

SOFT SKILLS

LESSON 10

NETWORKING & LEADERSHIP



What are soft skills?

Soft skills are character traits (e.g. integrity, discipline, etc.) and interpersonal skills (e.g. body language, cooperation, etc.) that describe an individual's relationship with other people and determine their emotional quotient (EQ).¹

At the workplace, soft skills complement hard skills, which refer to a person's knowledge and occupational skills (e.g. accounting, coding, etc.). **Soft skills** enable one to interact effectively and harmoniously with others, especially when working in a team.

For example, the soft skills required for a doctor would be empathy, understanding, active listening and gentleness.

Here, we will discuss 3 important soft skills required for any young person who will eventually enter the professional world:

(1) Networking Skills

(2) Decision Making Skills

(3) Leadership Skills

NETWORKING SKILLS

If you need assistance in the situations mentioned below, then whom would you contact for help? Write the name of a person and not the name of any organization.

You need someone to drive you to the nearest airport.

_____ (Contact person)

You need someone to help you find a part-time job.

_____ (Contact person)

You need someone to review your resume.

_____ (Contact person)

You want a big donation for your charity fundraiser.

You need to stay for a few weeks at someone's house.

You need someone who can edit videos for your college project work.

You need a letter of recommendation from a working professional.

You need someone to take good quality photos at a reasonable rate during your sister's wedding.

You need someone to fix a broken pipe in your house.

You have only two days before an important exam and need someone's help to prepare for it.

From the above, we realize that networking is very important in our day-to-day lives; without it, it seems almost impossible to get any job done.

What exactly is NETWORKING?

Networking is the exchange of information and ideas among people with a common profession or special interest, usually in an informal social setting.³⁰ For example, if you are interested in robotics as a passion or as a career choice, meeting with and exchanging ideas with other robotics enthusiasts at conventions, seminars, etc. - this is networking.

Networking involves building and maintaining relationships with other people. The personal networks that you develop over time, both socially and professionally, can be an invaluable resource. This is true whether you are an entrepreneur looking to start and grow your new venture, looking for a job, or working on a project where external ideas and input can be of value.

There are two main types of networks:

Social Networks – includes friends, family, classmates, teachers, neighbours etc.

Professional Networks – includes people who are interested in or work in your industry of interest.

They can help you build your network by putting you in touch with relevant people. And because your new contacts will come through people you know and trust, you will find it easier to get in touch with them.

Who Networks?



Students

Students commonly use networking as a means to connect with people in fields of their interest. These can be fields that you are interested to pursue a career in or simply passionate about. Networking can lead you to develop contacts in that specific field, which can prove to be advantageous in the future in a variety of different ways.



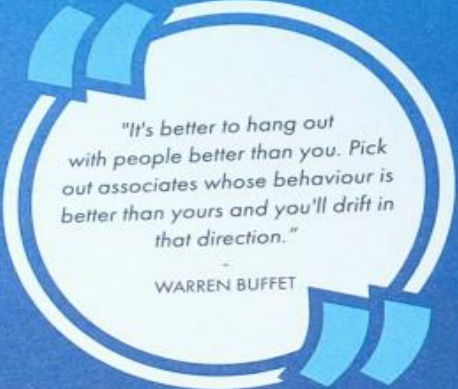
Entrepreneurs/Businessmen

Use networking to connect with potential partners and clients. They can put their idea out in the field and see how people react to it. Entrepreneurs can use networking to bring efficiency to their business or venture: they are able to source needed skilled employees, grow their business, overcome financial limitations, and come up with creative solutions or new product ideas, and much, much more.



What kind of person is successful at networking?

- **Someone who is good at listening** – Remember, networking involves conversing with people who you may not know that well. So, it is important to actively listen to them so they can see you are interested in them or their work.
- **Someone who is good at asking the right questions** – This goes along with the point above. If you ask the right questions when meeting someone, they will see that you are sincerely interested in the industry or in their work.
- **Someone who is sincere** – People know when you are faking it. Be sincere about your interest in the field. It becomes obvious if you are only interested in getting a job or a client. People will be deterred from connecting with you.
- **Someone who stays in touch** – Once you've made a contact, it is important to stay in touch with that person. Sending an email or a message every so often keeps the relationship fresh.



*"It's better to hang out
with people better than you. Pick
out associates whose behaviour is
better than yours and you'll drift in
that direction."*

–
WARREN BUFFET

Networking Events:

Have you ever heard of **Vibrant Gujarat**? **Vibrant Gujarat** is an event that began in 2003 held by the Government of Gujarat and has taken place every two years since. The event is aimed at bringing together business leaders, investors, corporations, thought leaders, policy and opinion makers. The summit is advertised as a platform to understand and explore business opportunities in Gujarat. This is one of the largest networking events that take place in Gujarat, however there are many others that take place that you may be interested. Search online for various networking events that are taking place across Gujarat and India.

Use website such as www.meetup.com, www.eventbrite.com, www.indianchamber.org/networking-events/ to stay in touch with any networking events taking place.

DECISION MAKING

Humans make about 35,000⁴³ decisions on a daily basis! That's an average of 24 decisions every minute!

Now, here is the real question – how often are we satisfied with our decisions? How often do we regret our choices?

When we are making so many decisions on a regular basis, we are going to make choices that we regret.

Can you think of any major decisions that you ever made that you regret or weren't completely satisfied with?



So, how can we minimize our regrets and maximize our satisfaction with our decisions?

Fortunately, there is a methodology behind decision-making. If we apply some of these principles to our life, then we will be able to make better decisions.



1. IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

What decision needs to be made? What problem are you trying to solve? This must be clear in order to make sure you are addressing the correct issue.



3. CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS

Most likely you will have several options. Weigh the information you've gathered and make your decision based on what outcome is most desirable to you or others involved.



2. GATHER INFORMATION

Mentally or physically gather information, data, facts - whatever will help you make an informed decision. Ask yourself 'What information do I need? What do I need to know in order to make the best decision?'



4. MAKE THE DECISION

Take action on the selected option and move forward.

MAKE A DECISION!

You are looking to buy a new smartphone – which one will you purchase?

ONEPLUS 7 PRO



SAMSUNG GALAXY A7



REDMI K20 PRO



DISPLAY	6.67" (1440x3120 px, 515 PPI)	6.7" (1080x2400 px, 393 PPI)	6.39" (1080x2340 px, 403 PPI)
STORAGE	128 GB (Non Expandable)	128 GB (512 GB Expandable)	128 GB (Non Expandable)
CAMERA	48 MP + 16 MP + 8 MP (Primary) 16 MP(Front)	32 MP + 8 MP + 5 MP (Primary) 32 MP(Front)	48 MP + 13 MP + 8 MP (Primary) 20 MP(Front)
BATTERY	4000 mAh	4500 mAh	4000 mAh
PRICE	Rs. 48,999/-	Rs. 26,685/-	Rs. 28,999/-

Justify your choice of phone and explain why you didn't choose the other phones.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Plenty of information is available on leadership, including more than **15,000 printed books**.^{*} In fact, a quick search on "Google Scholar" will present **over four million scholarly articles** on "leadership".

But, for your reference, the IPDC Team has extracted the four most essential and relevant leadership qualities required for youth today.



LEADING WITHOUT A TITLE

When you hear the word "leader", whose picture comes to your mind? What do they look like? What clothes do they wear? How do they speak?

A powerful personality, sitting in a big luxurious office and operating a multinational organization, and an effluent speaker who is wealthy, famous, stylish and intelligent. Generally, this is the picture we have when we think of a leader. But leadership is defined by something other than the characteristics as mentioned above. It is not the monopoly of a specific class of people, such as the rich or the powerful. Instead, leadership is something that each one of us can have, irrespective of who we are or what we do within an organization. You don't need to have a title to lead people; you can lead without a title.

We have all witnessed the progress of Narendra Modi, from a normal party worker to the 14th Prime Minister of India. So let's take his life as a case study to understand leadership. Do you think he was a leader before he became Prime Minister? Explain your reasoning with the help of examples from his life.

'LEADERSHIP IS NOT A POSITION OR A TITLE, IT IS ACTION AND EXAMPLE.'

CORY BOOKER, US SENATOR

GO THE EXTRA MILE

A leader is not one who gives orders. Instead, a true leader is one who is the most hardworking and dedicated. Good leaders go above and beyond - they go the extra mile.

Let's look at how many hours successful leaders work on average in a day:

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos initially used to work for 12 hours per day throughout the week, including on Sundays. He often stayed awake until 3 AM to ensure the books were dispatched on time.

Mukesh Ambani wakes up at around 5 AM, exercises, reads, eats breakfast and then works from 11 AM to 10 PM.[†]

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When Barack Obama was President of America, he would start his day around 9-10 AM after completing his daily morning exercise routine and always made it back to the residence in time to have dinner with his family. But, Obama was known to stay awake until 1-2 AM, working after his family had gone to sleep.⁶

What does Narendra Modi do on a normal day? How many hours does he work? Does he go the extra mile? Write down your views below.

BECOME A MASTER CHEF

Imagine a master chef working in a kitchen during peak hours, handling the high pressure of serving all different dishes in minimum time. Time is limited, yet the chef must combine numerous ingredients to make a flavoursome meal. Each ingredient has its unique characteristic – whether it's crackling mustard seeds, bright yellow turmeric, strong pungent cloves, very hot chillies, ginger with its distinctive spicy taste, a sour twist of lemon juice or the exotic richness of saffron. Alone, each ingredient is extremely powerful and aromatic. If too much or too little of any one ingredient is added, then the taste of the final dish is spoiled. But MasterChef knows each of their properties, so they can balance and blend them to make a delicious meal.

Similarly, each team member will have a different skill set and unique personality.

But a leader brings them together in such a way that they complement each other.

Does Narendra Modi bring his team together like a master chef? Discuss with facts and figures to support your opinion.

KEEP BALANCE

A leader has a balanced personality. They do not let popularity dictate their decisions nor allow other people's opinions to stop them from doing what is right. They are not insecure but, instead, are strong and confident. They speak the truth and make the right decisions, irrespective of their critics' opinions. Leaders are powerful, influential and inspiring, but they will still treat even the simplest people with care and respect. It is all about balance; having well-balanced behaviour is a fundamental quality of a leader.

"Tender yet tough, compassionate yet courageous, part saint yet part warrior, friendly yet firm... Extraordinary leadership is a balance."

– Robin Sharma (one of the world's leading experts on leadership), *The Greatness Guide*