Soft Skills and Community

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Participation Activity #2 (small group discussions)

- What is a soft skill you are great at?
- What is one soft skill can improve on?
- How do soft skills differ across cultures?

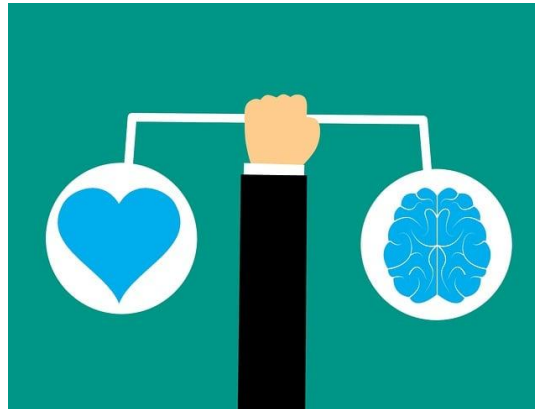Image by Mohamed Hassan from Pixabay

Image by Mohamed Hassan from Pixabay

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Generations also have differences

Five Generations Working Side by Side in 2020

Traditionalists	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen 2020
Born 1900-45	Born 1946-64	Born 1965-76	Born 1977-97	Born after 1997
Great Depression	Vietnam/Moon Landing	Fall of the Berlin Wall	9/11 Attacks	Age 25 and younger
World War II	Civil/Women's Rights	Gulf War	Community service	Optimistic
Disciplined	Experimental	Independent	Immediacy	High Expectations
Workplace Loyalty	Innovators	Free Agents	Confident, Diversity	Apps
Moved to the 'Burbs	Hard working	Internet, MTV, AIDS	Social Everything	Social Games
Vaccines	Personal computer	Mobile phone	Google, Facebook	Tablet Devices

Generation Z Stats

- Population to reach 2.56 billion by 2020

- 96% own a smartphone

- 85% uses social media

- 50% will be connect online up to 10 hours per day

- 33% watches 1 hour of online video per day

- Have an average attention span of 8 seconds

- 63% prefer to see real people in ads

- Will make up 40% of all consumers by 2020

- Over half do not notice if slides contain fake stats

- 72% notice no citations and question this info

- 27% understand my sense of humor

Soft Skills matter!

- AI is used to screen candidates.

- The questions, and your answers to them, are designed to evaluate several aspects of a jobseeker's personality and intelligence, such as your risk tolerance and how quickly you respond to situations.

- Or as Pymetrics puts it, "to fairly and accurately measure cognitive and emotional attributes in only 25 minutes".

- Its AI software is now used in the initial recruitment processes of a number of multinational companies, such as McDonald's, bank JP Morgan, accountancy firm PWC, and food group Kraft Heinz. An interview with a human recruiter then follows if you pass.

- "It's about helping firms process a much wider pool [of applicants], and getting signals that someone will be successful in a job," says Pymetrics founder Frida Polli.

Soft skills more important than ever?

- "Increased globalization, greater job insecurity, massification of higher education and the shift to a knowledge economy" means you need more than just a degree to separate your application in a more competitive environment.

- Employers value soft skills more than academic qualifications!

- These skills are transferable, 21st Century, key competencies to a successful life and well-functioning society.

"When you see a woman in silks and sables and diamonds speak to a little errand girl or a footman or a scullery maid as though they were the dirt under her feet, you may be sure of one thing; she hasn't come a very long way from the ground herself."
— **Emily Post,** Etiquette

Common soft skills

- Skills, abilities, and traits that pertain to personality, attitude, and behavior rather than technical knowledge.

- A mix of dispositions, understandings, attributes and practices.

- Communication, teamwork, problem solving, critical and innovative thinking, creativity, self-confidence, ethical understanding, capacity of lifelong learning, the ability to cope with uncertainty, as well as the willingness to accept responsibility

20 soft skills operationalized

- Personal
  1. Being Committee to Work
  2. Being Professionally Ethical (profession dependent)
  3. Being Tolerant to Stress
  4. Creativity/Innovation Skills
  5. Learning Skills (librarian 101)
  6. Life Balance Skills
  7. Self-Awareness Skills

- Social
  8. Communication Skills
  9. Conflict Management and Negotiation Skills
  10. Contact Network Skills
  11. Culture Adaptability Skills
  12. Leadership Skills
  13. Team-work Skills

- Methodological
  14. Adaptability to Change Skills
  15. Analysis Skills
  16. Continuous Improvement Skills
  17. Customer/User Orientation Skills
  18. Decision Making Skills
  19. Management Skills
  20. Results Orientation Skills

Results of survey of employers and students

- Communication skills, Being Committee to work and Teamwork skills were ranked most important.

- Qualitative comments indicated students lacked self-awareness, in particular the ability to identify strengths and weaknesses.

- What can UT, CCI, SIS, do to address this perceived/actual lack of soft skills?
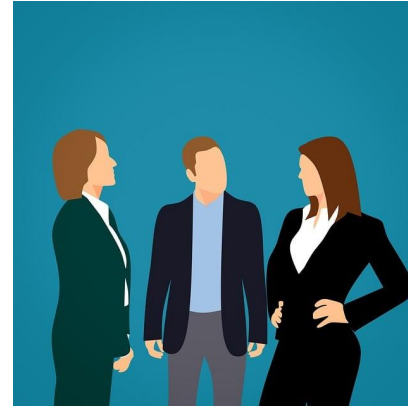

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Competency and expectations

- "a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes to achieving observable results"

- "most development of their competencies had occurred 'on-the-job'"

- "Interviews agreed that, when seeking a new employee, communication skills are more important than technical knowhow"

- "combining soft skills with broad rather than deep technological competencies"

Read, A., & Cox, A. (2020). Underrated or overstated? The need for technological competencies in scholarly communication librarianship. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 46*(4), 102155. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2020.102155

Socio-technological competence

1. Interpersonal skills in order to manage relationships with varied stakeholders, thrive in communicative/generalist roles, and function as **Interpreters**;

2. A positive 'interpretive' attitude to technology in order to understand technologies/intermediaries; a willingness to learn and progress their computational sense;

3. An appropriate level of computational sense, less in specific skills/knowledge and more in fluency with systems and an appreciation of technological possibilities

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Emotional intelligence is library work

- Defined by four domains: self awareness, self management, social awareness, and relationship management

- **RUSA Behavior Guidelines**

- 1.0   Visibility/Approachability
  - 1.1.3   Acknowledges patrons by using a friendly greeting to initiate conversation.
  - 1.1.4   Acknowledges others waiting for service.

- 2.0   Interest
  - 2.2.1   Faces the patron when speaking and listening.
  - 2.2.2   Maintains or re-establishes eye contact with the patron throughout the transaction.

- 3.0   Listening/Inquiring
  - 3.1.1   Communicates in a receptive, cordial, and supportive manner.
  - 3.1.2   Uses a tone of voice and/or written language appropriate to the patron and the nature of the transaction.
  - 3.1.3   Allows the patron to fully state his/her information need in his/her own words before responding.

Community of Practice

- Agenda Design
  - Domains
  - Practice
  - Community
  - introductions
- Creating Joint Agendas
  - Community building
  - Identify new connections
  - Some are content driven
  - Learning outcomes

- Making connections
  - Journal club
  - Mentoring new faculty
  - Instructional skills workshops
  - Library outreach
  - TA Training
  - Course design
  - Portfolio

Are soft skills racist?

- "Three factors underlie negative evaluations for Black men as workers: Racial stereotypes, cultural differences between employers and young Black men, and actual skill differences" (Moss & Tilly, 1996)

- What *cultural* differences exist across organizations, sectors, communities, countries, and so forth?

MOSS P, TILLY C. "Soft" Skills and Race: An Investigation of Black Men's Employment Problems. *Work and Occupations*. 1996;23(3):252-276. doi:10.1177/0730888496023003002