WHY USE COMPETENCIES?

Most employers are hiring employees based on competencies rather than on skills alone. If you can describe your competencies, you'll have an advantage as you apply for a wide range of opportunities. You can describe your competencies in applications, résumés and cover letters and talk about them during interviews. You can use your competencies to further develop your understanding of how your school, work and other experiences align.

Three reasons to identify and practice your competencies:

1. Reflect on your experiences
   Consider your past experiences to assess your competency development and you'll:
   - Identify your own competency level and employability
   - Measure your progress towards your goals
   - Improve the quality of your work

2. Strengthen the link between your academic and workplace learning
   Thinking about the competencies you’ve developed through your experiences can help bring your learning to life. You’ll bring your workplace competencies back into the classroom and apply them to your classroom projects. You can use your academic, workplace, volunteer, athletic and other experiences when describing your competencies to employers, supervisors and others.

3. Express your value to employers
   Employers often ask competency-based or behavioural questions during the interview process. This type of question includes questions like:
   - Tell me about a time when you had a communication breakdown with a co-worker
   - Give me an example of how you’ve used teamwork to solve problems
   - Describe an experience that demonstrates your strengths in research and analysis

   If you were asked to “give an example of when you had a conflict with someone at work,” you could answer by telling the employer how you used your communication skills to mediate the conflict so that everyone was satisfied with the outcome.