

Soft skills

Sociology



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Soft skills are increasingly becoming the hard skills of today's work force. It's just not enough to be highly trained in technical skills, without developing the softer, interpersonal and relationship-building skills that help people to communicate and collaborate effectively. These people skills are more critical than ever as organizations struggle to find meaningful ways to remain competitive and be productive. Teamwork, leadership, and communication are underpinned by soft skills development. Since each is an essential element for organizational and personal success, developing these skills is very important and does matter a lot!

The Importance of Soft Skills in the Workplace by Kate McFarlin, Demand Media When it comes to skills in employment, the first line of emphasis is typically towards abilities, training and knowledge of specific skill sets. These are referred to as hard skills. Soft skills are often overlooked, but they also play an important role in day-to-day operations. Small business owners should place equal importance on hard and soft skills during the hiring process for new employees. In addition, current employees should be encouraged to develop soft skills if they are lacking in this area.

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Training Materials Customizable training materials to teach soft skills workshops. CorporateTrainingMaterials.com Drive/Work Ethic This is a difficult skill to quantify, but employees will typically either display a strong work ethic and the drive to complete tasks, or they won't. While a work ethic is largely an innate skill, it can be learned with proper training and motivation. Some employees may be able to develop a stronger work ethic

with incentive based pay or monetary rewards such as bonuses if they reach a certain goal.

Communication Skills

Communication skills are the most important soft skills for an employee. The ability to communicate through the spoken and written word is a necessity in nearly every industry and in every workplace. Communication skills can be learned and improved with the right training. It may take time for employees to learn effective communication skills, particularly if they have a naturally shy disposition. In this case, a course on public speaking can work wonders. The techniques learned by speaking to a large crowd can be adapted for daily communications and these lessons are typically good confidence builders for employees.

Teamwork

The ability to work well within a team is another important soft skill. Some employees may naturally feel comfortable working within a group, while others may have problems and prefer to work alone. It is necessary to spot these personality types ahead of time for proper group formation. Every team should have a diverse set of personalities that mesh together as a cohesive whole. Team building exercises can be very beneficial in helping employees develop this skill.

Decision Making and Problem Solving

Being able to make quick decisions, think on their feet, and solve simple problems are important employee traits. Even simple problems such as a copier being out of toner can grind an office to a halt if no one displays these

simple skills. At least one employee needs to have the ability to take charge of a situation and guide the others through if they have difficulty. The employees who display these decision making skills are often excellent candidates for promotion to management level.

So you've got an impressive set of letters that come after your name, a wealth of valuable experience and even a few connections in high places. But believe it or not, that may not be enough to land you your dream job or that promotion you've had your eye on.

These days, the strength of your " soft" skills can make or break how successful you are in the workplace. what are soft skills? Soft skills are essentially people skills -- the non-technical, intangible, personality-specific skills that determine your strengths as a leader, listener, negotiator, and conflict mediator. " Hard" skills, on the other hand, are more along the lines of what might appear on your resume -- your education, experience and level of expertise.

Are you an agreeable person? Conscientious? Do you communicate effectively? Solve problems efficiently? These are the types of questions aimed at uncovering the strength of your soft skills. Why employers care about them employers value soft skills, because research suggests that they are just as good an indicator of job performance as traditional job qualifications or hard skills. One recent study, for example, found that personality measures like conscientiousness and agreeability were equally important predictors of work success as cognitive ability and work accuracy the skills.

So how do you uncover your soft skills and get the most out of them? Here's a list of some of the most important soft skills and how to perfect them.

- Have a "winner" attitude We've all heard that it's better to see the glass half full instead of half empty. And in the workplace, that type of positive thinking can go a long way. An overall positive outlook leads to an overall positive attitude, and that can be a valuable asset in work environments that typically breed cynicism and negativity.

The key to having a winning attitude is in how you tackle obstacles and challenges that come your way. For example, instead of complaining about a stressful workload, think about it as an opportunity to show off your abilities by getting through it productively and efficiently.

- Be a team player Employers love an employee who displays the ability to work well in groups and teams. Being a team player means not only being cooperative, but also displaying strong leadership ability when it's appropriate.

The next time a conflict arises within your team, take the initiative to mediate. When you find your team getting stuck in a project, take the lead to move things forward. And what if you don't normally work with a team? Try to be more collaborative in the work you do and build professional relationships with your coworkers.