

Employability skills – Why English communication skills matter

Cath Moore ETS TOEFL

cmoore@etsglobal.org

Outline

- What skills are employers looking for in graduates
- Why English communication skills matter: English Language Tests and beyond
- Why do English communication skills matter?
- Workplace communication: tasks and skills
- Developing your English communication skills

What skills are employers looking for in graduates ?

Developing your workplace English skills

What am I doing now to develop the English communications skills I need for my future workplace?

[International Student Employability: Top Tips to Expand Your Job Prospects](#)



Do you have what employers are looking for?

Employability skill	1	2	3	4	5
Communication skills					
Academic results					
Teamwork skills					
Aptitude					
Interpersonal skills					
Leadership skills					
Work experience					
Cultural fit					
Motivational fit					
Adaptable					



English Language Testing

- Do I need evidence of my English language ability?
- What evidence do I need? Why?
- How do I best prepare for an English language test?
- Which is the best test for me?



Beyond Language Testing

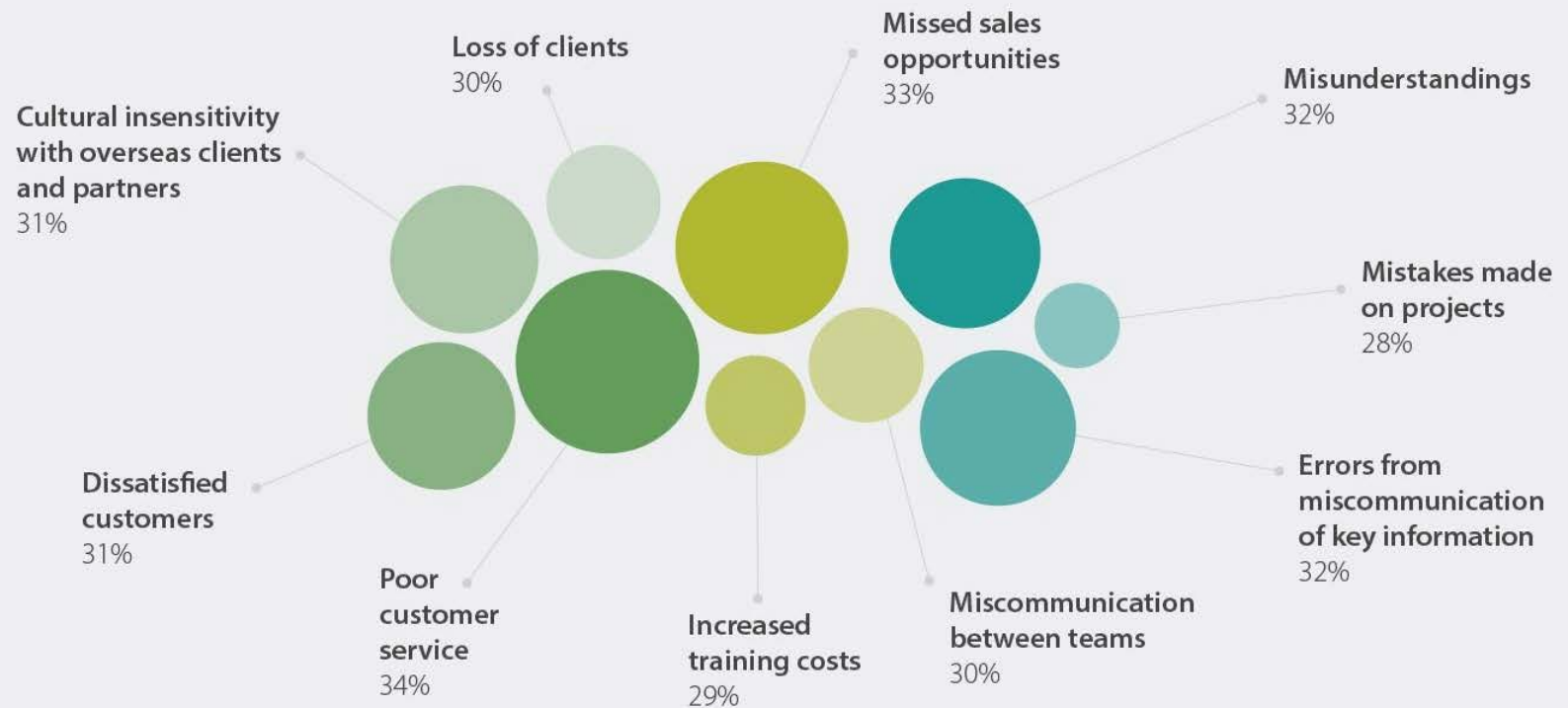
I have done an English Language Proficiency test, what more do I need to prove to an employer that I have good communication skills?



Why do English Communication Skills matter?

Top 10 Business Costs of Poor English Proficiency

Leading companies report negative effects of poor English skills:



Learn how English impacts your business at [WhyEnglishMatters.com](https://www.WhyEnglishMatters.com).

Why English communication skills matter



What is the cost of poor English Communication skills in your profession?

Communication skills + Interpersonal skills
= **communicative competence**





Workplace Communication – tasks and skills

Workplace communication: Tasks



What tasks will you be required to do in the workplace?

Workplace communication: Tasks

Activity

Q 2. What English language skills are needed to successfully complete these tasks?

Workplace communication: Tasks and skills

Accountants and Engineers (Knoch, May et al 2015)

1. Emails

Range of purposes – inc follow up from spoken interaction

Skills needed:

Register

Accuracy –content and grammar

Workplace communication: Tasks and skills

Accountants and Engineers

2. Reports

Templates used (accountants)

Bullet points

Constructed by teams

Skills needed:

Clear

Brief

Concise

Relevant

Accurate

Workplace communication: skills

Health Professionals

Writing Skills valued:

- Appropriateness
- Conciseness and sufficiency (all key information present, no irrelevant information)
- Clarity – content, organisation, presentation, language

(Knoch et al 2015)

Workplace communication: skills

Health Professionals

Speaking skills valued (Elder et al. 2012, O'Hagan et al al 2013):

Most important skill for health professionals

- Approach
- Manner
- Techniques in interaction and communication

Workplace communication: skills

Health Professionals

Speaking skills valued :

- Approach: attitude/sensitivity to patient's needs, etc.
- Manner: behaviours towards patient
- **Communication skills:** (inc. non verbal and manner)
- Content: coverage of issues, clinical knowledge
- Organization: structure/sequence of tasks; process
- Techniques: interactional tools- eg. Use of open questions
- Terminology: medical language, technical/lay terms
- Nonverbal communication e.g., eye contact, posture
- Language: e.g., intelligibility, grammatical accuracy

Workplace communication: Tasks

Activity

Look at the tasks employers think are necessary for success in the work place:

Q 1. How similar are these tasks to what you are currently doing now to complete your degree

Assessing your English Communication skills

Assess your English communication skills



What other communication skills do I need to function successfully in my future workplace?

Assess your English communication skills



- List 3 areas you need to improve/skill gaps
- How are you going to improve them?

Developing your English Communication skills

Developing your workplace English skills

University resources

Student services

Study support and Academic advice

Careers

Student life

Other...



Developing your workplace English skills

MOOCS

TOEFL Test preparation – insider's guide

<https://www.edx.org/course/toefl-test-preparation-insiders-guide-etsx-toeflx>

Communication and team work

<https://www.edx.org/course/career-edge-communication-teamwork-fullbridgex-career2x#!>

Conversational English Skills

<https://www.edx.org/course/conversational-english-skills-tsinghuax-30640014x-1#!>

Communication in the workplace

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/communication-in-the-workplace#ratings>



Developing your workplace English skills

Further resources:

- Doyle, J. 2015. *International Employability Guide. International students*
- Youtube
- Body language
- Effective communication
- TED Talks

Developing your workplace English skills

Why employers value you!



If you want to know about other events and workshops please like



ETS TOEFL



<https://www.facebook.com/TOEFL>

For further information contact:
Cath Moore
English Language Consultant
ETS TOEFL
cmoore@etsglobal.org



References

- Arkoudis, S. et al .2014. *English language proficiency and employability framework* for Australian higher education institutions. CSHE for Australian Government Department of Education. http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/research/teaching/docs/ELP_Employability_Framework_Final_Report_181114.pdf. Retrieved, November 17, 2015.
- Australian Government, 2013. *Core skills for work developmental framework*. <https://www.education.gov.au/core-skills-work-developmental-framework> Retrieved 17 November 2015.

References

- Elder, C., Pill, J., Woodward-Kron, R., Mcnamara, T., Manias, E., Webb, G. and Mccoll, G. (2012), Health Professionals' Views of Communication: Implications for Assessing Performance on a Health-Specific English Language Test. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46: 409–419. doi: 10.1002/tesq.26
- Gribble, C., Blackmore, J. & Rahimi, M. (13 February 2014). Challenges facing Australian international graduates transitioning into the Australian labour market. *Edu Research Matters*. Australian Association for Research in Education (Website). Retrieved from <http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=174>
- Knoch, K., May, L., Macqueen, S. et al. (2015). IELTS academic writing tasks from the perspective of engineering and accounting students, academics and professionals. Paper presented at ALAA/ALANZ/ALTANZ conference , *Learning in a multilingual world*, Adelaide, December 1, 2015