of our labor harder to produce and temporary. (Gen. 3:16-19). King Solomon acknowledged the long-term futility of work efforts (Eccl. 1:2-9). In addition to the results of our work eventually declining, our skills tend to deteriorate as well, especially as we near end of life through aging. But skills can also deteriorate without practice or become irrelevant as technology changes. So, it's important to be a continual learner and practice skills with diligence. Pursue certifications, take advantage of training your organization offers, become active in associations related to your occupation or industry. Besides excellence in character, improving your skills are a must if you hope to advance in your career and get the projects you want. "Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank." Proverbs 22:29. A sharp knife works much more efficiently and productively than a dull knife. Sharpening the knife takes a bit of time and effort, but it's worth it. Keep your skills sharp so that you can work more efficiently and productively.

---

## Ask Your Mentor

1. What top five technical skills are core to doing well in your occupation?

TC1: \_\_\_\_\_

TC2: \_\_\_\_\_

TC3: \_\_\_\_\_

TC4: \_\_\_\_\_

TC5: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What aptitudes (e.g. good at math) must a person possess to do well in your occupation?
3. What certifications, if any, should I pursue if I'm to do well in this occupation?
4. Are there industry associations that you are involved in? If so, why?
5. About how long does it take before a person becomes considered proficient in this field or industry?
6. What were some resources that you found helpful in your career?
7. How do I...? Have a specific skill you want to learn. Ask your mentor.

## Go Do

Pick one skill that you will focus on learning or improving and practicing over the next few weeks. Ask your mentor for the names of people in your occupation with whom you could do informational interviews about ways to improve skills.

Is there any skill that you would like to role play or practice with your mentor?

## Go Deeper: Further Conversation & Study

1. Investigate a professional association related to your occupation or industry. Check out what's involved in pursuing certifications.
2. Ask your mentor for info on occupation or trade magazines, blogs, videos, journals, etc.. that could be helpful in building knowledge and skills.

## Sources & Resources

Video- Why is Competence So Important, Kyle Werner,

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/180640578>

Video- Knowledge vs. Skill and the Importance of Coaching,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4D4a4Pp-IHE>

Baton Exchange

Article- <https://www.zippia.com/office-worker-jobs/skills/>

Article- The Importance Of Practice – And Our Reluctance To Do It by Jennifer Long,

<https://www.harvardbusiness.org/the-importance-of-practice-and-our-reluctance-to-do-it/>