

## HOW AM I DIFFERENT? WHAT IS MY COMPETITIVE EDGE?



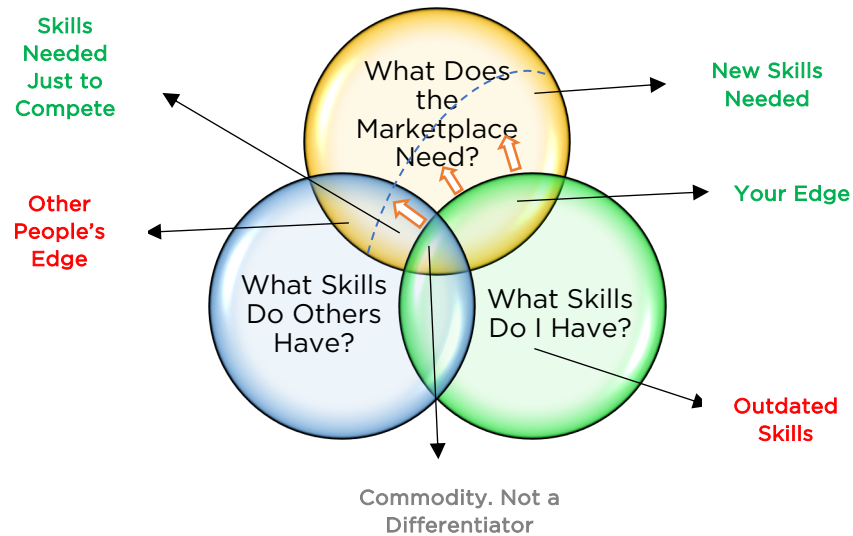
Studies have shown that 80% of employees view themselves as performing in the top 20%. This simply is not possible and it means that most employees have an inflated view of their value in the marketplace. You need to get honest with yourself so you can clearly articulate your true value.

Your competitive edge or unique value proposition are skills, behaviors, traits that the marketplace needs to be successful. These needs are changing constantly so you need to have the ability to articulate your edge and prove your marketplace worth and/or determine your gaps and build worth in the areas of marketplace need.

It's okay if you can't define your edge right now because this moment can be the springboard for you to define what success looks like on your terms and what you need to do from a growth perspective to achieve that result.

Just like a company, you personally need to get honest with yourself and be crystal clear as to your individual competitive edge over others in the marketplace or what you aspire for that edge to be.

Below is a more in depth look at what you need to consider when both determining your competitive edge:



**Commodity** – Stop thinking that skills that you and everyone else has is a differentiator. It may be a “ticket to the dance” but it doesn’t make you special so stop presenting it this way.

**Outdated Skills** – We all have them. We just have to admit them and stop acting like they are still important.

**Other People’s Edge** – Honestly admit others have skills for certain positions that you just don’t have. The question is, “What are you going to do about it?” You may need to get some of those skills just to complete to “get a ticket” to the opportunity but other skills you may conclude are skills that I don’t want based on my desired path and I’m okay with them having that edge in that area.

**Your Edge** – True skills or higher-level proficiency in those skills the marketplace needs that you can PROVE through results or accomplishments. Not just your opinion.

**New Skills Needed** – We all need to anticipate future needs in all areas of our lives. Your profession is not different. What skills are in demand that I don’t have and what am I going to do to get them?

Use the following Competitive Edge Worksheet to determine your “Edge” or what you need to do to obtain that edge. If there is a specific role or position you desire now or in the future? If so, what is it or what does it look like? Then put down the specific marketplace skills needed to excel in this role (first column). The remaining columns are will determine what you need to do to 1) obtain your edge; 2) maintain your edge or 3) improve and leverage your edge.

ROLE OR POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

Marketplace Skill Need	Do I Have That Skill?	Am I Better Than Others?	Do I Have Proof? What is it?	Aspire to This Skill?	Who Do I Admire That Has This Skill?	Plan To Achieve	Due Date	Accountability Partner

## EXAMPLE

ROLE OR POSITION: Business Intelligence Manager\_\_\_\_\_

Marketplace Skill Need	Do I Have That Skill?	Am I Better Than Others?	Do I Have Proof? What is it?	Aspire to This Skill?	Who Do I Admire with This Skill?	Plan To Achieve	Due Date	Accountability Partner
Effective Communication	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High ratings here in last five appraisals.</li> <li>Polled 25 peers and this was rated as my highest skill</li> </ul>	Continuously Improve	Michaela Bearden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get certified in “Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team”</li> <li>Speak at a convention of peers and ask for formal and informal feedback</li> </ul>	6/30	Bill Stevens
Influencing Others	Yes	Equal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets expectations in performance reviews</li> <li>Presented four new projects to senior management. Two were approved</li> </ul>	Significantly Improve	Angie Burnett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take Advanced Presentation Skills course</li> <li>Read book on building relationships and networking</li> </ul>	9/30 3/31	Sandy Beech
Creativity	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	Yes	Tim Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read IDEO design thinking book and present learnings to the team</li> </ul>	3/31	Sue Jones
Multi-Dimensional Data Analysis	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certified BI Analyst</li> <li>Recognized for establishing data connection between leading &amp; lagging indicators that results in \$200k in improved profits for the year.</li> </ul>	Continuously Improve	Kevin O’Toole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead a difficult new project related to a company defined “large opportunity”</li> </ul>	12/31	Tim Stanwell

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ROLE OR POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

Marketplace Skill Need	Do I Have That Skill?	Am I Better Than Others?	Do I Have Proof? What is it?	Aspire to This Skill?	Who Has This Skill?	Plan To Achieve	Due Date	Accountability Partner