

Skills Handbook
for performing artists

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Lexicon

Skills

“Be able to...”

Professional abilities implemented within a professional situation: doing something well at the right moment (efficient and timely action).

Skills require prior acquisition of knowledge and know-how.

Specific skills

Professional abilities implemented specifically in the performing arts sector.

Cross-sector skills

Professional abilities that can be implemented in all sectors of activity.

Knowledge

“A body of theoretical and practical knowledge” – CNCP

Know-how

Understanding of a process and mastery of its execution.

1- Introduction

What is a Skills Handbook?

The Skills Handbook is a set of tools that helps us better understand the various professions by specifying their make-up and particularities, which in turn allows us to distinguish one from the other, as well as their common characteristics which remain the same whatever the context.

Because it is a necessarily incomplete snapshot, quickly outdated, due to the diversity of areas of application and practices, the Skills Handbook must be regularly updated in order to keep up with all the evolutions of the working environment. Thus, it is a constant but essential work-in-progress that is needed in order to appreciate the true value of these occupations, organize co-activity, and prepare for the future: we define professional identities in order to create common ground.

Why list out all the skills?

There can be many uses of this Skills Handbook, depending on one's objectives, the type of user, and the tools and structures that require improving.

For guidance, before or during professional activity, it helps young people and professionals to:

- Identify required skills
- Clarify expected abilities and levels of competence for a given post
- Define professional goals
- Choose an appropriate course of professional training

Practical applications: catalog of occupations, job profiles, index of training programs, guidance counseling...

For professionalization, it helps professionals to:

- Review their abilities
- Identify skills to be updated, developed, or acquired
- Prepare for career change or conversion
- Prepare for recruitment or job interview

Practical applications: training, Accreditation for Work Experience, CV writing, passport skills, skills assessment, self-assessment tests...

For human resources, it helps employers to:

- Organize tasks
- Learn how to value qualifications
- Evaluates skills
- Identify needs in continuing education

Practical applications: job descriptions, organization charts, projected management of jobs and skills, professional interviews, company training plan...

For the prospective study of the sector, it helps social partners, public authorities, institutions, training organizations, etc., to:

- Anticipate future trends in the sector and identify factors of change
- Identify new skills
- Understand training priorities
- Adapt training availability to needs
- Promote equality of opportunity for access to and practice of occupations
- Propose actions and means towards achieving goals

Practical applications: job market research, classification of jobs governed by collective agreements, sector training plans, new initial or continued training program creation / qualification or certification courses...

Who is behind the Skills Handbook?

This Handbook was compiled by the CPNEF-SV (*Commission paritaire nationale emploi formation du spectacle vivant*), that is to say, by the organizations of employers and employees in the performing arts, structured as a work group in which performing artists participated.

The main goal of the workgroup was to improve the description of skills, knowledge, and know-how among performing artists in order to strengthen the availability of initial and continued professional training.

How to use it?

The goal of the Handbook is not to impose a rigid grid that cannot be modified, but on the contrary to propose a reference that can lead to rethinking how work is organized. The advantage of the Handbook lies in its ability to be applied by users according to their specific needs: employers, professionals, youths, unions, public authorities, institutions, resource centers, training or guidance organizations, guidance counselors...

Thus, the Handbooks must use the same system of job classification as the national collective agreements for the given sectors and the employers' job descriptions.

Find out more

This performing artists Skills Handbook is part of a wider process of classification, also involving technicians and administrative personnel: a guide to the professions of the performing arts.

You can find the entire series of handbooks online at www.cpnefsv.org

2- Definition of the profession of performing artist

The performing artist performs, that is to say represents, sings, recites, proclaims, acts, dances, or executes before an audience (or within the context of a process of artistic research) an artistic, literary, musical, or choreographic work or work of variety, circus, street art, or puppetry.

The profession of performing artist requires skills in the following areas:

- artistic expression;
- career management;
- risk prevention and health and safety in the workplace.

Furthermore, performing artists may be called to exercise other activities, such as initiating artistic projects or taking part in artistic or cultural activities, which require additional skills.

According to the regulations of the French Labor Code, performing artists are presumed to be employees, working in the framework of an employment contract.

3- Skills of the performing artist

All disciplines and forms

Selective and non-exhaustive list

Domains	Skills (be able to...) ➤ training goals	Knowledge and related know-how ➤ training programs
Artistic expression	<p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking stock of and acquiring the individual aptitudes making up one's discipline - Situating the work and its artistic singularity within its aesthetic, historical, sociological, etc., context - Decoding the underlying meaning of the work, understanding its structure and recognizing its emotional tone - Deriving a personal interpretation from the work and/or from information or direction given by the artistic director - Taking and following direction - Using one's imagination and perceptive ability to strengthen performance - Committing physically and emotionally to the performance, but simultaneously remaining able to judge the appropriate distance - Considering individual performance in the context of the production as a whole - Making proposals relating to performance in coherence with the overall artistic direction - Listening to other performers and supporting their own performances - Improvising according to direction - Taking the presence of the audience into account during performance - Taking on a role or a particular interpretation using the various resources available - Developing physical awareness - Managing physical and emotional commitment over the duration of the performance - Allowing for and handling unforeseen situations that may arise during the performance - Acting or performing within a given scenic space and adapting to its physical characteristics and constraints - Suitably using the lighting and scenic elements - Coherently expressing needs to technicians and administrators - Understanding and following technical and administrative direction - Managing anxiety 	<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The repertoires from within one's discipline(s) including variations of style and epoch, and their customs - The work's range of emotion and codes of acting/playing - Artistic expressions relating to the discipline - Current artistic and cultural events happening inside and outside the discipline - Physiology, anatomy, posture... - Professional vocabulary relating to the discipline - The stage environment and its constraints - The professions involved in directing, producing, and promoting live entertainment - The functions of the members of technical and administrative teams <p>Know-how</p> <p>Application of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual and collective artistic techniques of one's discipline(s), - technologies, tools and equipment relating to one's discipline(s) - preparation, training, warm-up, and recovery techniques, be they mental or physical, individual or collective - language and terminology required to perform in one's discipline(s) - corporal and/or vocal precision techniques, coordination, balance, movement analysis, breathing... - stress management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Preparing mentally and physically before the performance- Performing relaxation techniques and/or physical and mental recovery exercises- Maintaining one's physical and technical abilities, individually and/or collectively- Preparing, installing, and maintaining whatever instruments, props, equipment, etc., required for the performance- Staying informed about what is happening in the social environment around the production <p>Cross-sector skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Managing emotions- Working in a team- Establishing verbal and non-verbal communication- Expressing and putting forth proposals- Developing original and innovative approaches- Abiding by the schedule- Organizing personal tasks and defining priorities- Undertaking research and general awareness	
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Domains	Skills (be able to...) ➤ training goals	Knowledge and related know-how ➤ training programs
Career management	<p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining career goals as well as the pathway to achieving said goals - Developing strategies for seeking employment - Identifying employment opportunities locally, nationally, and internationally within one's discipline(s) - Targeting artistic directions corresponding to one's choices - Contacting project instigators and employers in the appropriate manner - Disseminating one's own professional news through the appropriate channels and networks - Preparing for auditions, competitions, interviews, etc. - Analyzing and negotiating clauses in job contracts - Remaining aware of current events in the world of entertainment - Defending one's social entitlements - Defending one's rights relating to intellectual property - Identifying factors and situations that could lead to career enhancement and/or reconversion <p>Cross-sector skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constituting, maintaining, and mobilizing a professional network - Understanding one's working environment - Presenting one's career path, verbally and in writing - Researching and analyzing relevant social and regulatory information - Mobilizing resources and finding pertinent information - Being able to evaluate oneself and situate oneself within the profession 	<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main artistic, cultural and institutional players in the performing arts, on a local, national or international level - The organization of the job market in the performing arts, the different types of employers and agents - The role of artistic agents, managers and impresarios - Social legislation and agreements in application - Authors' rights and intellectual property rights - The various ways artists are hired and paid, by French and foreign employers - The conditions for cumulating activities, jobs, and levels of status - Social entitlements for performing artists: social security, unemployment benefits, retirement, health insurance, provident savings, paid leave, professional training, occupational medicine, etc. - The role and function of social institutions, collective rights management organizations, labor organizations (unions) - Professional networks and resource centers within one's discipline(s). <p>Know-how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scouting for job offers and auditions - Writing a CV, a biography, a book, a letter of motivation... in French and/or in a foreign language - maintaining a file system of useful contacts - Using office software and digital instruments of communication - Mobilizing one's means and resources to develop skills.

Domains	Skills (be able to...) ➤ training goals	Knowledge and related know-how ➤ training programs
Risk prevention and health and safety	<p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintaining one's physical and mental well-being as well as that of others - Applying individual and collective preventative measures against risks - Proposing action for the improvement of artists' working conditions and preventative measures against risk - Managing situations of unsteady work periods, irregular hours, and frequent travel within the respect of regulations - Managing variations and unpredictability of work situations - Identifying a work accident <p>Cross-sector skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applying rules of health and safety - Drawing attention to risks relating to safety, malfunctions, wear & fatigue, and the importance of adhering to norms - Declaring an accident and alerting emergency services - Managing conflict situations and tensions within the group 	<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main functional or accidental risks relating to the physical exercise of one's artistic disciplines(s) (musculoskeletal disorders, hearing problems, lumbago, injuries, carrying loads, etc.) - The main psycho-social risks (stress, tension, discrimination, harassment, balance of private and professional life, professional exhaustion, depression, addiction, etc.) - Options concerning therapeutic and insurance coverage - Rules of hygiene, health & safety in the workplace - Rules governing working conditions as defined by contract, by convention, and by law - Contractual responsibilities of signatories - Principles of individual and collective risk prevention - People involved in risk prevention (elected employees, fire personnel, company doctor, labor inspectors, etc.) - Nutrition, biological rhythms, the aging process... <p>Know-how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - techniques for maintaining good physical condition - gestures and postures of one's discipline(s) - urgent acts and first aid according to the requirements of the particular discipline - Identification of symptoms and signs - Expression of problems, active listening - Managing illness - Managing a handicap - Managing conflicts - Managing stress

4- Additional Skills of the performing artist

All disciplines and forms

Selective and non-exhaustive list

Domains	Skills (be able to...) ➤ training goals	Knowledge and related know-how ➤ training programs
Initiation of an artistic project	<p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing an artistic project leading to the production of a live show - Putting together a team and defining the material, artistic, and technical means required to realize the project - Defining and positioning an artistic project within a social, legal, technical, financial, and regulatory context - Analyzing and negotiating an author's contract - Identifying various types of potential partners (producers/promoters, buyers, public or private investors) - Identifying suitable types of financial support - Looking for a producer - Targeting the audience - Designing how the artistic project is to be presented - Using available channels, networks, and tools for promotion - Promoting the artistic project on the internet - Defining a marketing and public relations strategy <p>Cross-sector skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining goals, challenges, and risks of a project - Identifying and planning for the project's various stages - Mobilizing participants and required resources - Organizing and moderating collective work sessions - Establishing reasoned arguments and formulate proposals, verbally and in writing - Working social and environmental topics and challenges into projects - Writing, sending and archiving administrative documents - Driving the conception and achievement of communication media 	<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events happening in artistic and cultural spheres within and outside of one's discipline - Organization of the job market in the various branches of the performing arts and the types of employers - The role and function of the various participants in the process of creation/production/distribution within the artistic project's discipline - The role and function of public authorities, public funding, collective management organisms, resource centers, etc. - The role and function of production offices, nurseries, employer groups, residencies, platforms, etc. - Options for guidance and advice - Subsidies and private and public funding available for creation, production, distribution, and touring - The social status of performing artists and other employees within the group - Social legislation and agreements in application - The various ways artists can be hired and paid, by French and foreign employers - Authors' rights and intellectual property rights - Legislation governing entrepreneurs in the performing arts - Co-production, license, rights transfer, and co-directing contracts. <p>Know-how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a methodology for the project - office software - information and communication technologies - Verbal and written description of the project (synopsis, treatment, note of intent) - Establishing a provisional budget - Establishing a show's technical rider

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Making reasoned arguments for colleagues & partners- Analyzing and following a specification sheet or responding to a call for tender- Compiling contact lists and databases
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<p>Artistic and cultural action</p>	<p>Specific skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyzing a call for action from a commissioner, the challenges at stake, and context for the action - Analyzing public expectations and finding realistic ways to approach these with the works - Designing cultural actions related to one’s art - Constructing a program of preparation with participating partners - Participating on conceiving ways to perpetuate and value the action - Proposing suitable and original actions allowing targeted audiences to develop their creativity, imagination, artistic sensitivity, critical faculties, and encourage them toward artistic practice, individually and collectively - Linking one’s artistic expression to a cultural and/or educational and/or social project - Designing the action as a complement to the work of the other participants (teachers, mediators, social services, etc.) - Providing the keys to interpreting the works performed, indicating their structure, their references and their emotional register - Sharing one’s creative pathway and talking about one’s life as an artist - Encouraging exchanges relating to the work(s) <p>Cross-sector skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing, driving, and enriching a project - Giving a project longevity - Mobilizing partners and working within a network - Creating group dynamic and enthusiasm for building together - Structuring the action - Facilitating expression and commitment from each participant - Analyzing, synthesizing and communicating information, verbally and in writing - Making a final report about the project 	<p>Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The repertoires from within one’s discipline(s) including variations of style and epoch, and their customs - Current artistic and cultural events happening inside and outside the discipline - Public policy relating to democratization of culture - Sociology of the various target audiences - Policies and modalities of artistic and cultural education, and the types of stakeholders concerned (public, quasi-public, or private) - Social status of performing artists during these actions - Modalities of hiring and paying artists during the various types of actions - Literary and artistic property rights, authors’ rights, and neighboring rights - The framework of amateur performances <p>Know-how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individual and collective artistic techniques from one’s discipline(s) - technologies, tools and equipment from one’s discipline(s) - transmission techniques and group management - information and communication technologies - office software - Identification of the various types of action (lecture, workshop, amateur mentoring, experimentation, etc.), of levels of expertise (beginner, intermediate, experienced), and of the different approaches (informative, interactive, play-based, participative) - Analysis of and response to a specification sheet and call to tender - Identification of cultural, social, historical, or geographical particularities of a given area
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