**Attributes employers look for**

I am going to explore why employer’s value particular attributes in employees, including attributes related specifically to the job, general attributes, and attitudes.

Specific job-related attributes

Technical knowledge.  
Technical knowledge is important to an employer, because it is necessary for the employee to do the job – if the employee works in networking, and doesn’t know which ports to use to add a computer to the network, they will be unable to do it. An employer would rather hire someone who knows how to use the hardware they are working with.  
Technical knowledge also implies experience – if the employee has technical knowledge of something, they must have used/worked with it in the past. This means they have already had practice at many parts of the job, and will be able to do them well.  
Technical knowledge also negates the need for training – which is expensive for the employer, as during training the employee is using resources and time without doing work for the company.

General attributes

Planning and Organizational skills.  
An employee must be able to plan and be organized in order to work effectively and efficiently. If they are not organized, they will waste time because they will not know what they should be doing.  
If a software engineer did not plan their program, they would not be sure what it is supposed to do, so it could end up missing features the client requested, or have extra features the client didn’t want. Also, the code could have many errors – many errors are made when programs are written without a structure or plan in mind.  
Similarly, if the software engineer is not organized, they will waste time trying to organize themselves during the project. For example, if they do not carefully organize the files and folders on their computer, and save work in random places, they could waste a lot of time trying to find files. However, if they make an organized structure for saving work, even if they can’t remember exactly where something is saved, they will be able to find it quickly because they know where it *should* be.  
The team that writes the code for the hardware that launches NASA’s rockets plans all their programs in great detail – every line is thought out, and every change must be justified and tested individually. As a result of this careful planning and organization, only 17 errors have been made in the code they have written in the last 11 versions – and none made it into the final program.

Team working.  
An employee must be able to work in a team – nearly all businesses have more than one employee, and they must be able to get along and work with their co-workers.  
Team work is especially important in team projects, where a lack of team work and co-operation reduces productivity, and can cost the company a lot of money. If a team cannot communicate effectively (listen as well as get their idea across), they will not be able to agree on anything, and therefore be able to get any work done.  
Going back to the example of NASA’s software engineers, they have two teams – one writes the code and the other group tests it. This causes a ‘friendly rivalry’ – the programmers are desperate to ensure that the testers find no errors, and the testers want to find as many as possible. This competition reduces the number of errors by nearly 90% - simply because both teams want to ‘win’.  
In a team, everyone must work toward a common goal, to ensure everybody co-operates.

Attitude

Independence.  
The best employees are capable of being independent – working on their own and using their initiative when they aren’t sure.  
If an employee has to stop to ask questions every time they are unsure what to do, they will not get much work done and quickly become annoying. However, if they make educated guesses and use reasoning, they will get more work done and impress their employer.

Self-motivation.  
An employee must be self-motivated to get work done.

It is difficult to get anything done without motivation – without a reason to do it, it seems pointless.

Therefore, if an employee is motivated – whether it be because they enjoy their work, want to achieve something, want to impress their employer, or even so they can get paid – they will work better and try harder.