SKILLS Cards Sort – Brief User Guide

SKILLS – Cards sort (© S. Rochat, 2021)
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Purpose	Skills are abilities based on knowledge or experience that are recognized in an individual (Académie française, 2019). They are always context-dependent, sometimes transferable, and generally developable.
Background	The SKILLS instrument is based on 12 domains of professional life that are used to varying degrees across industries: leadership, management, communication, problem-solving, ethics, flexibility, creativity, project management, personal skills, interpersonal skills, career management, and technical proficiency.
Rationale	The SKILLS instrument aims to support the career counseling process by helping participants to: • Describe their perceived skills in a flexible way. • Identify the skills whose use gives them enjoyment and satisfaction. • Identify potential career directions or sources of tension related to their level of proficiency in these skills or their subjective experience of using them. These skills can also be explored using an inventory, but sorting cards encourages dialogue, collaboration, and reflection rather than assessment.
Process	With reference to the 5As model of career counseling, the SKILLS instrument is particularly relevant during: • Activating the introspection: promoting self-awareness by exploring perceived skills and the enjoyment experienced when using them, and opening up reflection on the fit between the person, the requirements of an occupation, and opportunities for development.
Content	The SKILLS instrument contains 140 cards, each representing a transferable skill. The cards are organized into the 12 domains listed above. Each domain contains 10 cards, except for the interpersonal domain, which contains 30 because of the diversity and importance of interpersonal skills in most work settings.
Administration	1. Invite the participant to sort the cards according to how proficient they believe they are in each skill. 2. Invite the participant to sort the cards according to how much enjoyment or satisfaction they experience when using each skill. 3. Explore together potential career directions associated with skills involving both high proficiency and high enjoyment; training opportunities for skills involving high enjoyment but low proficiency; and potential risks associated with skills involving high proficiency but low enjoyment.
Interpretation	The pictograms on the cards can help identify patterns: = leadership; = management; = communication; = problem-solving; = ethics; = flexibility; = creativity; = project management; = personal skills; = interpersonal skills; = career management; = technical proficiency.
Further Reading	• Mapping career counseling interventions (Chapter 5.4). • Les 5As du conseil en orientation (Chapter 4.1).