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Soft skills: Need of modern Era

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Abstract

Soft skills are often described by using terms often associated with personality traits, such as: Optimism, Common Sense, Responsibility, A Sense of Humour, Integrity; and abilities that can be practiced (but require the individual to genuinely like other people) such as: Empathy, Teamwork, Leadership, Communication, Good Manners, Negotiation, Sociability, the Ability To Teach. Soft skills are learned behaviours which require training and focussed application in that particular area. Soft skills make us what we are, generally encompassing our attitudes, habits and how we interact with other people. Soft skills are communication skills, problem solving skills, decision making skills free from stress and frustration, ability to work in team, personality development, and leadership etc. This paper tries to highlight the importance of Soft Skills in modern era for teachers and students.

Keywords: Interactions, Behaviours, Training, Sociability, Problem Solving, Acquired

1. Introduction

Soft skills are a combination of interpersonal skills, social skills, communication skills, character traits, attitudes, career attributes and emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) among others that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills. The Collins English Dictionary defines the term "soft skills" as "desirable qualities for certain forms of employment that do not depend on acquired knowledge: they include common sense, the ability to deal with people, and a positive flexible attitude."

Soft skills are a cluster of productive personality traits that characterize one's relationships in a milieu. These skills can include social graces, communication abilities, language skills, personal habits, cognitive or emotional empathy, time management, and teamwork and leadership traits. A definition based on review literature explains soft skills as an umbrella term for skills under three functional elements

- 1) People skills,
- 2) Social skills and
- 3) Personal career attributes.

National Business Education Association deems soft skills as critical for being industrious in today's workplace. Soft skills complement hard skills also known as technical skills, for productive workplace performance and everyday life competencies (Arkansas Department of Education, 2007). Hard skills were the only skills necessary for career employment and were generally quantifiable and measurable from educational background, work experience or through interview. In the 20th century soft skills are a major differentiator, a sine qua non for employability and success in life

2. What Are The Most Important Soft Skills?

It's hard to judge which soft skills are most important, but this list is broadly what employers mean when they talk about good soft skills and the skills which are most likely to enable you to build constructive working relationships with others, or to be a constructive and helpful employee.

2.1 Communication Skills

Communication skills are always top of the 'essential skills' list in any job advertisement. People with strong communication skills can build relationships (from the

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Initial building rapport through to a longer-term relationship), listen well, and vary their communication to suit the circumstances.

2.2 Making Decisions

Valued by employers for many reasons, being able to make decisions is key to getting on in life. Sometimes the actual decision doesn't even matter; what matters is that you have made one and moved on.

2.3 Self-Motivation

People who are self-motivated get on by themselves. They don't need close supervision and they are good to work with because they are generally positive about life and can be counted upon to keep going. It also helps to work on your personal resilience and adaptability to change.

2.4 Leadership Skills

These are the set of soft skills that we least expect someone to develop by themselves. There are many leadership training courses available and much has been written about how to develop your leadership skills. Our leadership skills pages describe many of the skills needed for effective leadership and how to develop your leadership style.

2.5 Team-Working Skills

Like leadership skills, there are many training courses to teach you how to work well in a team. However, there is also plenty of thinking to suggest that good communication skills, particularly good listening skills, together with an ability to build rapport will go a long way to support your ability to work well in a team.

2.6 Creativity and Problem Solving Skills

Creativity and problem-solving skills are highly valued because they are hard to develop. There are many people who believe that creative thinkers are born, not made, and there are certainly some people who find these skills much easier. But, like other skills, you can develop them if you work to do so and our pages on these topics will give you some ideas about how to do this.

2.7 Time Management and ability to work under pressure

Many would say that these two skills, which often go hand-in-hand, are more an attitude than a skill. However they can also be developed and honed, which is why we include them as skills. Highly valued by employers, they are also very useful for organising a family or a team, and for making sure that the job gets done.

3. Soft Skills Essential for Teachers

3.1 Helps them make their classes more interesting: If teachers wish to have a powerful impact on their students and make their classes lively and memorable it is vital that teachers have soft skills. As we all know, students have a very low attention span and their attention needs to be attracted by the use of innovative techniques. A teacher who has soft skills will be able to modulate her voice and even make charts according to the need of the moment so that students are able to grasp the maximum amount of knowledge.

3.2 To serve as an example for the students: Soft skills are things which cannot be taught via a book or by a long lecture. Students need to improve soft skills by observing their teachers. If teachers are exemplary examples for their students then the students grow up becoming exemplary individuals who are able to make a success of their lives and also contribute very positively to the society in which they live. It is vital that all teachers who are hired on board to schools are able and skilled individuals who know the important roles which they have to play in the students' lives.

3.3 To interact with students at their own level: Students are young individuals who are very impressionable and it is for this reason, that the teachers who are entrusted to take care of them and teaching skills should be very able and abounding. It is important for teachers to have soft skills, because if they do not have soft skills, then they will never be able to give the students lessons and lectures according to their respective ages and cognitive ability.

3.4 Enables them to be good leaders: Teachers need to be good leaders and command respect so that their students listen to what is said to them and obey instructions which are given. If a teacher is frivolous and unable to have a serious and stern manner then students are going to end up becoming rather undisciplined. Having soft skills is vital for teachers so that they can be good leaders who are able to lead the students from the front and in turn encourage the students to become good leaders themselves.

3.5 Makes them much more approachable: There is a fine line which ought to be maintained between the teachers and students. This means that both should maintain a respectable distance between each other. Teachers should function as advisors and a guide for their students and it is only if they have soft skills that they will be able to guide the students along the right path and give them useful advice.

3.6 Allows them to be sensitive to the needs of the children: It is very important that teachers have soft skills, because if they are lacking in soft skills, they will not be sensitive to the needs of those students. There are often silent students who need to be encouraged so that they come out of their shells and in addition to that there are other students who need to be given extra attention. It is only a sensitive teacher who has high emotional intelligence that will be able to look below the surface and differentiate one child from the next.

4. Importance of Soft Skills for Students

4.1 Helps them in making friends: Man by nature is a social animal. It is right from school that children are taught to interact with one another, from a very young age. Soft skills are important for children as it helps them to make friends and form a meaningful relationship with others. Those children who have trouble interacting with others are never able to enjoy the company of friends or peers. Having friends is something which is very important indeed.

4.2 Assists them in understanding the lessons being taught: The primary reason why students attend school is so that they can gain knowledge and learn new things. It is vital that students have soft skills, because if they do not have

soft skills, they would not be able to understand the lessons which are being taught to them and they would not be able to imbibe everything which is being said

4.3 Help them in good presentation: In the course of their school life, students are required to give a number of presentations. Right from a young age, students are encouraged to come forward and answer in class and even speak the minds on topical issues. Therefore, these important skills for students, because they require them at times like this, when they need to form opinions and deliver these opinions, supporting it with adequate arguments as well as examples.

4.4 Help them in good expression: At regular intervals there are exams conducted where students have to prepare adequately and write down answers according to the questions which are being asked. No matter how much they know, if students are unable to comprehend the questions and answer to the point, they will never be able to attain good marks and do well on the academic front. It is for this reason, that having soft skills is very important so that they can express themselves in a proper manner and write answers which are able to impress the examiners who are reading the answer scripts.

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