

# ***Generic Abilities***

Generic abilities are attributes, characteristics or behaviors that are not explicitly part of the profession's core knowledge and technical skills, but are nevertheless required for success in the profession. Ten generic abilities were identified through a study conducted at University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991-1992.

**The 10 abilities and definitions are:**

<b><i>Generic Ability</i></b>	<b><i>Definition</i></b>
<b>1. Commitment to Learning</b>	The ability to self-assess, self-correct, and self-direct; To identify needs and sources of learning; and to continually seek new knowledge and understanding.
<b>2. Interpersonal Skills</b>	The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other health care professionals, and the community and to deal effectively with cultural and ethnic diversity issues.
<b>3. Communication Skills</b>	The ability to communicate effectively (i.e., speaking, body language, reading writing, listening) for varied audiences and purposes.
<b>4. Effective Use of time and Resource</b>	The ability to obtain the maximum benefit from a minimum investment of time and resources.
<b>5. Use of Constructive feedback</b>	The ability to identify sources of and seek out feedback, and to effectively use and provide feedback for improving personal interaction.
<b>6. Problem Solving</b>	The ability to recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes.
<b>7. Professionalism</b>	The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively.
<b>8. Responsibility</b>	The ability to fulfill commitments and to be accountable for actions and outcomes.
<b>9. Critical Thinking</b>	The ability to question logically; to identify, generate and evaluate elements or logical arguments; to recognize and differentiate facts, illusions, assumptions, and hidden assumptions; and to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant.
<b>10. Stress Management</b>	The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop effective coping behaviors.

References:

1. May WW, Morgan, BJ, Lemke JC, et al. Model for ability-based assessment in physical therapy education. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education* 1995; 9(1): 3-6
2. May WW, Straker G, Foord-May L. *Opportunity Favors the Prepared*. May and Associates Consulting; Stoneham, MA 2000.