

# The Most Desirable Skills for Entry Level Positions



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Good help is hard to find. That gripe has been reiterated many times over the years. With so many business owners actively seeking strong candidates, there is a great opportunity for tomorrow's leaders to step up and fill the role. But to set yourself on a path to success you must bring the skills businesses are seeking.

## **Skills wanted**

For entry level positions, character trumps experience, says Nick Nykorczuk, president of [Creative Pavers Inc.](#), a design/build landscaping firm in Gibbstown, New Jersey. Unlike a management position, experience is not an expectation.

"We want someone who wants to learn and is willing to do what it takes to gain experience for their desired position," Nykorczuk says.

Terra Phelps, co-owner of [Utopian Landscapes LLC](#) in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, says enthusiasm is the most important thing she looks for in potential new hires in entry-level positions.

"Everything else can be taught," Phelps says. "If you're enthusiastic about something, you care about it. And if you care about it, you'll do your best to make it work."

While Nykorczuk expects to have to provide ongoing monitoring and training for entry-level jobs, with senior positions he's looking for someone who can basically step right in and get started. "Being able to exhibit your ability to independently take ownership of tasks, problem solve along the way and execute tasks successfully is a huge factor for us when considering adding you on in a management role," he says.

## Be better prepared

With changes coming down the pipeline, now is the time to prepare yourself for the future. Make yourself desirable by focusing on some of the skills landscape professionals are seeking, Phelps says. Those skills include understanding stormwater management, three-dimensional landscape design and efficient communication through the latest technology.

Also, “independence is being stressed more and more as a skill set, and future jobs will be more reliant on self-motivated individuals to lead the way,” says Nykorczuk. “Current and future employees will be asked to perform more tasks and take on more responsibilities in the roles that they play. Being as much of a team player as possible is the surest way to find your footing.”

Having worked with many new graduates over the years, Nykorczuk adds that he wishes horticulture schools would focus portions of their lessons on teaching the “business side of things.”

“One thing that new graduates often seem to lack is an understanding of how their role correlates to creating value for the employee and/or the client,” Nykorczuk says. “I feel if schools would try and tie more of their teachings into the practical role that it will play in the work world, new graduates would begin their careers by thinking more about how they are contributing to the bottom line.”

The more value someone can bring to a company, the more likely they will remain employed, adds Nykorczuk. It’s also one of the largest factors attributing to the growth of the employee both in their professional experience, but also in their financial compensation. Specific skill sets aside, a potential hire should consider how they can bring as much value as possible to the table for that particular company. At the end of the day, being an asset to the team will make you indispensable.