



10 People Skills Every Government Employee Should Have

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It's estimated that there are now just over two million federal government employees. Despite how many there currently are, there are always more people looking to land a government position. Plus, those who are already working for the government can benefit from brushing up on their people skills in order to get ahead. Those with solid people skills will find that they are not only happier with their time spent on the job, but they will also be the ones in a position to be promoted as the opportunities arise.

The Skills

Whether someone has been on the job for years, or they are just considering applying for a government position, it's never too late to take inventory on their people skills. There is usually room for improvement, and even making small changes can have a big impact on the [job](#) and in working around others.

Here's a list of 10 people skills that every government employee should have:

1. **Open-mindedness.** When working around so many other fellow employees, it is important to have an open mind. You are bound to hear many opinions and ideas. While you may not want to buy into each of them, even having an open mind to consider them will lead to people respecting you. Being receptive to other people's opinions does not mean that you necessarily have to agree with them. It just means you can respect the opinion of others and consider it.
2. **Listening skills.** We live in a world where we tend to talk more than we should, rather than listening to others. If we listen to others, we make them feel valued, and when they feel valued, they are going to be more dedicated to the team and mission. Active listening can be learned with practice, and includes making eye contact, asking meaningful questions, providing feedback, and avoiding being distracted or multi-tasking.
3. **Empathy.** Having empathy means that you have the ability to understand someone else's feelings. If you feel empathy for others, you are more likely to try to work out differences diplomatically. Most great leaders share the trait of having empathy. Caring about others, in turn, creates more people who care about you.
4. **Tolerance.** Having tolerance means you will be able to accept the idea that others engage in other practices and beliefs that may not coincide with your own. We essentially live in a "melting pot," where there are people from all walks of life. Chances are good that you will work around people who engage in different practices and have different beliefs, or you will work with the public that does.
5. **Self-awareness.** When you have self-awareness, you know what it is that makes you tick. You know what makes you get worked up and what makes you get frustrated. Having self-awareness will help you to remain being a stronger person who is better able to perform their position. You will be able to identify your strengths and weaknesses and compensate for them where necessary.
6. **Patience.** As the saying goes, patience is a virtue. In any type of career, [government jobs](#) included, having patience is a skill that everyone needs. It's important to remember that good things come to those who wait, and sometimes there are delays in change and things can move slowly, especially when it comes to the government.
7. **Stress management.** Any job, and especially those for the federal government, can become stressful. It's important that employees know how to de-stress so that it doesn't get the better of them. There are a lot of things that can be done to de-stress, such as doing yoga, Tai

Chi, journaling, mediating, and practicing breathing exercises. Find out what works for you and then use it when you feel the stress of the job, or even your home life, growing.

8. **Leadership skills.** Being a great leader means being able to bring out the best in others. Every good leader knows how to effectively motivate people, bring out their best skills, and have them contribute as a team. This is a skill that is invaluable, especially for those who want to be promoted to higher positions within the government.
9. **Negotiation skills.** Being able to negotiate with others, whether it is fellow employees, the public, or for business-to-business transactions, can be a skill that can save the government money, as well as help people get along. Being able to negotiate effectively is a skill that takes practice, but can be learned in time.
10. **Courtesy.** It's never out of style to be respectful to others, even if many believe it is something we are losing in our society. Being courteous to others will help you gain respect in return. It also makes for a more peaceful and satisfying work environment for employees, as well as anyone in the public or [business sector](#) that you may work with.

Staying Focused

Perhaps it may seem like it's a little too much to focus on all of these skills at once. That's fine, you don't have to try and become a super star employee overnight. Pick one or two of these skills to start with and make a point of working on them while at work. Notice the difference you feel in yourself and that you see in those around you as a result of your positive changes. Chances are, the more you focus on having these great people skills, the better and more valuable employee you will become.

There are many other skills that government employees can use as well, in order to further their position, or simply become more efficient and effective. But focusing on these 10 will make for an employee that is hard not to notice. When exhibiting these skills, those around the person will in turn begin to have them as well. Just like a cold, attitudes in the workplace are highly transmittable. Those who focus on being an employee that is easy to get along with and ready to help motivate others will soon become a star on the team.