

Career-Related Skills That Can Be Developed by Psi Chi Officers

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We sent surveys to 4000 randomly selected Psi Chi alumni who graduated in 2000 and 2003 (2,000 from each class). The final question on our survey asked, “If you were a Psi Chi officer, what specific skills did you acquire as a result of your duties that helped you in your continued education or employment since your graduation?” A total of 317 skills were reported, which are organized below within the framework of the federal government’s 1991 SCANS Report. This report identified the competencies—and the foundational skills and qualities required to acquire these competencies—that the members of the American workforce of the 21st Century need to develop during their education so they can succeed on-the-job. The Psi Chi officers who responded to our survey reported that they have developed all of these skills as a result of carrying out their duties. The take-home message from this study is that Psi Chi inductees should not treat Psi Chi as simply a line on their resumes; they should view it as a golden opportunity to develop the skills and competencies that will enable them to accomplish their post-baccalaureate aspirations. In other words, although their induction into Psi Chi is a great honor, it is not an end in itself. It is the means to an even greater end.

1. **COMPETENCIES:** Effective workers can productively use...
 - a. **Resources** by allocating time, money, materials, space, and staff
 - managing time (20)
 - calendaring (2)
 - working under time pressures (e.g., dealing with deadlines)
 - learning to be accurate and on-time
 - facilitating/managing group work (20)
 - delegating responsibilities/duties (10)
 - recruiting
 - managing volunteers
 - planning events (8)
 - hosting conferences and workshops (3)
 - organizing events (2)
 - marketing (2)
 - organizing a 30+ group to attend a psychology convention
 - managing finances (6)
 - balancing the books
 - acting as treasurer
 - fundraising
 - working under monetary constraints
 - developing philanthropic skills
 - b. **Interpersonal Skills** by working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds
 - displaying leadership (61)
 - organizing, planning, and running a meeting (4)
 - motivating others (3)
 - managing large and complex tasks (3)
 - developing thorough and thoughtful planning skills (3)
 - setting goals
 - learning the benefits of being in a well-organized and motivated group
 - developing interpersonal/people/social skills (32)
 - networking (8)
 - getting to know, communicating, and working with faculty (5)
 - meeting new people (2)
 - being considerate of others’ situations (2)
 - advising/mentoring
 - learning how to deal with people in stressful situations
 - displaying diplomacy
 - learning to work effectively with other officers
 - working with others on a team (17)
 - making sure everyone has a job and learning to “follow up” to make sure the job is done (2)
 - learning that cooperation is necessary to reach goals (2)
 - acting as a liaison
 - dealing with diversity (4)
 - advocating for a particular population (2)
 - relating successfully to students of all ages
 - putting together ideas when everyone has a different one

- c. **Information** by acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information
 - developing organizational skills (46)
 - learning to pay attention to details
 - keeping very good track of paperwork
 - acting as the chapter's historian
 - d. **Systems** by understanding social, organizational, and technological systems; monitoring and correcting performance; and designing or improving systems
 - understanding how to operate within systems (8)
 - learning how to communicate effectively with faculty (3)
 - learning the ins/outs of departmental operations
 - understanding hierarchies
 - learning how to communicate within a bureaucracy system
 - becoming aware of community agencies
 - understanding the benefits of "getting involved"
 - e. **Technology** by selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies
 - developing computer skills (5)
 - developing Word and Excel skills
 - communicating via email
 - using HTML as a webmaster
 - designing the chapter's website
 - performing research on the internet
2. **THE FOUNDATION:** The ability to exhibit these competencies requires . . .
- a. **Basic Skills:** reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics
 - developing communication skills (55)
 - giving oral presentations (11)
 - developing interpersonal communication skills (2)
 - learning to make contact with a target audience
 - developing writing skills
 - listening to others' perspectives
 - b. **Thinking Skills:** thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, visualization, knowing how to learn, and reasoning
 - developing thinking skills (11)
 - being creative (3)
 - becoming involved in research (3)
 - developing skills to work in an academic situation (2)
 - making decisions
 - developing better understanding of psychological information
 - realizing that I can extend my interests to other areas
 - c. **Personal Qualities:** individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity
 - acting in a responsible manner (13)
 - developing self-discipline
 - being accountable
 - developing a willingness to go above and beyond to fill a position that was time-consuming, but which benefited a large number of people
 - developing confidence and self-esteem (5)
 - realizing the benefits of hard work and dedication
 - producing high quality work
 - developing self-management skills (4)
 - exhibiting patience (2)
 - learning how to develop balance
 - being flexible
 - displaying integrity (2)
 - making ethical decisions
 - gaining the trust of faculty to get jobs done

Reference

United States Department of Labor: The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. (1991). *What work requires of schools: A SCANS report for America 2000*. Washington, DC: Author.