

Career planning – employer expectations

The different aspects of learning are often defined with the concepts of KSA = Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes, where

Knowledge are *things you know*, like facts, concepts, or domain models. Knowledge is usually the type of thing you find described in most text books. Knowledge is something that you have conscious access to and can tell someone about.

Skills are *things you do*, like sing a song, calculate a formula, throw a ball. Almost always, you will use knowledge when you perform a skill. Skills are not something you have conscious access to, you just "do it" although you may have knowledge about the skill that allows you to describe what you can do.

Attitudes (also called dispositions) are *what you tend to do*, just because you *can* do something doesn't mean you actually do it--an attitude specifies what you actually tend to do. For example, do you tend to work on your own or are you a group-worker.

Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are the three pillars that define a person's competence in a particular field.

Exercise:

- Browse job posting websites, select 4-5 announcements that seem like potential career directions to you. [Site links are available in Aalto JobTeaser](#).
- Go through the job postings you picked and answer the following questions:
 - Analyze what knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) are called for? Can you identify commonalities or differences between the positions?
 - What's left out of the writing: What do you think is expected implicitly? What could bring a competitive edge?
 - Based on your analysis, what kind of learning goals can you identify for yourself? Specify separately learning goals for knowledge, skills and attitudes. How would you transfer these learning goals into your personal study plan?
- Alternative to screening job postings is to interview a supervisor of an employer of your interest. Eg. If you can't find postings of your interest, you can contact companies/start-ups/other organisations yourself and collect responses to the above mentioned questions.
- Another alternative to screening job postings is to familiarize yourself with a research group within Aalto (especially if you are interested in a career in the academia). Interview the group leader (or other responsible person) and collect responses to the above mentioned questions.