

SKILLS ACTIVITIES: UNLOCKING YOUR FULL POTENTIAL



ColoradoCareerAdvising.com





SKILLS

UNLOCKING YOUR FULL POTENTIAL



This booklet is a rebranded version of *Indigo Skills Activities*: *Unlocking Your Full Potential*, originally published by Indigo Education Company and now adapted for Colorado Career Advising.

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WELCOME

This resource is designed to help develop essential skills for personal growth, career success, and meaningful connections. Through guided activities, you will enhance strengths, address growth areas, and build practical tools for lifelong success.

Why Skills Development Matters

Skills shape how we solve problems, connect with others, and navigate challenges. This booklet offers interactive exercises to strengthen emotional intelligence, teamwork, adaptability, and leadership, empowering you or your students to thrive in any setting.

What You'll Find Inside

Our Skills Activities booklet features a diverse range of topics to help personal and professional growth:

- Build Emotional Intelligence Develop empathy, self-awareness,
 and resilience.
- Strengthen Relationships Enhance teamwork, conflict resolution, and communication.

- Foster Leadership and Vision Inspire others, set goals, and envision future possibilities.
- Encourage Innovation and Adaptability -Think creatively, embrace change, and solve problems effectively.

How to Use This Booklet

Perfect for career advisors, students, and career seekers of all ages, this guide provides engaging activities and actionable insights. Explore each activity at your own pace to cultivate confidence, resilience, and compassion.

We encourage you to dive into each exercise of this booklet thoughtfully, focusing on the skills and competencies that resonate most. By actively engaging with these activities, you will develop the confidence, adaptability, and compassion needed to thrive in a complex world.



Sheri A. Smith



Sueann Casey

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Analytical Problem Solving	Mentoring and Coaching	24
Conflict Management 3	Management	27
Continuous Learning 5	Negotiation	29
Teamwork 6	People Advocacy	31
Decision Making	Personal Responsibility	33
Diplomacy / Tact 10	Persuasion	35
Empathy 12	Presenting	36
Flexibility 14	Written Communication	38
Futuristic Thinking 16	Planning / Organizing	40
Goal Orientation 17	Time and Priority Management	42
Interpersonal Skills 20	Creativity / Innovation	44
Leadership 22	Refining Skills through Reflection	46





Analytical Problem Solving

We all encounter challenges in various aspects of our lives, whether it's at school, in our communities, or within ourselves. However, simply identifying these problems is just the beginning of the journey. Our goal is to shift the focus from merely complaining about problems to actively collaborating on solutions and implementing the best ones.



In this activity, we'll explore a structured approach to analytical problem solving, empowering you to tackle any big-picture issue or question with confidence. From identifying complaints to brainstorming solutions and refining them, we'll guide you through each step.

And remember, analytical thinking is a skill that extends beyond problem-solving exercises. We'll explore additional ways to hone your analytical skills, from playing brain games to utilizing online analytical tools in your daily life.

Are you ready to transform problems into opportunities for growth and innovation? Let's get started!

The Goal: Develop analytical problem-solving skills by shifting the focus from merely identifying problems to actively collaborating on solutions. Work toward creating actionable plans, evaluating options, and implementing the most effective solutions to achieve positive outcomes.

Note: You should become familiar with the "Yes, And" technique to do this exercise successfully. Learn more about the **Yes, And Technique**.

This exercise can be repurposed to tackle any big-picture issue or question.



Step 1: Think about your complaints about your school or workplace. Do you hate the food? Do you wish the rooms had more light? Do the restrooms smell? Write them down. The problems could be about anything – school, work, friends, family, or your community.

Step 2: Set a timer and come up with as many solutions as you can in 5 minutes. Write them on sticky notes. The goal of Part 2 is quantity, not quality. Challenge yourself to come up with as many crazy ideas for solutions as you can.

Step 3: Pick your top 3 to 5 ideas and use the "Yes, And" technique to improve them. How can these ideas be made better? Which are feasible to do? How can you make each solution more tangible? Add more sticky notes and create an affinity diagram to answer these questions for your top 3 to 5 ideas.

Note: More information on affinity diagrams can be found here.

Optional Add-On: Other ways you can to build analytical thinking skills include playing brain games online at <u>Lumosity</u> or playing common games like Sudoku, chess, backgammon, and Scrabble.



You can also try incorporating online analytical apps and tools into your daily habits. <u>MyFitnessPal</u>, <u>Mint</u> – a budget manager and tracker, Google Analytics, and other data based apps are great ways to track your habits and improve analytical thinking.





Conflict Management

Conflict is often viewed as a source of tension and discomfort, something to be avoided at all costs. However, beneath the surface lies a powerful catalyst for innovation and growth. Some of the most profound ideas emerge from the depths of conflict, yet many shy away due to a lack of effective conflict resolution skills.



In this activity, we present a six-part process to empower you to navigate conflicts confidently, whether in school, career, or life.

The Goal: Learn to engage in conflict productively by developing the skills needed to turn disagreements into opportunities for growth and innovation. Through this activity, you will master a six-part process to navigate and resolve conflicts effectively.

Step 1: Read the short article, "The Proven Six-Step Tool for Conflict Resolution". As you read, consider the extent to which you have or have not used these six strategies when engaging in conflicts in the past.

Step 2: Consider your skills in these six strategy areas and rank them from your strongest skill to your weakest skills, with 1 being your strongest skill and 6 being your relatively weakest skill.



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: STRENGTHS TO AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Conflict Management Skills	Rank Order
Listening	
Mirroring what you hear	
Asking for more information	
Validating feelings	
Empathizing	
Asking to Respond	



Step 3: Set a goal for your part in the next important conflict situation you encounter. What will you do more of? What will you do less of?



Step 4: As you go through the next week, observe the conflicts you are involved in, both large and small. Use these situations as opportunities to practice the Six-Step Tool for Conflict Resolution, and then reflect on these questions:

- What did you learn about *conflict* as you used the Six-Step Tool?
- What did you learn about *yourself* as you used the Six-Step Tool?





Continuous Learning

Dedicate yourself to the pursuit of continuous learning, a lifelong journey that embraces curiosity, inquiry, and the expansion of your expertise and skills. This activity showcases what it means to be a lifelong learner, explores various methods to achieve continuous learning, recognizes your existing efforts, and helps you commit to ongoing growth both personally and professionally.



Engage in the activity to learn more and lay a foundation for perpetual learning, ensuring success in school, work, and life.

The Goal: Cultivate the mindset of a lifelong learner by exploring what continuous learning means, recognizing your existing habits of inquiry and skill development, and committing to ongoing growth in school, work, and life. This activity will help you define lifelong learning and identify ways to integrate it into your daily life.

Step 1: Read <u>50 Ways</u> to Be A Lifelong Learner at Home.

Step 2: As you read, take notes using the format in the chart.

Step 3: What commitment will you make to engage in continuous learning in your work and in your life? Write down your commitment.



LIFELONG LEARNING REFLECTION & ACTION PLAN

	Practices
Have Practiced: From the article's list of practices, write 3 to 5 ways you already practice continuous learning.	1. 2. 3.
Will Practice: From the list of learning practices, write 3 to 5 new ways you will incorporate continuous learning in your life.	1. 2. 3.
Benefits: Of the benefits of lifelong learning mentioned in the article, which is the most important to you?	Benefit:





Teamwork

Teamwork is essential to thriving in any group setting, but it takes practice and intention to truly develop. Effective teamwork isn't just about working together; it's about building trust, empowering each other, and taking responsibility for shared outcomes.



This activity will help you develop affirmations to reinforce trust and mutual support, equipping you to build stronger, more collaborative relationships. Dig deep into this exercise to foster an authentic, empowering approach to teamwork!

The Goal: Develop strong teamwork skills by building mutual respect, leveraging diverse strengths, and sharing responsibility for team success.

Step 1: Make a daily affirmation list regarding trusting and empowering others. A couple examples are provided for you, but see if you can come up with at least five more. Once you have completed your list, keep a copy of it on a notecard, in your journal or notebook to refer to prior to meeting with the groups with which you learn and work.

Examples:

- "I will trust other people to do their jobs."
- "I will complete my part of the project so that others can complete theirs."

My Affirmations:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Tip: People who have well developed teamwork skills easily form relationships with mutual respect among diverse types of people.

Step 2: Use your affirmations to foster stronger team relationships by actively practicing them in group settings. Before your next meeting or collaboration, review your list to set a positive mindset. Then, during your interactions, look for opportunities to put your affirmations into action.

For example:

- If your affirmation is "I will trust other people to do their jobs," actively delegate a task and express confidence in your teammate's ability to handle the responsibility.
- If your affirmation is "I will complete my part of the project so that others can complete theirs," ensure your tasks are completed in a way that supports the team's overall progress.

Step 3: Afterward, reflect on how practicing your affirmations influenced your relationships and the team's dynamic. Adjust your affirmations as needed to address new challenges or opportunities for growth.

Teamwork thrives on trust, respect, and collaboration. By embracing these values and working together toward shared goals, you help create a positive, thriving environment for everyone. Keep practicing—your efforts will make a real difference and lead to greater success for you and your team!

SKILLS ACTIVITY TEAMWORK | 7





Decision Making

Making decisions can be daunting, especially when faced with multiple options and the pressure to make the best choice. Whether you're deciding which bicycle to buy, which course to enroll in, or what career path to follow, a structured approach can simplify the process. This is where a Decision Matrix Tool comes in handy.



In this activity, you'll learn how to use a Decision Matrix to systematically evaluate your options and make well-informed decisions confidently. By the end of this guide, you'll be equipped with a powerful method to tackle any decision, big or small.

The Goal: Learn to use a Decision Matrix Tool to simplify the process of choosing between multiple options, ensuring the best decision is made by individuals or teams.

Step 1: Think of a decision you need to make that involves two or more options. Are you trying to decide which of three new bicycles to purchase? Or which course to take? Or which major or career to pursue?

Write down what decision you need to make. Then write down the options you have.

Step 2: The article, "The Decision Matrix: The Decision Matrix Is The Perfect Tool For Decision Making," defines the decision matrix and presents a case study that shows you how to design and use a decision matrix.

Read the article, and as you do so, consider how to design and use a decision matrix of your own to make the decision you identified in Step 1, above.



Decision:

Options:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Step 3: Design and use a decision matrix that will lead you to the best decision among the options you identified in Step 1. You may use the template below or adapt it to best fit your specific decision and options.

DECISION MATRIX FOCUS / TOPIC / TITLE:

CHOICES	CRITERIA		SCORE	
CHOICES	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	SCORE

Step 4: What are the benefits of using a decision matrix for you? How could you use this tool in the future?





Diplomacy/Tact

Effective communication is key to fostering positive relationships and creating harmonious environments in our personal and professional lives. Diplomacy and tact are crucial components of this communication. This exercise aims to enhance your understanding and application of these skills using the "Three Levels of Text" protocol.



By reflecting deeply on the content of the article "Tact and Diplomacy," you will gain insights that can transform your approach to communication in various aspects of your life.

The Goal: Strengthen diplomacy and tact by using the "Three Levels of Text" protocol to analyze and reflect on an article's content and its broader implications, fostering deeper understanding and practical application of these skills in relationships and environments.

Step 1: "Tact and Diplomacy" is an article with definitions, prerequisites, and strategies. Our understanding of what we read can be enhanced by using a protocol that promotes reflection as we read. One such protocol is Three Levels of Text, which can be used as you read and can also enhance discussion when two or more people read the same article in a group setting.

Read the article and, as you read, use the prompts on the next page to reflect on essential elements of the article and identify implications for your own communication.



THREE LEVELS OF PROTOCOL

	Identification Write the passage from each section of the article that is the most important to you.	Interpretation What do you think about the passage (interpretations, connection to past experiences, etc.)?	Implications Consider what the most important implication of this is for your life, learning, or work.
Definition Section			
Prerequisites Section			
Strategies Section			

Step 2: Reflect on your current communication skills and identify one specific goal you want to achieve in the area of diplomacy and tact. Write down this goal, ensuring it is clear and actionable. Consider how achieving this goal can positively impact your personal and professional relationships.





Empathy

Empathy is not just about understanding others—it's also about being in tune with ourselves. Before we can fully connect with the feelings of those around us, we must first recognize and acknowledge our own emotions. This activity introduces a simple yet powerful activity designed to help you do just that.



Through a self-empathy check-in, you will have the chance to pause throughout your day, take stock of your feelings, and gain deeper insights into your emotional landscape. By engaging in this practice, you will not only enhance your self-awareness but also strengthen your capacity for empathy toward others.

The Goal: Build self-awareness by taking the time to recognize and reflect on your emotions. This activity provides an opportunity for a self-empathy check-in, encouraging mindful observation of your emotional state, even in moments of calm.



Step 1: Choose a two-day period and stop briefly at identified times of day to notice and note the emotion(s) you are experiencing. Use the chart format on the next page to record the emotion and what you were doing at the time (e.g., eating breakfast alone, reading a book, dealing with a difficult customer).

SKILLS ACTIVITY EMPATHY | 12





SELF-EMPATHY CHECK-IN CHART

	DA	Y 1	DA	Y 2
Time of Day	Emotion Noted	What I Was Doing	Emotion Noted	What I Was Doing
9 AM				
12 PM				
3 PM				
6 PM				
9 PM				

Step 2: Reflect on what you notice about the emotions you wrote down.

- What patterns do you see?
- What did it feel like to stop on a schedule to notice what you were feeling?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn about empathy?

Step 3: Identify one action you can take based on your reflections to enhance your emotional awareness or empathy. For example, you might choose to practice pausing before reacting in challenging situations, share your emotions with someone you trust, or intentionally cultivate positive emotions during specific activities. Over the next week, put this action into practice and note any changes in how you experience or respond to emotions.

SKILLS ACTIVITY EMPATHY | 13





Flexibility

Change is inevitable, but how do you respond when it happens? Take a moment to reflect on recent shifts in your life—big or small. How did these changes make you feel, and what did they reveal about your flexibility in response to change? By exploring these questions, you might discover something unexpected about your ability to adapt.



Dig into this self-reflective exercise to uncover how you can turn change into a powerful catalyst for personal and professional development.

The Goal: Develop flexibility by increasing self-awareness of your responses to change. By understanding your reactions, you can build the skills needed to adapt and navigate change more effectively.

Step 1: List three changes that have occurred recently in your personal or professional life.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Step 2: For each of the three changes, answer the questions listed in the chart on the next page.





CHANGE CHECK: YOUR EMOTIONAL PULSE

Questions	Change 1	Change 2	Change 3
What changed?			
How did you feel during the change?			
For times you felt negative (e.g., anxious, angry or scared), try to identify why you had negative feelings.			
For times you felt positive (e.g., excited, energized or happy), try to identify why you had positive feelings.			
What did you do to manage the change?			

Step 3: What are the implications of your reactions to these changes in your school, work, or life?

*Adapted with permission from TTI International, Ltd. 2010.

SKILLS ACTIVITY FLEXIBILITY | 15





Futuristic Thinking

At Colorado Career Advising, we believe that understanding yourself, your team, and your future is key to success. Futuristic thinking is a powerful skill that allows you to envision possibilities and champion ideas that can shape tomorrow.

Whether you're a student, career seeker, or professional, learning to think like a futurist can guide your path and open doors to new opportunities.

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Explore the principles of futures thinking and reflect on how you can apply these insights to your personal and professional journey.

The Goal: Cultivate the ability to envision possibilities and anticipate future trends by thinking creatively and championing innovative ideas that have yet to be realized.

Step 1: Read the article, "Five Principles for Thinking Like a Futurist."

Step 2: As you read, apply the 4 A's Protocol to reflect on the ideas in the article.

Step 3: Take a moment to reflect on how these principles and your insights can shape your approach to future challenges.

How can you incorporate futuristic thinking into your personal or professional growth?



Assumption. Identify one key assumption in the article:	Argument. What is one area of the text with which you would argue?
Agreement. Identify one area of the text with which you agree?	Aspiration. What is one aspiration you have related to the text?





Goal Orientation

Goal setting is one of the most powerful yet overlooked tools in personal and professional development. Studies show that people who write down their goals are 50% more likely to achieve them, yet only a small fraction of adults harness this simple strategy.



If you're ready to unlock your potential, this activity will guide you through setting meaningful, actionable goals that you can stick to and achieve.

By learning proven techniques like SMART and HARD goal-setting models, you'll create a clear path to success, one goal at a time.

The Goal: Harness the power of goal setting by learning to think deeply about your aspirations, write them down, and develop the skills to set and achieve meaningful goals throughout your life.

Step 1: Begin by developing 2 to 3 big-picture goals for yourself as an individual, which you can work toward throughout one full semester or another extended period of time. These goals may involve personal development (e.g. "I want to be more confident" or "I want to speak up for myself"), career development (e.g. "I want to become a lawyer" or "I want to start a company"), or skill development (e.g. "I want to become a stronger reader" or "I want to improve my presentation skills").

The goals may relate to school or work, or they may not. Either way, establish something that you want to achieve. After brainstorming 2 to 3 big picture goals, write down 1 or 2 sentences outlining each goal.

Step 2: Come up with 3 to 5 specific goals for the next 2 to 4 weeks and write them down. These short-term goals should promote, in some tangible way, your big-picture goals. Write down goals that are actually achievable within the given timeframe. It is better to achieve small wins over time than shoot for a big win and get discouraged.



Step 3: Every week, go back over your short-term goals and check off the goals that you've accomplished.

Step 4: Now that you've made progress on your short-term goals, it's important to take a step back and assess whether these accomplishments are moving you closer to your long-term vision. Ask yourself: Are my short-term wins aligned with my long-term objectives?

If your progress is on track, great! But if you find that you're not moving in the right direction, it may be time to adjust. Look for any gaps between where you are now and where you want to be. Identify new short-term goals that can bridge those gaps or help you overcome obstacles that have surfaced along the way.

Tip: This step is about staying flexible. Your long-term goals might remain steady, but your short-term goals should be adaptable based on your progress and new insights.

GOAL SETTING MODELS

SMART goals and **HARD goals** are guidelines to writing effective, accomplishable goals. To follow one of the goal-setting models, write down each category (i.e. Specific, Measurable, etc.) and then write down the part of your goal that fulfills it.



SMART Goals

SMART goals are goals that fulfill the following guidelines:

- Specific Clear, focused idea of what you want to change.
- Measurable Defined, quantifiable way to track the change or growth.
- Actionable Straightforward, simple things you can do to progress this goal starting today.
- Realistic Levelheaded, honest assessment of the goal's feasibility.
- Timely Precise, easy to follow calendar for when you should hit certain milestones.

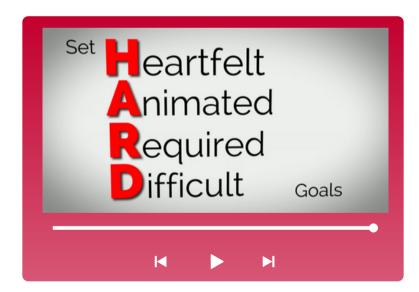




HARD Goals

HARD goals are Heartfelt, Animated, Required, and Difficult. When you are creating a goal, it's best to work in the order A, H, D, R.

- A is for Animated Animate goals in your mind by envisioning them happening. When you've got a good idea of what you want, write it down. This will make your vision more real and increase your odds of achieving it.
- H stands for Heartfelt Make sure you can answer the questions, "Why does your goal matter?" and "Why do you care about it?". When you are clear about the value of your goal, it's easier to stay committed.
- **D is for Difficult** Make goals that push your limits. What skills do you need work on to make the impossible, possible? Great achievements don't come easily, but that's what makes them so rewarding.
- R stands for Required You've got to be convinced that your goals are necessary and not just a wish, if you want to make them happen. Do something every day that is on track with your vision. What can you focus on this week? What do you need to achieve in the next month? In the next year?



WATCH: Click **here** to explore the HARD Goals video

Optional Add-On: If you'd like another way to achieve your goal, consider using our Action Plan Form to help break down your big goals into actionable steps.







Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are the foundation of successful relationships, both personal and professional. The ability to connect with others impacts everything from your day-to-day interactions at home, in the classroom, at work, or to the long-term success of your career.



If you can't connect with the people around you, your personal, academic, and future professional life will suffer. How you are perceived by those around you plays a large role in things as minor as your day-to-day happiness at home, in class, or at work, and as major as the future of your career.

Developing strong interpersonal skills allows you to communicate more effectively, resolve conflicts, and gain the trust and support of those around you.

The Goal: Explore how you can build essential interpersonal skills by carefully observing those around you whose skills you particularly admire. Learn from their techniques and setting personal goals to enhance your own interpersonal abilities.

Step 1: Make a point of observing people who are particularly good at gaining support and agreement from others. Chose two teammates or people you know well whose interpersonal skills you admire. Notice what strategies and techniques they use and record these in response to the questions using the format of the chart on the next page.





INTERPERSONAL SKILLS OBSERVATION CHART

Questions	Person 1	Person 2
What technique does each person use to persuade people?		
How do they present themselves?		
How do they present their ideas?		
How do they handle disagreements and conflict?		
What do you like best about how they present new ideas?		

Step 2: Based on your observations of your team, what is one goal you would like to set for further development of your own interpersonal skills?

*Adapted with permission from TTI International, Ltd. 2010.





Leadership

In the busyness of everyday life, it's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture: the purpose and potential that lie within you. Leadership isn't just about guiding others—it's about knowing who you are, understanding your unique strengths, and shaping a vision for your life. This activity is designed to help you elevate your thinking, explore the essence of great leadership, and begin reflecting on the kind of leader you aspire to be.



Through this exercise, you'll delve into inspiring leadership examples, examine their lessons, and begin shaping your own leadership message. By doing so, you'll start developing the mindset and style that aligns with your values and strengths, setting the stage for your unique contribution to the world. Ready to uncover your leadership potential? Let's begin!

The Goal: Discover the bigger picture of your life by engaging with high-level leadership thinking This activity is designed to help you start exploring and shaping your own leadership style, preparing you to lead with confidence.

Step 1: Watch some videos of leaders speak about topics you care about. Examples are included on the next page but feel free to supplement with your favorite TED talk / industry speaker / author / master at the mic. You could also look for written pieces from leaders.

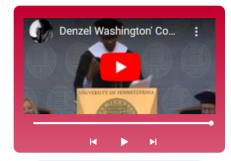
SKILLS ACTIVITY LEADERSHIP | 22



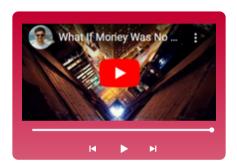
■ Leader Talks



WATCH: Click here to explore.



WATCH: Click here to explore.



WATCH: Click here to explore.



WATCH: Click **here** to explore.

Step 2: Answer one of the following two prompts in a 3-5 paragraph short essay: "What is the biggest take away from the video? Why is it important?" OR "How could you apply the speaker's lessons to your life?"

Step 3: Write a 3-5 paragraph short essay to answer: "What is YOUR lesson you want to teach the world as a leader?" Use your top 2 Motivators from your CCA Tool Results to enhance your message.

Optional Add-On: If you want to work on developing the skill of empathy, you could also write a third essay answering the question "How can you take what you learned to help make the world a better place?"



SKILLS ACTIVITY LEADERSHIP | 23





Mentoring and Coaching

Feedback is more than just a formality; it's a vital part of personal and professional growth. Learning how to give and receive feedback effectively can transform our interactions, enhance our skills, and ultimately help us reach our collective goals.



In this two-part activity, we will explore effective strategies for both giving and receiving constructive feedback, crucial skills for mentoring and coaching relationships.

Part 1 will guide you through the art of providing feedback in a way that is both supportive and actionable. Part 2 will focus on the importance of receiving feedback with an open mind, introducing the "Yes, And" approach to ensure you can integrate insights into your development.

By mastering these skills, you can foster an environment of continuous improvement and collaboration in any mentoring or coaching setting.

The Goal: Giving and receiving feedback is an integral part of growing as an individual, developing your skills, and working with others to achieve a common goal. This two-part activity will go over how to give and receive feedback using two different methods.

PART 1: GIVING FEEDBACK

Step 1: In your Colorado Career Advising Tool Results, read your 'Communication Tips' before jumping into this activity. After reading this, you'll gain a clearer understanding of how your communication style influences your interactions with others, along with key tips to enhance how you connect based on your preferences. Having a greater understanding of your own style will make it much easier for you to effectively communicate with others.



Step 2: Follow a "Sandwich Method" for providing constructive criticism.

- 1. Start with a positive comment
- 2. State the problem or constructive criticism
- 3. Give a helpful and positive suggestion for improvement.

Put this technique into practice.

- 1. Find a partner or student who has completed the CCA Tool. Together, discuss the skills outlined in this booklet and identify which ones you find most challenging. Reflect on why these skills may be less developed and share a specific example of a time when you struggled in those areas.
- 2. Swap stories about when you struggled with one of these challenging skills. Remember to take note of the whole story, not just the negative aspects.
- 3. Give the other person a positive comment about their experience.
- 4. Next, articulate the main problem that held you back and caused you to struggle in that situation.
- 5. End with a helpful suggestion about how they could have positively solved the problem.

Note: Although subtle, this exercise teaches you to give constructive feedback in a positive light. By ending on a positive note, you equip the person receiving feedback with a tangible solution. This exercise also teaches problem solving through conversation.

PART 2: RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Step 1: In your Colorado Career Advising Tool Results, read your Personalized Tips on the 'Results Summary' tab and your 'Communication Tips' if you haven't already. Then watch "Yes, And" on YouTube.



WATCH: Click here to view the 'Yes, And' video



Step 2: Learn more about the "Yes, And" technique for receiving constructive feedback. The technique boils down to two core concepts.

- 1. Find something you like. Start off by looking at the positive side of any suggestion or feedback. For example, suppose a friend challenges you to read ten books over the summer—but you hate reading. You could respond, "I agree that it's important to keep learning, even outside of school." This way, you are saying "yes" to the person's idea, even if there are parts of the suggestion you don't like.
- 2. Find something to add. Instead of arguing with the other person, go ahead and use their idea—with your own changes and style. For example, you might tell your friend, "I want to keep learning over the summer, and reading is boring to me. I want to be outside! What if we explore local parks and learn the names of all the trees and flowers?" You want to build on the original idea, not shoot it down. The key lies in taking the idea or suggestion and tailoring it to your own unique way of doing things.

Step 3: Find another person to practice with. Begin with Part 1 of this activity, the Sandwich Method. After the person provides positive feedback, respond to their idea with the "Yes, And" approach. Find something you like about the suggestion and then add to it with your own ideas and ways of doing things.





Management

Management is an art that blends strategy, empathy, and action. It's a journey that often begins without formal recognition, yet it influences countless lives and outcomes. You might not realize it, but you are likely managing people or projects every day, whether you're coordinating a community event, leading a volunteer team, or simply overseeing tasks in your daily life.



Every interaction, every shared goal, and every delegated task is a reflection of your potential as a manager. By learning to delegate effectively and understand your unique management style, you can cultivate a more harmonious and productive atmosphere in both your personal and professional life. Let's unlock the power of management.

The Goal: Develop a deeper understanding of your management style and improve your delegation skills, enabling you to lead more effectively and grow as confident, adaptable managers.

Step 1: Practice Delegation

You might already be "managing" more people that you realize. For example, if you hire someone to fix something for you or clean your apartment, you are in essence "managing" them. You might also be part of a volunteer or sports team where you have taken on a management role, without the formal title.

You cannot manage anyone without giving up control of something in your work or life. Can you think of some things you are currently doing that you might possibly delegate to someone else? Maybe part of a group project? Maybe a project around your home or dorm? Do you have a mentor or mentee you can delegate something to? Maybe even delegating making dinner one night to a friend?

Delegate a task to someone intentionally, then reflect on how well you guided and supported them to ensure the task was completed to your standards.





DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT SKILLS THROUGH DELEGATION

Task to Delegate	Reflection on how your delegation process worked

Step 2: Understand Your Management Style

All managers have different styles. Finding a style that is authentic to you is important. The self-awareness you've gained through your CCA Tool Results is the perfect first step to articulating your management style.

Consider your DISC scores and write about how you see yourself acting as a manager. For example, someone who is High Dominance and Low Steadiness/Compliance might write "I'm a manager who has a direct style that tends to miss communicating important details. I will make sure that the person I'm managing has all the information necessary to succeed and slow down enough to ask questions and provide a warm work environment."

Step 3: Adapt and Grow Your Management Style

Once you've understood your management style, the next step is to adapt it to better suit the needs of your team and specific situations. Use your strengths while addressing any potential gaps. For instance, if you're direct but tend to overlook details, make a conscious effort to slow down, communicate thoroughly, and ask for feedback regularly. Continually seek opportunities to improve how you manage, whether through training, feedback from your team, or personal reflection.





Negotiation

Negotiation is an essential skill in both personal and professional life, allowing us to reach agreements and find common ground with others. Effective negotiators use a range of strategies to achieve the best outcomes in challenging situations.

In this activity, you'll explore your own negotiation experiences and learn valuable techniques from the article "15 Diplomacy Strategies for Negotiations." By reflecting on your past negotiation and identifying strategies to improve, you'll build a stronger foundation for future success in negotiation.



The Goal: Master the art of negotiation by developing effective strategies to facilitate agreements and achieve successful outcomes.

Step 1: Think of a recent situation in your life, either in or outside of school/work, that required you to negotiate with someone. What was the situation?





Step 2: Read the article "15 Diplomacy Strategies for Negotiations" to learn specific strategies used by professional negotiators.

Step 3: Reflect on the negotiation situation you described above. Which of the strategies mentioned in the article did you use when you negotiated that situation? Which strategies from the article did you not use, but might serve you well if a similar situation arises in the future?

Use this table as a guide to help you reflect.



NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES REFLECTION

Strategies I Used	Strategies I Would Try Next Time

SKILLS ACTIVITY **NEGOTIATION | 30**





People Advocacy

In a world that's becoming increasingly interconnected, understanding and practicing people advocacy is more crucial than ever. At the heart of effective advocacy is the ability to truly listen and comprehend the stories of those around us.

We all have unique stories, both of our own personal life and that of our ancestors. When we fully hear and understand each other's stories, we know how to better advocate from a cultural and meaningful point of view.



The Goal: Build advocacy skills by learning to understand and share others' stories, strengthening empathy, interpersonal skills, decision-making, and leadership.

Step 1: Write how you would tell your story from the perspective of land, people, and values. You can write solely from your experiences growing up or draw on what you know of your ancestors.

You can utilize the table on the next page to help you share your story.





INTERPERSONAL SKILLS OBSERVATION CHART

Story Parts	Reflection
Land - Where did you or your ancestors come from? How do you imagine it looked like, felt like, smelled like, etc.?	
People - Who were the people that most shaped your life? Do you have a connection to anyone in your lineage?	
Values - What values did you receive from your family? Your experiences growing up? Your heritage?	

Step 2: Find a partner or someone you'd like to get to know better and share your story to them from these perspectives. Have them relate their story as well.

Step 3: After you both share, reflect on the following about your partner's story:

- When I was listening to your story, the parts that stood out to me were ...
- Because of your story, you bring the following gifts/perspectives to the world...

Step 4: Write a reflection on how knowing other's stories can help you to better understand, support, and advocate for them in the future.





Personal Responsibility

In today's fast-paced world, cultivating a strong sense of personal responsibility is essential for personal and professional success. Individuals with this mindset perform well even when expectations are unclear, resources are scarce, and competition is tough. They view the accomplishment of their goals as fundamental to their identity and consistently work towards these goals, regardless of obstacles.

Building your personal accountability "muscles" involves reflecting on your strengths and weaknesses, allowing for self-assessment and growth. As you engage in this activity, take the time to dig deeper into your experiences and motivations, unlocking valuable insights that can transform your approach to responsibility.



The Goal: Develop personal responsibility by reflecting on past experiences and assessing your strengths and weaknesses. This empowers you to take ownership of your actions and decisions, consistently pursuing goals even in challenging situations.

Step 1: List three examples of times when you believe you displayed personal responsibility, why it was necessary to accept responsibility, and how you felt about it. Use the chart on the next page as a template to reflect.





PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN ACTION

Situation/ Responsibility	Repercussions Why It Was Necessary to Accept Responsibility	Degree of Difficulty Scale of 1-10, Least to Most	How I Felt
1.			
2.			
3.			

Step 2: Then, list three instances when you lacked personal responsibility, explain why it was important to demonstrate it, and describe how you felt at the time.



PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY CHALLENGES

Situation/ Responsibility	Repercussions Why It Was Necessary to Accept Responsibility	Degree of Difficulty Scale of 1-10, Least to Most	How I Felt
1.			
2.			
3.			

Step 3: Based on the examples above, what area of your life are you going to consciously take more responsibility and how will that positively impact your life?





Persuasion

Persuasion is more than just convincing someone—it's about understanding perspectives, fostering connections, and gently guiding others toward new ideas. Whether you're looking to sway opinions, encourage new behaviors, or make impactful connections, persuasion is a skill that empowers you to leave a lasting influence.

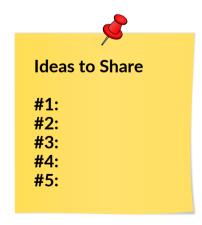


This activity takes you from understanding persuasion's foundations to actively practicing it in real-life scenarios. Get ready to uncover how to harness persuasion in ways that resonate and inspire others!

The Goal: Persuasion is the ability to convince others to change the way they think, believe, or act. Learning the skill of persuasion will allow you to influence others now and in the future.

Step 1: Read the article "Influencing:
Learning How To Use The Skill of
Persuasion". Focus on understanding key concepts and strategies.

Step 2: After reading, write down the five most valuable insights you would share with someone eager to learn about persuasion.



Step 3: Practice applying these insights by trying to persuade someone—a friend or even a stranger. Start with something simple, like suggesting a favorite restaurant, recommending a color to wear, or inviting someone out for ice cream. Once you see your persuasive self in action, you can begin experimenting with more challenging topics.

SKILLS ACTIVITY PERSUASION | 35





Presenting

Presenting is a skill that blends preparation, selfawareness, and the ability to connect with your audience. Every great presenter started somewhere, and with each presentation, you'll refine your approach and grow more confident.

Giving a compelling presentation is about more than just speaking in front of others—it's about connecting with your audience and delivering your message with confidence and clarity.



In this activity, you'll gain insights into building powerful presentations, identify your strengths, and pinpoint areas for growth. Get ready to elevate your next presentation and communicate like a pro!

The Goal: Learn how to plan and structure impactful presentations that effectively communicate your message by reflecting on your strengths, addressing areas for growth, and taking actionable steps to enhance your presentation skills.

Step 1: Read the article, "8 Tips for Giving a Presentation Like a Pro".

Step 2: As you read, note tips that stand out to you as most helpful. For each tip, identify a strength and a need you feel you have as a presenter.

SKILLS ACTIVITY PRESENTING | 36



PRESENTATION SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT

Tip Which tips stand out to you?	Strength Identify your strength as a presenter.	Need What do you need to learn or practice?

Step 3: Identify two important steps you will take to assure your next presentation has power and impact.

1.

2.

Take what you've learned here and apply it to your next opportunity to present. Whether it's in a classroom, boardroom, or online meeting, your ability to communicate with clarity and impact will set you apart. Remember, the key to presenting like a pro lies in thoughtful preparation and the courage to keep improving.

PRESENTING | 37 **SKILLS ACTIVITY**





Written Communication

The best way to improve your written communication is to practice! Whether you're crafting essays or resumes, each type of writing provides a unique opportunity to showcase your individuality, skills, and experiences.

In this activity, you'll focus on crafting a compelling personal or college essay using insights from your Colorado Career Advising Tool Results. Through



reflection and guided prompts, you'll explore how your strengths, passions, and experiences define who you are and prepare you for future success. To complement this exercise, we've included a supplemental resume-writing activity to help you translate these same qualities into a professional format.

Together, these activities will equip you to share your story in a way that stands out and resonates with your audience.

The Goal: Enhance your writing skills by practicing writing personal essays and resumes—foundational exercises that strengthen your overall communication and support future growth in your written communication skills in your desired education focus or career field.

Step 1: Begin by revisiting and reviewing your CCA Career Advising Tool Results.

- Strengths
- DISC Behaviors
- Motivators
- Communication Tips
- Most Valued Skills (from this activity booklet)

Step 2: Select one or more of the following prompts that resonate with you.

- Strengths Share an impactful experience where you used your key skills or strengths.
- Passions Connect your top Motivators to your chosen field of study or career.
- Perfect Fit Explain why a school or job aligns with your ideal school/work environment.



Step 3:

1. Brainstorm Ideas

- o Reflect on specific examples, stories, or experiences that align with the prompt(s).
- Jot down key details, including the skills or Motivators involved, and how they shaped your journey.

2. Write Your Essay

- Introduction: Start with a strong hook that introduces your story or theme.
- o Body: Use vivid examples to illustrate your strengths, passions, or challenges. Tie these to your Colorado Career Advising Tool Results for depth and insight.
- Conclusion: End by summarizing how your unique qualities prepare you for success in the school, job, or path you are pursuing.
- 3. Peer Feedback Share your draft with a classmate, teacher, or team member for feedback. Look for clarity, connection to the prompt, and whether your essay highlights your unique attributes effectively.

This activity will help you develop a personalized, reflective essay that showcases your individuality and aligns with your future goals.

Optional Add-Ons:

- Using your CCA Tool Results, build your personal brand through a three part activity that guides you through creating a resume, polishing your resume, and finally optimizing your LinkedIn profile.
- Reach out to Get Schooled for personalized editing and review of both your college essay and resume. Their team can provide valuable feedback to help you refine your writing and make it stand out.
- Explore the resources listed below to further improve and fine-tune your skills. These tools will help you polish your essay and resume, ensuring they effectively showcase your unique strengths and experiences.

Resources: Online resources for honing your writing skills.

- **Grammarly** spelling and grammar checker
- Wordcounter word count, reading level estimates, and reading time
- Hemingway Editor readability suggestions
- One Look reverse dictionary and advanced thesaurus





Planning/Organizing

Creating a planning system is more than just organizing tasks—it's about developing a framework that motivates, guides, and empowers you to manage time and priorities effectively. In today's busy world, persuasion isn't just for others; sometimes, it's about persuading yourself to stay organized and committed.



This activity will help you design a customized system that aligns with your goals, using tools that fit your style. Dive in to create a personalized plan that turns ideas into action and transforms your approach to productivity!

The Goal: Create your own unique organization system that is uniquely tailored to you, which will organize your time, priorities, and workload into the perfect planning system.

Step 1: Create a planning system that works for you. For example, you can use existing phone apps, sticky notes color coded for priority, or a diary-style planner that includes every single task that you must complete. You could also create a simple day-by-day to do list organized by priority from top to bottom. Whatever it is, make it the way you want it.

Note: It may be helpful to find others who share your top DISC scores so that you can share ideas. Collaborating with those who think similarly can help you develop even better solutions.

Step 2: Show a teacher or mentor your organization system and get their feedback. Also, consider ways you can integrate your plan into everyday life.

Remember that there is no "right" or "wrong" way to do this – you want to find a system that works for you.



Note: If you are having a hard time coming up with an idea for creating your planning system, make it more tangible by creating a system to organize and plan just your homework or tasks for that given week.

Step 3: Once you've put your planning system into action for a week or two, take time to reflect on its effectiveness.

Ask yourself:

- What worked well? Identify which aspects of your system helped you stay organized, motivated, and on track.
- What didn't work? Consider any areas where you felt overwhelmed, distracted, or unmotivated.
- What can be improved? Look for ways to tweak or enhance your system to better suit your style and needs.

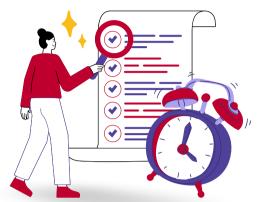
Adjusting and refining your planning system is essential as your goals, tasks, and priorities change. A flexible system is a successful one, so don't be afraid to make changes that keep you aligned with your evolving aspirations and daily life.





Time and Priority Management

Managing time and priorities can be one of the toughest challenges, especially if you are juggling academics, extracurricular activities, work, and everything else life throws your way. With so many distractions—like that irresistible YouTube video of adorable puppies—it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

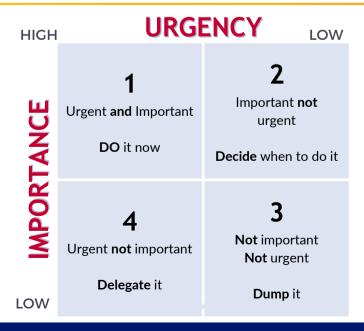


However, learning to prioritize effectively can transform chaos into clarity. The "Time and Priority Management" exercise helps you do just that by giving you a practical tool to help organize your tasks based on importance.

By mapping out your priorities on a matrix, you'll be able to assess where your energy and focus should go and learn how to prioritize more effectively. Ready to regain control? Let's get started!

The Goal: This activity will equip you with a practical time and priority management tool to organize tasks and focus on what truly matters.

Step 1: Read over the priority matrix. Tasks with different levels of importance are sorted into four quadrants, corresponding to the degree of priority.





Step 2: Create a priority matrix for yourself. Your priority matrix can be for all activities in a day, all components in a project, homework for all of your classes, or anything else in your life that needs time and priority management.



Consider using priority matrices during high-intensity and busy times and as a tool to organize yourself.

Take this tool with you and use it regularly, especially when you're feeling overloaded. Prioritizing will not only help you stay on top of your tasks but also help you feel more confident and in control, no matter how busy life gets.





Creativity/Innovation

Unleashing Creativity and Innovation!

Imagine a world where students and employees are given the same freedom to innovate as engineers at Google, who spend 20% of their time on passion projects. What could our students and employees achieve with similar flexibility to pursue their own genius?

This activity explores the concept of the "Genius Project," a commitment to creativity and personal growth. Students or employees will brainstorm ideas, write proposals, dedicate time each week to their projects, and present their results—all while tying their efforts to their top Motivators and most valued skills. Join us in redefining potential and fostering a new wave of creativity and innovation.

Note: This exercise is a commitment. It requires time and a willingness to engage in serious exploration and growth over the course of months.

The Goal: Encourage creativity and innovation by giving students and employees the freedom to explore their passions and pursue self-directed projects that inspire them. This activity aims to unlock their potential by providing the time and space to focus on ideas that matter most to them.

Optional Add-On: To develop "Time and Priority Management" and "Planning and Organizing" skills, write a proposal that includes how you plan to manage your time over the course of this project and define the different tasks you must complete before the project is considered complete. Essentially, you will submit a detailed plan of how you will carry your project out and manage your own time over the planned timeframe of the project.





Step 1: Brainstorm what your "Genius Project" could be. Your ideas should be specific to you as an individual. Your passion project must be tied to your top one or two Motivators so start brainstorming by looking at your Motivators on your Colorado Career Advising Tool 'What Motivates You' page.

Examples of ideas:

Starting and growing a new club at school for people interested in coding or investing, building a business, planning a organizationwide volunteering day, writing and producing a one-act show, leading a full-fledged fundraiser for an initiative that you care about, managing your organization's social media, learning to build a website from scratch, working on a massive art project or performance, etc.

Step 2: Write a one-page proposal. The proposal should explain the overall project scope and also how it fits your top one or two Motivators. You should explain how you plan to utilize your most valued skills to execute your project. Hold yourself accountable to picking a project that fits you and is sufficiently challenging.

Step 3: Spend one or two hours a week pursuing your project. This project can be as long or as short as you would like it to be, but the sweet spot is at least 15-20 hours enough time for you to develop serious projects with a large scope of work.

Step 4: Create a presentation about the end results of your project. This can be in any form you choose—presentation, essay, collage, video, website, etc. - as long as it is clear that the results reflect your true genius and genuine effort. In your final presentation of the project, you should demonstrate how the project tied in to your top Motivators and how you used skills developed in these activities to successfully complete the project.





Refining Skills through Reflection

Take a step towards personal growth with this simple yet impactful 15-minute activity designed to further enhance a durable skill in this activity booklet.

By combining reflective journaling with a tailored video, you'll dive deeper into your strengths, understand their significance, and take actionable steps to refine them. Let's turn self-awareness into self-improvement, one skill at a time.



The Goal: The goal of this activity is to build self-awareness and strengthen a specific skill by reflecting on its meaning, assessing personal proficiency, and creating an action plan for improvement.

Materials:

- Your journal or notebook
- The Skills video for your focus skill



*Colorado Career Advising Tool is a career exploration platform brought to you by Indigo Education Company.

Step 1: Skill Focus - Review the Indigo Skills video options linked above. Select one skill you'd like to develop further. This can be either a skill you enjoy or one you feel needs more practice—the choice is yours!

Step 2: Ranking - Rate how developed you think this skill is for you on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = least developed, 5 = most developed). Write the skill and your ranking in your journal or notebook.

Step 3: Reflection - Think about the question: "What does this skill mean to you?" Write down your thoughts—there are no right or wrong answers!



Step 4: Watch the Video - Watch the video related to your chosen skill. As you watch, take notes in your journal or notebook, focusing on the following questions:



How is this skill defined?
What are steps you can take to successfully apply this skill?

Step 5: Solo Reflection - Respond in your journal or notebook to the question below.

Reflect on the score you gave yourself for this skill earlier in the activity. After watching the video, consider the insights and information presented. How would you now rate your development in this skill? Adjust your score if needed and note your reasoning in your journal or notebook.

Step 6: Action - Make a commitment to yourself to practice this skill by writing a response to the question below.



What is one thing you can do today to practice this skill?



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