

University of Southern Mississippi

Skills Paper

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All people, no matter the gender, race, nationality, or any other difference between us, are made up of a combination of knowledge, experience, and skills. A combination of knowledge and experience allow the development of skills, skills that are used every day when alone but especially when interacting with others in the day. Three of these skills, or set of related skills, are general soft skills, teamwork skills, and emotional intelligence.

When working with other people, or simply interacting with people in the world outside of the office, it is important to have a set of skills generally referred to soft skills. These skills include but not limited to communication, adaptability, problem solving, creativity, and teamwork, which will be discussed more in depth later.

One of the most important soft skills is communication, the ability to relay information and the ability to receive information from others. Communication reduces the misunderstandings in the workplace that can lead to issues between team members and management over time. Poor communication can reduce worker performance and productivity which leads to stress between workers and management, in turn leading to more stress and eventually might lead to a hostile workplace.



Adaptability, or sometimes labeled as flexibility, is another soft skill that people use when faced with a problem or issue that was not planned for. Being able to adapted to the issue presented or around the problem encountered is a skill that is used frequently in any industry as the real world is not perfect and problems are apart of daily life. How one responds to challenges given is a useful skill to be learnt.

Moving from adaptability, there is problem solving which is related to adaptability. Like be adaptable, problem solving is essential skill one needs to know in order to face adversity in life and in the workplace. All of work is a problem to be solved, knowing how to solve those problems, or at least knowing the general processing of problem solving, is essential to any skill set. No one knows the answer to every problem, even if they are experienced in the field, there is always something to learn, some problem to solve. Knowing how to diagnose a problem, break the problem into smaller pieces, where to look for information about the problem, who to ask for help, are all important parts of problem solving.

Humans are not machines. That is reflected in the way we view the world, the way we create. While problem solving is more of a logic oriented skill. Creativity is the opposite of problem solving, putting the bits of thought into innovative solutions. Like previously stated, we humans are not machines. It is the reason why websites of now look sleek and streamlined compared to the clunky websites of twenty years ago. Creating is in humans and it reflects how we see the world. This skill leads into every industry and is used to create better products, more streamlined websites, to increase productivity in factories.

Lastly there is teamwork, probably one of the most important soft skill right behind communication. No one can do everything, producing products, websites, or anything of value usually requires multiple people working together in unison. Teamwork is a combination of other soft skills but warrants its own entry as it is so important. Being able to communicate, probably the most important soft skill, when to listen, when to take charge, when to give instead of incite conflict are all apart of teamwork.

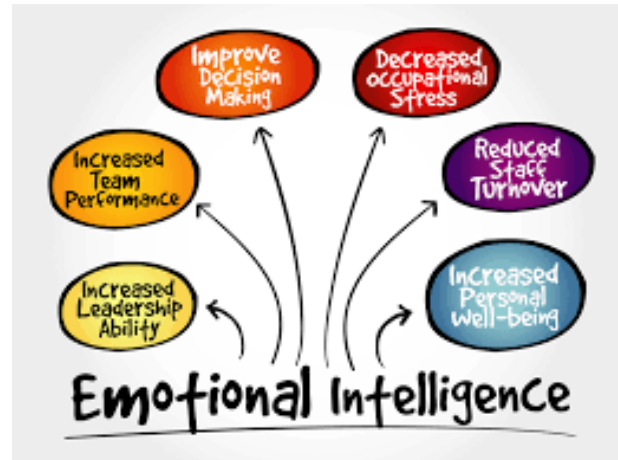
The set of skills that are referred to as soft skills are quickly becoming as important as hard skills, even sometimes surpassing hard skills in some cases. The ability to work as a team was the number one skill desired by employers looking for employees. Development of soft skills lead to more job opportunity according to studies. Not only do soft skills effect the workplace but they also affect life in general and even young adults like those of learn soft skills have a correlation to getting better grades and less disciplinary action.

Exploring teamwork further, it is clearly what every employer looks for when hiring an employee. A person will most likely never work alone and will instead be working with a team of people. When a team of people work together well, the cohesion shows in the form of increased efficiency and productivity within the team but also those outside the team. The clients of whoever a team works for will see that same cohesion which impresses them and gives the client more confidence in the team to deliver their product.

Nowadays, teamwork is even more important with the rise of remote work. Due to the distance between team members, communication and teamwork are stressed as there is a disconnect between everyone. Virtual meetings, collaboration, and interactions is simply different compared to face to face interactions. It is harder to connect with your team members and collaborate with them due to the disconnect. This in turn leads to more of an emphasis on teamwork as it requires an even higher level of the skill.

When dealing with people in the workplace, and also in every day interactions, there is an important skill called emotional intelligence.

The soft skills that everyone uses in their day to day lives are linked to emotional intelligence, like teamwork which was previously discussed. Emotional intelligence is understanding the human aspect of people, as humans are not machines but living breathing, feeling people, and understanding one's emotions, the emotions of others, and how both affect the people around them.



Those with a high emotional intelligence are usually better leaders as they can identify the states of emotions and moods of their team members to better handle issues before they become a problem. High emotional intelligence can also increase team performance, stemmed from an increased cohesion of the team and a better understanding of each other, which ties into the previously discuss soft skill of teamwork to make the communication of the team better. An increased emotional intelligence can lead to a improved decision making process as the team is not discouraged from voices their opinions and with more input, more opinions come a better understanding of the problem that the team faces which will ultimately lead to a better decision being made.

Due to in part increased performance and productivity, in concert with other aspects that are improved by high emotional intelligence, the stress one experiences in their occupation is decreased. This decrease in stress due to high emotional stress is back by a studies where there was a direct linear correlation between emotional intelligence and occupational stress. Because of the benefits of high emotional intelligence, there is a lower turnover rate as the team cohesion, productivity, performance, and overall satisfaction is high.

Lastly, one of the most important aspects of a high emotional intelligence is the overall wellbeing of a person when compared to those with low emotional intelligence. Those with high emotional intelligence can better process negative emotions which in turn leads to better mental health and more motivation due to less stress in their chosen occupation.

All of the discussed skills are related, and their importance is shared, from teamwork being a soft skill to higher levels of emotional intelligence leading to better soft skills. Improving one of these skills, because they are linked, improves the rest of the skills.

## Sources

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