

How soft skills are important for us

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Abstract

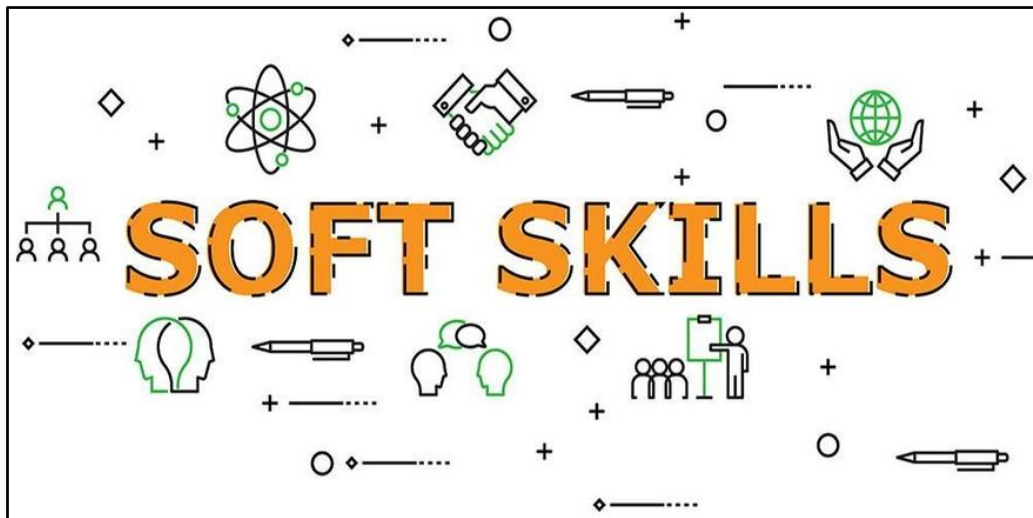
Soft skills are personal attributes that influence how well you can work or interact with others. These skills make it easier to form relationships with people, create trust and dependability, and lead teams.

Basically, we need to be the best at whatever work we do, but if our soft skills aren't cutting it, we're clearly limiting our chances of career success. Read out this article on "How Soft skills are important to us" to learn which soft skills are critical to have firmly under our belt for our career growth and what steps one can take to acquire them.

In short to say, we can improve our soft skills by taking personal development courses or online courses, networking with people both inside and outside our organisation and challenging ourselves to take on new tasks. With a strong set of soft skills complementing our hard skills, the most important paving stones to success will be in place.



Introduction



Before really knowing how soft skills are important for us and why are they so much needed in today's competitive world, let's have a brief overview of what are soft skills and its various domains.

Unlike hard skills, which can be proven and measured, Soft skills basically include any sort of skills that can be classified as a personality trait or habit. These skills can be considered as the more intangible and non-technical abilities that are sought from candidates.

When it comes to our succeeding in the workplace, a college degree isn't necessarily enough. Nor comes into play our many years of experience on the job.

That's because the most in-demand skills that employers crave are the elusive "soft skills"—the intangible but important qualities that enable us to work and interact with the people around us effectively.

Even if we know that we are really going to rock the technical aspects of our job, there's more to success than nuts-and-bolts know-how. And some of the most important skills in a professional environment can be the hardest to learn. These are "soft skills" that are crucial to any work environment.

Here are the top five soft skills that we need to master ourselves with:

The Five Best Soft Skills

- **Communication:** Communication soft skills are the tools that we use to clearly and effectively converse with others, may it be our colleagues, senior officials or clients, set expectations, and work with others on projects.
 - Make the power of listening as our Secret Communication Weapon. People often associate good communicators with excellent public speaking. But the best communicators do something that most others fail at. They listen.
- **Teamwork:** Teamwork skills grow when workers combine their individual skills in pursuit of a goal which includes helping and guiding, persuading, sharing openly and willingly, being an active participant, being flexible, and showing commitment.
 - Some of us may prefer to work alone, but it's important to demonstrate that we understand and appreciate the value of joining forces and working in partnership with others to accomplish the company's goals. This shows that we possess the soft skills necessary to engage in productive collaboration.
- **Problem-solving:** Problem-solving soft skill is a universal job skill that applies to any position and every industry. Building and maintaining strong problem-solving skills makes a huge impact on growing and nourishing our career.
 - Be a creative thinker and resourceful with whatever resources are present with us. The greatest innovations tend to arrive under constraints. The companies with the largest budgets or head counts don't always finish first. Use your disadvantages to your advantage. Focus on the ingredients that you have, not the ones you don't, and then embrace the freedom that this creates.

- Leadership: It is not mandatory to be a natural born leader in order to have leadership skills. They are the ones whom others will call for suggestions when they can't find a solution to any issue by themselves. Problem-solving, along with decision-making, is one of the most important leadership soft skills.
 - Understanding how to influence people and accommodate their needs is an essential element of leadership, which too many companies overlook when they simply place someone with the most technical expertise in a position of authority. Soft skills development is often a key component of leadership training.
- Responsibility: No doubt responsibility seems to be a seldom talked word but highly valued soft skill because it proves our dedication towards the work. Colleagues who fail to take responsibility for their work will be less productive and less successful overall.
 - Learn to take Accountability and do what you say you're going to do. When something goes wrong and we're responsible for it, it's not fair to make excuses, ignore it, or blame someone else. Instead, we must take full accountability and responsibility for the role that we played in it. Even better, learn from it.

Alternate name as Professional Skills

Soft skills are sometimes referred to as transferable skills or professional skills. As this term implies, these are skills that are less specialised, less rooted in specific vocations and more aligned with the general disposition and personality of a candidate.

Soft skills mainly relate to our attitudes and our intuitions, and our dealings with our clients. As soft skills are less about our qualifications and more personality-driven, it is quite important to consider what our soft skills are and how we might show evidence of them before we apply for a job. This is particularly true when the recruitment process for graduate programmes comes into scene, where transferable skills and potential often take precedence over professional experience.

Soft skills are the difference between adequate candidates and ideal candidates. In most competitive job markets, recruitment criteria are not limited to technical ability and specialist knowledge. Every job role requires some interaction with others, whether they are colleagues or customers, so soft skills will be important to most employers.

Difference made by Soft Skills

- A doctor is required to have an extensive repertoire of hard skills, especially the ability to diagnose and prescribe treatments for an array of ailments. But a doctor who does not have the soft skills of emotional intelligence, trustworthiness and approachability is not likely to be very highly regarded by their patients.
- A salesperson, who may have an unrivalled and exhaustive knowledge of their market, will find it difficult to close a deal and retain their clients if they lack the soft skills of interpersonal skills and negotiation.
- A customer services professional with amazing organisational skills will only do well if they are also able to interact professionally with customers, and have empathy and listening skills.

Importance

Along with hard skills, we should spend enough productive time considering what our soft skills are as it may help to ask people who know us well and highlight them in our resume and in job interviews. Hard skills can be shown via qualifications, but soft skills are more slippery. A productive and healthy work environment depends on soft skills. After all, the workplace is an interpersonal space where relationships must be built and fostered, perspectives must be exchanged and, occasionally, conflicts must be resolved.

Most interactions with other people require some level of soft skills. At a company we might be negotiating to win a new contract, presenting our new idea to colleagues, networking for a new job, and so on. We use soft skills every day at our work and developing these soft skills will help we win more business and accelerate our career progression.

On the other hand, a lack of soft skills can limit our potential, or even be the downfall of our business. By developing strong leadership, delegation, teamwork, and communication abilities, we can run projects more smoothly, deliver results that please everyone, and even positively influence our personal life by improving how we interact with others.

Outside of the office, soft skills such as communication are used to build friendship groups and meet potential partners. We might be negotiating the price of our new house renovation, or mentoring our neighbours children on the weekend.

Soft skills are useful both in our professional and personal lives.



For Students:

According to a survey, it was found that over 80% of respondents in each of the 4 populations (principals, parents, teachers and superintendents) indicated that it is equally important to assess both academic and non-academic skills in a student's all round development. And the workforce seems to agree.

The study noted previous research that demonstrated 60% of employers felt a broad range of skills were important for recent college graduates to achieve long-term career success.

- Having a non-academic skillset is important for student-patients as well. The students who receive educational services in an alternative or hospital setting face a wide range of challenges that can impact their learning and ability to participate successfully in the social aspect of school and society as well.
- It is vital to the student's success that they learn how to navigate and overcome personal challenges, and expand their social emotional skills to understand and work around issues they may face as a result of, or in conjunction with, their diagnosis.
- Fostering problem-solving skills, teamwork and critical thinking skills also provides an opportunity for students to be successful in a new area, therefore having the potential to boost their confidence and ability to connect with and lead groups of peers in activities.
- Through soft skills training programs, students will be able to better handle interpersonal relationships with a strong sense of empathy. They will also be in a favourable position to monitor the emotions of others so as to come up with well-informed perceptions about others' behaviour and thinking patterns.

For Employees:

Studying takes us on a path towards acquiring hard skills – the specific technical skills we need to do our job effectively. While these are the skills we'll list on our resume, today's employers seek more than this. Increasing importance is being placed on soft skills – personal attributes that enable us to interact well with other people. In most jobs, technical skills alone are not enough to be truly effective.

- A salesperson with an unrivalled knowledge of their product and market will have little success if they don't have the interpersonal skills needed to close deals and retain clients.

- A business manager needs to be able to listen to employees, have good speaking skills, and be able to think creatively.
- All careers require at least some soft skills to make the hard skills valuable. Skills such as listening, collaborating with others, presenting ideas and communicating with team members are all highly valued in the modern workplace.



- Strong soft skills ensure a productive, collaborative and healthy work environment, all vital attributes for organisations in an increasingly competitive world.
- The modern market offers consumers an unlimited number of choices through technologies such as the internet and smartphones. For the consumers, convenience and low prices are easy to come by, so customer service is often what influences the choice to use a particular business. The ability to communicate efficiently and effectively with customers is therefore a vital factor in an organisation's success.

Suggestions



If we want to improve on our soft skills or have some that we need to develop to work in a certain role, here are some tips to help:

- Participate in self-reflection: In order to improve, we must first be honest about what and where our shortcomings are. This isn't always easy. If we are struggling, ask a friend or family member to help us identify our true strengths and weaknesses.
- Looking for online training: Once we have identified the areas we need to improve, look for some online courses that will help us to learn skills that would be useful in the workplace.
- Observing others: Look to others who exemplify the soft skills that we want to improve. If we have a relationship with them, ask for their advice or coaching.
- Practice makes a man perfect: All soft skills will improve with practice. Once we have obtained training or coaching, practise using our new-found skills with friends or family before our interview. This will give us the confidence to take these skills into the workplace.

The Final Words...

And this is really what soft skills are about. After all, it's not just about landing a cushy job or impressing an employer. Bringing these traits to a job can help make the work we do more efficient, effective, and—dare I say it—even enjoyable.

Many employers value strong soft skills over technical skills because they are often personality traits developed over a lifetime and can be difficult to teach. That being said, anyone can improve their soft skills with experience and practice.



While hard skills are important for completing technical tasks, strong soft skills will make you the kind of worker employers want to hire, retain and promote. It's important to highlight the soft skills you have at all stages of the job search process and continue developing those skills once you find the job you're looking for.

But suppose you don't have these skills? It's never too late to develop them. They may seem simple and we may have already started practicing some of them, but pushing ourselves to do more, going deeper, and pushing ourselves even further is all what we need now. Because in the long run, they're what's going to get us ahead.