

Not too Hard – Soft Skills

Employers seem to demand the moon these days, but they're really looking for candidates who may be easier to work with (assuming they already have the core skills to do the job). Each company looks for a different mix of skills and experience depending on the business it's in. Yet it's no longer enough to be a functional expert. To complement these unique core competencies, there are certain "soft skills" every company looks for in a potential hire.

Degrees and credentials are important, but the development of soft skills—skills that are more social than technical—are a crucial part of fostering a dynamic workforce and are always in high demand. Today's service economy and the ascendance of work teams in large organizations puts a new premium on people skills and relationship building. That means "soft," or intangible qualities, such as leadership skills, a sense of ownership or being able to work with others, can be a strong competitive advantage for the job seeker.

With business being done at an increasingly fast pace, employers also want people who are agile, adaptable and creative at solving problems. Today, employers want to see a candidate's ability to show value in the workplace beyond the job description. It's the tangible skills or core competencies that get you in the door. It's the soft skills that often get you the job. What are the 'soft skills' employers want? Below we take a look at some of the most common soft skills. These skills are personal qualities and attitudes that can help you to work well with others and make a positive contribution to organisations you work for.

Communicating

It's more than just speaking the language. Skilled communicators get along well with colleagues, listen and understand instructions, and put their point across without being aggressive. Communication skills involve active listening, presentation as well as excellent writing capabilities. It involves articulating oneself well and using appropriate body language. If you've got good communication skills you should be able to develop constructive working relationships with colleagues and be able to learn from constructive criticism.

Leadership

Employers look for people who lead by example, constantly look to improve, motivate themselves, are positive, and know when to follow instructions and when to show initiative. Leadership skills are not only critical for supervisory positions, but also for candidates who may want rise to positions where they'll give directions to others.

Interpersonal skills

The ability to work in teams, relate to people and manage conflict is a valuable asset in the workplace. This skill is important to be successful in your job. The aptitude to work with others becomes even more crucial. Personal accomplishments are important, but showing that you can

work well with others is important too. A good team player has the team goals clear in their mind and works with others to achieve them while being honest and listening to others.

Problem-Solving Skills

The ability to use creativity, reasoning, past experience, information and available resources to resolve issues is attractive because it saves everyone at the organization valuable time. It is required that you are resourceful and able to creatively solve problems that will inevitably arise. You need to take ownership of problems and not leave them for someone else. If you can apply both logic and creativity to solve problems it is highly valued.

Flexibility

Deadlines and projects can change at a moment's notice. We live in rapidly changing times in the workplace, so if you're adaptable and flexible, you'll be able to change with the times. Employees need to quickly adapt while remaining focused on meeting deadlines. It's a great asset if you are able to step outside your comfort zone and try your hand at something you haven't done before. Employers like people who are positive, upbeat and have a 'can-do' attitude.

Strong work ethic

Employers are looking for people who take initiative, are reliable and can do the job right the first time. This is a skill that is expected from all employees. You will be expected to be motivated and dedicated to getting the job done, no matter what without supervision. Need to be conscientious and do your best while showing commitment. You are expected to be dependable, reliable, enthusiastic, and enjoy hard work.

Prioritising

When deadlines are looming, good time management is about the most important tasks, and then deciding which actions will produce the maximum output with the minimum effort. Employers will expect you to work on a number of different projects at the same time and also use your time on the job wisely.

Working Well Under Pressure

What is expected out of you is to handle the stress that accompanies deadlines and crises. Employers want you to put the stress to one side and focus on the job in hand. You will be required to decide quickly which approach will achieve the maximum results in a short period of time, and then get the job done.

Positive Approach

Employers are on the lookout for people who take pride in their work, and are confident enough to put their name to it. They also respect people who can own up their mistakes. You will be required to be optimistic and upbeat while generating good energy and good will. There will be a need to not just accepting feedback, but also applying that feedback and handle criticism.

For employers, getting the right people means identifying people with the right skills and qualities to fulfil the role and contribute to the organisation's success. If you have these skills you should highlight them on your resume and application forms, and talk about them in interviews. You should prepare specific examples of how you dealt with a specific task or issue. This will help others understand that you have the skills to solve their problems too.