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Skills Paper

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It should be no secret that employers value workers that are good at their job. The best at any particular occupation in the world will be guaranteed to have a job and concessions will likely be made to keep them there. Regardless of whether or not they are abrasive and unpersonable, they are valuable enough that a company will want to hold onto them. That being said, what about the rest of us? Oftentimes, some people that may not be as good at a job as another are promoted over others. Sometimes, there are a lot of reasons that could be mentioned such as appearances, connections, credentials. Other times, there are just skills that qualify them above others, though they may not be the hard skills of the job. These skills are referred to as soft skills. Soft skills are the ones that make you a beneficial part of the workplace. Everything down to your energy, how you interact with people, the vibe that you give people, all of these skills are factors in how effective you, and the people around you, are in the workplace [1]. Employers and the people around you value how you affect the environment, and these skills are often the make or break factor on where you progress in life. While there are an innumerable amount of soft skills like there are an innumerable amount of hard skills, there are three that I value the most. These skills are Emotional Intelligence, Leadership, and Continuous Improvement.

Starting with the first one, Emotional Intelligence is the ability to socially understand and influence your coworkers. I consider this to be the gateway towards good leadership, but that will be covered later. This ability is often described to be a sense of empathy developed through self-reflection and contemplation [2]. In a less confusing set of words, demonstrating emotional intelligence is a self-motivating process that causes the development of the skill in stronger and more comprehensive ways. So what does it mean to demonstrate emotional intelligence? Demonstrating emotional intelligence is understanding how the people are you feel and will react to the environment around them. Whether it be the people, the atmosphere, the subject matter of work, or anything in between, an individual with strong emotional intelligence will understand how their coworkers will be affected by things, and the particularly motivated ones will take steps to better the situation. Developing this skill often requires understanding how you, yourself, will react to situations that arise. Knowing yourself will allow you to empathize with the people around you. The more you understand yourself and begin to demonstrate emotional intelligence, the better you will be at it, hence the “self-motivating process”.

Moving forwards, a good leader is somebody that “betters” the situation around them, regardless of the reason. Good leaders come in many attitudes, places, and even motivations. Not every good leader must be a selfless person that takes on the tasks of others. Rather, a good leader is someone that can influence the people around them such that the situation is inarguably in a better state than without their influence. Note that there is often an incorrect conflation between management and leadership. A good leader often makes a good manager, but a good manager does not necessarily make a good leader. A good manager can make steps to “better” a situation, but they often come with long term detriments such as the attitude of the workplace may become less personable over time, or workers may have less trust between each other. On the other hand, a leader “betters” a situation by elevating the overall attitude of the workplace. To be a good leader, one has to demonstrate sufficient Emotional Intelligence along with the drive to consistently influence their coworkers in such a way that they are willing to follow the path they are given. A sufficiently good leader will be able to do this from non-leadership positions as well. This skill is often the primary reason why a less skilled employee may be chosen for a promotion over another, or even socially why some people tend to have people flock to them

over others. Someone with good Emotional Intelligence is not necessarily a good leader, but a combination of Emotional Intelligence and the motivation to use it has most of the foundation required to be a good leader. These two things in conjunction with good management skills is the recipe for an excellent leader.

The final soft skill that I would like to refer to is the ability to continuously seek improvement. While not one that will pay off as quickly as the other two, employers will notice this skill over time. That being said, this skill is important not because of employers but instead because of people you want to learn from. If you are actively showing motivation to improve, then people will be more willing to impart knowledge or have discussions with you. By constantly seeking improvement, you will become a better learner, worker, and in our case, developer [3]. While the two previous skills were, in a simplified manner, about affecting other people over a long term, this skill is entirely about bettering yourself over a long term. This is both the easiest skill to understand and the most difficult skill to develop. It involves a balance between pushing yourself to go beyond your limits and keeping yourself from burning out and becoming bitter over the topic. Many people have a talent for not burning out, but the majority of us will have to find the balance ourselves.

I chose these three skills because I believe that, in the long term, the development of these three skills will lead to the best possible employee. A worker with strong emotional intelligence and the ability to always learn is both the best teacher and the best person student. A worker with strong emotional intelligence and strong leadership skills is on the road to being the best possible leader. A worker with strong leadership skills and the ability to always learn is the best source of inspiration and motivation to those that they influence. Individually, all three of these skills are excellent soft skills that will set any worker in any occupation up for life. Any combination of the two leads to an irreplaceable worker that will have a place in any company. A combination of all three creates a template for an outstanding worker that will reach high places and never stop bettering themselves.

In conclusion, hard skills are a valuable skill that should be developed to be an effective worker, but it requires a combination of hard and soft skills to bring out the best of an individual. Emotional Intelligence is a soft skill that requires deep self-reflection and contemplation along with continuous usage to develop a strong understanding of how people feel and how it can be influenced for the better. Leadership is demonstrated when a person with strong emotional intelligence is also motivated to consistently use it to better the situation for themselves and the people around them. Often, leadership and management are falsely conflated, but they are two skill sets that only partly lend themselves towards each other. In my opinion, management is better understood as a hard skill, or an understanding of the hard skills relevant to the job, and leadership is a soft skill that helps you influence the hard and soft skills of others. The final soft skill I mentioned is the ability to continuously seek improvement, or in my definition of it, the ability to always learn. Whether it be through learning more about your particular hard skills, or constantly learning about yourself and others to improve your soft skills, you will become better at self-teaching and other people with knowledge will be more willing to impart it unto you if you are showing determination to improve. While all three skills are individually extremely important, the most important factors of them appear the more you are able to combine them.

There are an innumerable amount of soft skills that are underutilized, but these were the ones that I personally felt made the best possible worker.

## Works Cited

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