

Skill Library Guide



An Introduction to Skill Libraries

Welcome!

This document contains Educrowd's helpful guide to creating high quality skill libraries. With this guide you'll learn how to better name, describe, assign and categorize skills.

Creating a high-quality skill library is essential for organisations looking to get the most out of their skills management efforts. We hope that our guide can help you achieve this goal!

Best wishes

The Educrowd Team



Identifying Skills

When identifying skills it's important to remember that they should be

Appropriately specific – Skills should not be so broad that the organisation loses out on the valuable information a greater number of more specific skills would have captured. Nor should skills be so specific that measuring staff performance against them fails to add more value than what would have been captured by a smaller number of broader skills.

Ratable – Skills are best when they can be measured or rated. Generally speaking, this means skills should relate to either a workplace task or desirable behavior.

Relevant – Skills should be relevant to staff tasks or behaviors which are important to an organization's success

Naming Skills

High quality skill names are:

Concise – Educrowd recommends no more than 60 characters per name.

Meaningful – skill names should, at minimum, give staff an approximate understanding of what workplace task the skill refers to. This can be assisted by including a verb or adjective in the skill name.

Appropriately specific – Skills should not be so broad that the organisation loses out on the valuable information a greater number of more specific skills would have captured. Nor should skills be so specific that measuring staff performance against them fails to add more value than what would have been captured by a smaller number of broader skills.

Consistently formatted – Skill names should be consistent in their approach to capitalization, grammar, punctuation, etc.

Jargon light – Effective skill names should only include technical phrases and acronyms when these terms are widely understood by the staff assigned the skills.

Naming Skills

To illustrate the difference between good and bad skill names, two examples are provided below.

Number	Low quality skill name	High-quality alternative
1	Vrbl com	Verbal communication
2	2018 Holden Commodore wheel	2018 Holden Commodore wheel replacement
3	microsoft Word	Microsoft Word
4	Teamwork (collaborating effectively with others on projects, respecting the opinion of others, delegating work in a fair way)	Teamwork

Skill 1 has been unnecessarily abbreviated. The long form name, 'Verbal communication' is only marginally longer and more readily understood.

Skill 2 is unnecessarily vague. By adding the verb 'replacement', the skill name becomes instantly more meaningful, specific and clear.

Skill 3 possess inconsistent formatting. This isn't a major issue but ensuring a consistent approach to proper noun capitalisation is an easy way improve the appearance of a skill library.

Skill 4 is poor because it has included details more suitable for inclusion inside of a skill's description.

Describing skills

High quality skill descriptions are:

Concise – Concise descriptions ensure staff can conduct skill assessments quickly. Educrowd recommends no more than 1,000 characters per description.

Comprehensive – Descriptions should describe the skill in as much detail as is necessary to prevent harmful subjective interpretations by staff.

Consistently formatted – Descriptions should be consistent in their approach to capitalization, grammar, punctuation and acronym/initialism, etc. usage.

Jargon light – Effective skill descriptions should only include technical phrases and acronyms when these terms are widely understood by the staff assigned the skills.

Describing Skills

To illustrate the difference between good and bad skill names, two examples are provided below.

Number	Low quality skill descriptions	High-quality alternative
1	Thinks about problems, solutions, and gives credit to who came up with the solution	Analyses problems carefully by identifying specific risks or issues, reliably comes up with logical solutions, and is always able to give credit to others when they've developed the solution.
2	Builds strong teams with positive relationships among team members and understands and addresses the individual needs and concerns of staff and applies principles of change management and shares organisational vision and values and communicates and establishes the tone of behaviour in their individual work areas	A) Builds strong teams with positive relationships among team members. B) Understands and addresses the individual needs and concerns of staff. C) Applies principles of change management and shares organisational vision and values. D) Communicates and establishes the tone of behaviour in their individual work areas

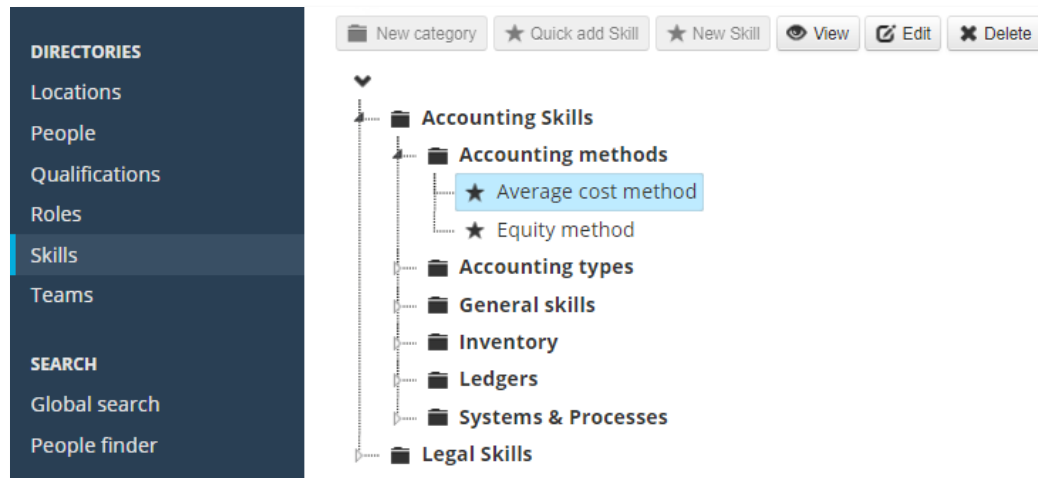
Description 1 lacks the level of detail necessary to ensure staff don't make subjective interpretations of the skill's meaning.

Description 2 possess sufficient detail to prevent harmful subjective interpretations, but is poorly formatted which makes it hard to read. The dot-point approach taken by the high quality alternative is considerably easier and quicker for staff to read.

Categorizing skills

For large organisations, skill libraries can end up including several hundred or more individual skills. Such a large number of individual skills can make the task of efficiently managing and assigning skills difficult. To address this problem, Educrowd recommends categorising skills in a hierarchical manner according to skill type.

To illustrate, consider the following screenshot from a demo Skills Base instance.



Here we can see the skill “Average cost method” (highlighted in blue and denoted by a star), has been placed into the “Accounting methods” category (denoted by a folder), which in turn has been placed into the “Accounting skills” category.

Assigning skills

Organisations can choose to assign skills to staff in a number of ways including job roles, teams, locations, etc. Of course, if an organisation is looking to maximise the relevance of skills assigned to staff, some approaches become more suitable than others.

In our experience, skill assignment works best when organisations assign skills according to employee job roles. This approach is favourable because job roles typically possess the same skill set organisation wide, which allows management to compare the skill assessments of staff in a more fair and valuable way than would be possible if staff were assigned skills that weren't relevant to them.

That's a wrap! Thanks for reading and please feel free to get in touch with an Educrowd team member if you have further questions about how best to manage your skills.

