



ESSENTIAL SKILLS PROFILE



COOK



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**Essential Skills
are the skills
people need for
work, learning
and life.**

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada have identified nine essential skills that are the foundation to success in today's workplace.

They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable Gaming employees to evolve in their jobs and adapt to workplace change.

Without adequate levels of Essential Skills, employees' productivity, training and career options in Gaming may be limited.

Essential Skills are critical to the Gaming Industry.

**HIT THE
JACKPOT...
BET ON A
CAREER IN
GAMING**

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The most important
Essential Skills for
Cooks are:

- Oral Communication
- Thinking Skills (Job Task Planning and Organizing)
- Thinking Skills (Problem Solving)

INTRODUCTION

Cooks prepare a variety of dishes and organize the work of the kitchen so that the public is always served in a timely manner. Cooks may begin their duties as dishwashers or bussers and apprentice themselves to chefs. They then choose whether to study Culinary Arts full time or alternate between studying and working in order to finally achieve the level of Cook I. A Cook III may have other duties (cashier, cleaner) as well as basic cooking. After two years of training a cook becomes a Cook II. A Cook I has completed the training and has gained experience and speed in a broad range of food preparation.

Cooks include:

- Cook I
- Cook II
- Cook III



READING TEXT

Refers to reading memos, schedules and procedure manuals.

Reading Text is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- Read bulletin boards for memos, job openings, general announcements and training opportunities
- Read procedure manuals, maintenance manuals and MSD sheets
- Read casino entertainment and special event information to pass along to customers

A. READING TEXT

Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
		Cooks:
<i>Typical</i>	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may read culinary journals to date with trends. May consult manuals for preparation of special effects. For example, sculpting in lard. (2)
<i>Most Complex</i>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read and consult recipe books. (2) • read labels on packages, checking weight, ingredients, shelf life. (1) • read material related to Food Handlers Certificate. For example, WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System.) (1) • may read cooking manuals to understand the theory and scientific grounds of cooking. (3) • may consult manuals for the machines such as slicers, cauldrons, or the tilt skillet to understand disassembly for proper cleaning. (3)

Reading Profile

Type of Text	Purpose for Reading			
	To <u>scan</u> for specific information/ To <u>locate</u> information.	To <u>skim</u> for overall meaning, to get the "gist".	To <u>read</u> the full text to understand or to learn.	To <u>read</u> the full text to critique or to evaluate.
Forms	>>>	>>		
Labels	>>>			
Notes, Letters, Memos	>>			
Manuals, Specifications, Regulations			>>	
Reports, Books, Journals		>	>	

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.



DOCUMENT USE

Refers to understanding documents that have a combination of words, numbers, symbols, colors and shapes together.

Document Use is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- Scan flow charts to learn sequencing of simple tasks and processes
- Complete forms, procedural checklists and end-of-day reports
- Identify WHMIS and other casino workplace symbols, icons and directional signs

B. USE OF DOCUMENTS

Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
Typical	1-2	Cooks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may read Interact and Visa receipts if working the till. (1) • may take notes about errors or refunds at the till for the manager to enter later. (1) • notes when stocks are running low. (1) • read schedules for banquets or bus tours (containing abbreviations) in order to plan special lunches. (2) • may review banquet reports and make suggestions to chef. (2) • write notes to themselves about changes in menus or duties. (1) • examine the labels to know and compare contents of new products or check for ingredients that may cause allergies. (2) • read (write) notes and memos daily to inform shift changes. (2) • fill in liquor requisition forms, write par lists (what is left in the refrigerator), stock lists. (1) • reads and interprets policies and procedures to staff. (3) • assigns stations to staff. (1) • draw up a diagram for a display or for food trays. (1) • record what recipes have been taught to apprentices. (1) • make entries in chef's log about time off, broken equipment, complaints from customers. (2)
Most Complex	3	

Document Use Profile

- >>> read signs, labels or lists.
- >> complete forms by marking check boxes, recording numerical information or entering words, phrases, sentences or texts of a paragraph or more. For example, completing information about menus or special events for other departments.
- >>> read completed forms containing check boxes, numerical entries, phrases, addresses, sentences or texts of a paragraph or more. For example, the banquet sheets.
- >> read tables, schedules/other table-like text. For example, read work shift schedules.
- >>> enter information on tables, schedules or other table-like text. For example, fill in information about shifts or supplies.
- > read assembly drawings.
- >> recognize common angles such as 15°, 30°, 45° and 90°. For example, use the correct angle to sharpen knives, cut desserts, consider the angle of presentation.
- >> make sketches. For example, how to lay out a dessert plate or fruit tray.
- >>> obtain information from sketches, pictures or icons. For example, to get ideas for presentation of trays.

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C. WRITING



WRITING

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Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
Typical	1-2	Cooks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write up incident reports. For example, describing an incident with a customer or describing a kitchen accident. (2) • may write up menu on the board from the menu binder. (1) • may write lengthy work-in-progress reports for shift change including preparation notes. (2) • write notes to themselves to remember changes. (1) • write (record) alterations to recipes, indicating what substitutions can be made. (1) • may create a dessert from scratch and write a description. (2) • may write lengthy monitor reports on apprentices (3) Cook I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may write employee evaluations. (3)
Most Complex	3	

Writing Profile

Length	Purpose for Writing						
	To organize/ To remember	To keep a record/ To document	To inform/ To request information	To persuade/ To justify a request	To present an analysis or comparison	To present an evaluation or critique	To entertain
Texts requiring less than one paragraph of new text	>>>	>>>	>				
Texts rarely requiring more than one paragraph	>>	>>					
Longer texts		>>	>>	>>			

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.



NUMERACY

Refers to using numbers and thinking in quantitative terms. (counting cash, calculating winnings)

Numeracy is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- Calculate winnings according to placement of chips, betting odds and values assigned to chips
- Count cash in opening and closing balances and customer transactions
- Estimate time required to complete tasks
- Estimate crowd flow
- Measure, calculate and use ratios to mix cleaning solutions and compounds

D. NUMERACY

Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
		Cooks:
>>> Money Math	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when performing duties as cashiers or servers, may count out change and enter cash amounts into the computerized till system. (1) • Calculate the costs of menu items for expected number of customers. (2)
>> Scheduling or Budgeting/ Accounting Math	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • estimate cost, time needed, staffing and supplies needed for daily or special events and banquets. Assist chef in costing items in order to fix menu prices. (2)
>>> Measurement and Calculation Math	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • estimate or calculate (usually in their heads) the fractions and multiplication needed to halve or double a recipe.
>>> Numerical Estimation	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooks are expert at estimating measurements of ingredients, doubling or halving recipes, estimating food needed to serve a crowd. They estimate times and temperatures for cooking several dishes at a time.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.

a. Mathematical Foundations Used

Number Concepts:		
Whole Numbers	>>>	read and write, count, round off, add or subtract, multiply or divide whole numbers. For example, taking stock of supplies, calculating the food needed to serve a given number of people.
Rational Numbers - Fractions	>>>	Read, write, add, subtract fractions, multiply, divide by a fraction, multiply/divide fractions. For example, divide or multiply all the ingredients in a recipe.
Rational Numbers - Decimals	>>	read and write, round off, add or subtract decimals, multiply or divide by a decimal, multiply or divide decimals. For example, when converting from metric to Imperial or vice versa.
Rational Numbers - Percent	>>>	read and write percentages, calculate the percent one number is of another, calculate a percent of a number. For example, to create mixtures (30% sugar;70% water).
Equivalent Rational Numbers	>>	convert between fractions and decimals or percentages, convert between decimals and percentages. For example, to convert from Imperial to metric and vice versa.



NUMERACY

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Patterns and Relations:		
Equations and Formulae	>	may use formulae by inserting quantities for variables and solving. For example, labour/cost or food/cost formulae. May apply formulae for converting F ⁰ to C ⁰ , litres to fluid ounces. (rarely, usually make use of instruments and measuring utensils.)
Use of Rate, Ratio and Proportion	>>>	use a rate showing comparison between two quantities with different units, use a ratio showing comparison between two quantities with the same units, use a proportion showing comparison between two ratios or rates in order to solve problems. For example, follow proportions of salt or spice in soup.
Shape and Spatial Sense:		
Areas, Perimeters, Volumes	>>	calculate areas, calculate perimeters, calculate volumes. For example, plan how seat a specific number of people in a space or how to cut a dessert into a specific number of portions.
See Use of Documents for information on:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing common angles • drawing, sketching or forming common forms and figures
Statistics and Probability:		
Summary Calculations	>	calculate averages, calculate rates other than percentage, calculate proportions or ratios. For example, record how long it takes and money saved by de-boning chicken on site.
See Use of Documents for information on:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using tables, schedules or other table-like text. • using graphical presentations.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.

b. How Calculations Are Performed

Cooks make calculations:

- >>> in their head.
- > using a calculator.
- >>> using a pen and paper.

c. Measurement Instruments Used

Cooks measure:

- >>> time – using clocks, oven timers, or hand-held timers.
- >>> weight or mass – using balance, spring, electric or digital scales.
- > distance or dimension – using a ruler to plan kitchen space.
- >>> liquid volume – using measuring cups.
- >>> temperature – using oven thermometers, meat (probe) thermometers, settings on steamer, candy thermometer (higher than 500^o)
- > pressure – using pressure gauge on soup cauldron.
- >> angles – using knife sharpener.
- >> density – using estimation

They use:

- >>> the metric measurement system.
- >>> the Imperial measurement system.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.



ORAL COMMUNICATION

Refers to talking to exchange information. (explaining Gaming rules and Casino information to customers.

Oral Communication is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- Educate customers about responsible gaming and ensuring anyone who is having difficulty gets the assistance that they need
- Explain casino information, services, gaming products and gaming rules to customers
- Ask questions to clarify job tasks and expectations
- Speak respectfully to customers and co-workers when dealing with complex issues or resolving conflicts

E. ORAL COMMUNICATION

Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
<i>Typical</i>	1-2	Cooks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yell instructions to one another, overcoming the noise that is always present in the kitchen. (1) • inform kitchen staff of what is needed to keep the buffet stocked. (1) • instruct the staff that is preparing ingredients for the dishes to be prepared. For example how to cut and slice the vegetables. (1) • keep in touch with Guest Services to know arrival times and numbers of bus tours in order to have the lunch special ready. (2) • interact with customers who approach the open kitchen with requests and questions. For example, questions about ingredients and possible allergic reactions. (2) • deal with customer complaints. For example, cafeteria clients are sometimes dissatisfied with the portion sizes. (2) • are prompt and diplomatic in dealing with the rest of the staff because it is important that everyone work hard when it is necessary. (2) • may present at special functions informing the public. (3)
<i>Most Complex</i>	3	

Modes of Communication Used:

Cooks communicate:

- >>> in person.
- > using the telephone.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.

Environmental Factors Impacting Communication:

Cooks work in a hectic, noisy environment. The fans on the ovens, the dishwashers, the mixers and fridge all contribute to the noise. The staff shouts over the noise of lids clanging and pots sizzling. There is also the background noise from the casino area. All spoke of having to “yell” to make themselves heard.

COOK - ORAL COMMUNICATION (continued)

Oral Communication Profile

Type	Purpose for Oral Communication											
	To greet	To take messages	To provide/ receive information, explanation, direction	To seek, obtain information	To coordinate work with that of others	To reassure, comfort	To discuss (exchange information, opinions)	To persuade	To facilitate, animate	To instruct, instill understanding, knowledge	To negotiate, resolve conflict	To entertain
Listening (little or no interaction)												
Speaking (little or no interaction)												
Interact with co-workers		>>	>>>	>>>	>>>	>	>					
Interact with those you supervise or direct			>>>	>>	>>>		>	>		>>		
Interact with supervisor/ manager			>>>	>>>	>>>		>	>				
Interact with customers/ clients/ public	>>		>>						>			
Interact with suppliers, servicers				>								
Participate in group discussion								>				
Present information to a small group								>		>		
Present information to a large group												

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.



THINKING SKILLS

Refers to the process of evaluating ideas or information to reach a rational decision. Thinking Skills includes problem solving, decision making, job task planning and organizing, significant use of memory and finding information from text, people and computerized databases.

Thinking Skills are Essential Skills that all Casino employees need to:

- Assess a situation and react appropriately
- Evaluate if currency seems suspicious
- Prioritize the order in which tasks are completed by considering deadlines and resources

F. THINKING SKILLS

1. Problem Solving

Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
<i>Typical</i>	1-2	Cooks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substitute ingredients when short of supplies, or change the menu to prevent food from going bad. (frequently, with chef's support) (2) • solve the mystery of orders lost in transit. (occasionally) (1) • deal with differences of opinions amongst staff. For example, about taste. (2) • fix food that has been over-thickened or over-spiced. (1)
<i>Most Complex</i>		

2. Decision Making

Tasks	Complexity Level	Examples
<i>Typical</i>	1-2	Cooks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make decisions about menu planning and food production. (Cook I level) (2) • decide when breaks are appropriate. (1) • make adjustments in menus (change totally) to give priority to the banquet room. (2)
<i>Most Complex</i>		

3. Job Task Planning and Organizing

Complexity Level	Description
3	Senior Cooks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help chefs to plan menus in advance, both for routine service and special events involving hundreds of people. Senior Cooks organize the work stations for the following day, taking into consideration the special talents of staff members. They demonstrate and oversee good practices regarding cleanliness and accident prevention.

4. Significant Use of Memory

Examples
<p>Cooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need good memories both long and short term. They accumulate their knowledge of cooking over years of experience and must have a wealth of information at their fingertips in order to plan quickly and efficiently. They remember the time that foodstuffs have been on hand in order to avoid spoilage. They remember cooking times for several different orders at the same moment.

5. Finding Information

Complexity Level	Examples
2	<p>Cooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often refer questions to the chefs. (1) • refer to recipe books and cooking manuals. (2) • check the binders of menus for the week. (1) • use the Internet to seek new ideas and information. (2) • may consult suppliers and servicers. (2)



WORKING WITH OTHERS

Refers to employees working together to carry out tasks.

Working with Others is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- *Co-operatively work with others to exceed casino service standards*
- *Coach and mentor new employees*
- *Make suggestions on improving teamwork and casino service (break schedules, shift times)*
- *Co-operatively work with others to repair casino equipment*

G. WORKING WITH OTHERS

Participation in Supervisory or Leadership Activities

Cooks:

- >> discuss menu suggestions and decisions informally on the job.
- > participate in formal discussions concerning the allocation of responsibilities within own group or appropriate goals for the work group or methods for achieving goals.
- >>> have opportunities to make suggestions on improving work processes.
- >>> monitor and evaluate the work performance of others, especially their speed, but most said that they did not keep records of this.
- >>> inform other workers or demonstrate to them how tasks are performed. Serve as role models for other members of the staff, particularly in how to perform routine cleaning and storage. They also demonstrate cooking skills.
- >>> orient new employees.
- >>> make hiring recommendations in an informal manner.
- >>> assign routine tasks to other workers. (daily)
- >>> identify training that is required by, or would be useful for, other workers. For example, time management or the Food Handlers certificate.
- > deal with other workers' grievances or complaints as a union representative.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.

H. COMPUTER USE



COMPUTER USE

Refers to the variety and complexity of computer use within the employees' position.

Computer Use is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- *Enter data into various computerized tracking systems and databases*
- *Use email to communicate with others*
- *Use document and spreadsheet software to prepare, edit, manipulate and analyze Information*
- *Manage department electronic files*
- *Use a variety of electronic devices and resolve basic technical difficulties*

Complexity Level	Computer Use
1-2	<p>Cooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may read accounting information from computerized till system. (1) • may use Word to write up memos. (rarely) (1) • may use the Internet to research cooking news. (2)

Computer Use Profile

Cooks:

- > may use word processing. For example, to write up memos, rules, or lists.
- >> may use bookkeeping, billing and accounting software. For example, to key Information into the computerized till system, or read accounting information from there.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.



CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Refers to the ongoing process of acquiring new skills and knowledge and applying them in the workplace.

Continuous Learning is an Essential Skill that all Casino employees need to:

- *Identify training opportunities that are available*
- *Learn about new casino equipment, products, services and procedures*
- *Identify and understand skill strengths and the areas where improvement is needed to become successful in other casino positions*
- *Use newly learned skills and knowledge to improve work*

I. CONTINUOUS LEARNING

How the Learning Occurs

Learning may be acquired:

- >>> by applying previous experience
- >>> as part of regular work activity.
- >> from co-workers.
- >> through reading or other forms of self-study:
 - >> on worker's own time.
 - > using materials obtained through a professional association.
 - >> using materials obtained on worker's own initiative.

The symbols >, >> and >>> are explained in the **Notes** section.

J. OTHER INFORMATION

In addition to collecting information for this Essential Skills Profile, our interviews with Cooks also asked about the following topics.

Physical Aspects	<p>The Cooks interviewed mentioned these physical aspects of their jobs:</p> <p>They are very active and on their feet all day. They lift, bend and stretch frequently. They require fine motor skills and good hand/eye co-ordination in order to cut and slice, pour hot liquids and measure out in pinches and dashes. Experienced Cooks (II and I) are significantly faster at their job.</p>
Attitudes	<p>Cooks work in a fast-paced environment where good organizational skills and flexibility are necessary. They are hard-working and respond well to a sense of urgency. They admit to being aggressive about getting things done.</p>

Notes

Throughout this document, the following codes have been used:

- >>> indicates that most respondents use that skill
- >> indicates that some respondents use that skill
- > indicates that few respondents use that skill
- indicates that none of the respondents use that skill