

# Exploring Your Skills & Career – Facilitator Guide

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[leadership.civicaaction.ca/youthconnect](http://leadership.civicaaction.ca/youthconnect).

**During this session, you'll help the youth at your table discuss and write down their interests and accomplishments, identify their skills and strengths, learn how to communicate their strengths to employers, and identify any gaps in their skills toolkit. You don't need to be an expert in HR, careers, or hiring practices. Simply speak from your own experience and knowledge!**

1. What are you passionate about? What excites you? (E.g. building things, working with people, being creative, etc.)

*With others at your table, discuss with the youth what drives or motivates them. This could be anything from sports, music, art, and community work to jobs and volunteer roles they've held. It may be helpful for you to answer this question yourself to prompt discussion.*

2. List 3 activities you have participated in that you are proud of. (E.g. volunteering, jobs, clubs, passion projects, extracurricular activities, etc.) Refer to the transferrable skills sheet for inspiration!

*Work with the youth at your table to identify 2 or 3 activities or accomplishments they are proud of. Again, give some personal examples to help get the conversation started. Think of something you currently do or did in the past that you feel has helped you gain professional skills.*

3. What are some of the skills you've gained and strengths you've honed through the activities and accomplishments you listed above? You can refer to the transferrable skills sheet for help.

*Use the transferrable skills sheet and your own knowledge to connect their activities and accomplishments to skills. For instance, tutoring someone means they have communication skills, while playing on a sports team indicates that they have collaboration and teamwork skills.*

4. Talk to the employers and workers at your table about their career paths. Why did they get into the professions they're in now?

*Tell the youth at your table about your own career story. How have you turned your interests into jobs and professional opportunities? This is an exploratory question to help direct the discussion around personal interest and motivations for choosing a career. Don't hesitate to talk frankly about your first jobs and how those experiences shaped your career.*

5. What are 2-3 areas of work/careers/jobs you are interested in?

*Ask the youth to talk about why they are interested in the 2-3 areas they list to help them think more deeply about specific areas of interest. If a youth is interested in IT, ask why. If it's because like taking apart electronics, then you can identify that they might be interested in the hardware side of IT.*

6. What skills might you need to have for the areas of work/careers you listed above? Rank these from 1 to 5 based on your competency level.

*This question is about identifying skills gaps. Using the lists they created in questions 3 and 4, do a deep dive. Ask the youth what skills they think they'll need for the areas of work they're interested in, and, if possible, suggest a few they may not know about. Ask them where they think they're at with those skills to identify where they may have gaps.*

*LinkedIn volunteers at the table: Make sure to mention that they'll be getting access to LinkedIn Learning, which can help them bridge those gaps!*

7. Pick 2 of your strongest skills and work on how to best communicate these skills to an employer.

*This will help the youth prepare for the mock interviews this afternoon! Do another deep dive based on these 2 skills to help youth find the right language to articulate their skills to employers.*

*For example, a youth who identifies leadership and communication as their skills might want to articulate it this way: "Leadership is one of my strongest skills. I am naturally drawn to being the leader in most group environments. I've taken the initiative to lead in several group projects and on sports teams I have been a part of. As captain of the soccer team, I was able to motivate my team of 15, through both wins and losses, by communicating effectively to boost team morale."*