

Prevalence of Social Skills within Information Technology Training Programs

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Introduction / Research Gap

Introduction:

The labor market has drastically changed in the last century. Since 1980, occupations requiring social skills have seen more growth compared to any other jobs. There has been a 12% increase in job growth from 1980 to 2012. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “employment in computer and information technology occupations is projected to grow 13 percent from 2020 to 2030,” which is a greater growth than any other occupation.

Gap: While there has been research about the importance of social skills in IT, there is no pre-existing research on if training programs for information technology lack a focus on social/interpersonal skills. The purpose of this study is to address that gap and determine the implications the results bring among any onboarding programs in the IT employees’ future and any possible effects on efficiency in the IT industry.

Hypothesis

Given the technicality of the field of information technology, I believe that most training programs will be based on technical skills rather than social skills. As a result, the people going through training programs for IT will lack the social skills required later in their career.

Methodology

A conceptual content analysis was performed various times on numerous training programs’ course descriptions. The reason for choosing this specific research method was that it would allow for the collection of quantitative data, specifically how often certain words or concepts appear in documents. Also, a successful conceptual content analysis would set up a path for determining the meaning and relationship of this data. Not only was the conceptual content analysis performed on dozens of documents or training program course descriptions in this study, but the content analysis was iterated several times on each training program’s description for the purpose of reinforcing the validity of the data.

Keywords + Parameters

Keywords:

If words or phrases such as “customer service,” “management training,” “interview training,” and “communication” were present in a training program’s description, then it was marked under the social skills category. On the other hand, any word or phrase that related to computer science was marked under the technical skills category, for example, “HTML,” “Python,” and “CSS.”

SOCIAL SKILLS

- ✓ Customer service
- ✓ Management training
- ✓ Interview training
- ✓ Communication

TECHNICAL SKILLS

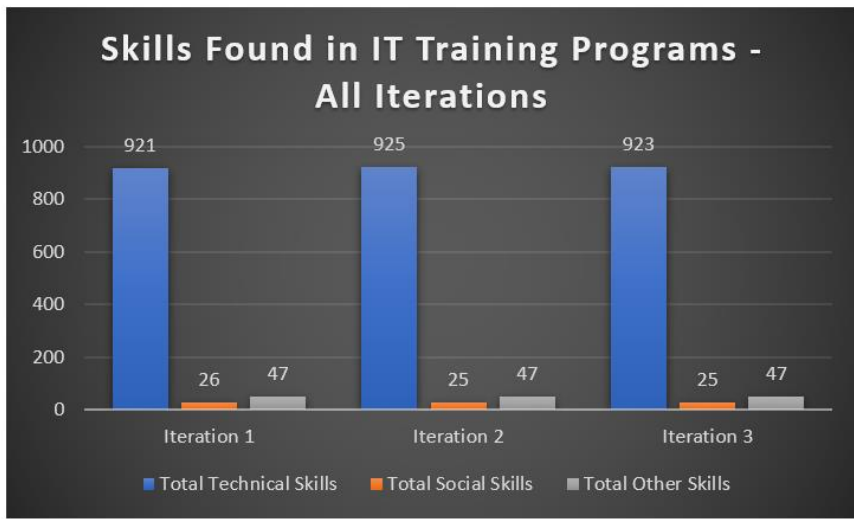
- ✓ HTML
- ✓ Python
- ✓ CSS

Results

The results from the completed iterated conceptual content analysis on the 89 total information technology-based training programs reveals that the majority of identified skills were total skills. For instance, in Iteration 3, of the 995 total identified skills, only 25 of them were related to social skills while 923 technical skills.

Furthermore, the results below show the minimal inconsistency in data. Throughout the different iterations, the total number of identified technical, social, and other skills barely changes.

Figure 12: Bar Graph Results – All Iterations



Conclusions

With an iterated conceptual content analysis on training programs focused on information technology, this study proved that the initial hypothesis was correct. Most IT training programs are indeed intended to teach technical skills, and they lack a strong focus on building a good foundation of social skills in future and current IT specialists. While the importance of teaching technical skills is important, this study also showed that many sources offering IT training programs completely neglected social skills.

Implications & Future Expectations

Implications:

- ❖ IT employers lacking social skills
- ❖ Unprepared future IT specialists could face problems when trying to get jobs.
- ❖ A possible unexpected failure in future onboarding programs

Future Considerations:

- ❖ A possible unexpected failure in future onboarding programs
- ❖ Web Scraping/Program
- ❖ Analyze University Courses
- ❖ Larger Sampling Size

Works Cited (Top 3)

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