

# Importance of Soft Skills and Its Improving Factors

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## Abstract

Soft talents are those that have to do with how someone operates. Interpersonal skills, listening skills, communication skills, time management, and empathy are examples of soft skills. Any talent that may be defined as a personality characteristic or habit is considered soft. Students should acquire soft skills both for the benefit of their education and for the sake of their professional employment since they are directly related to greater academic accomplishment. This study focused on the benefits of soft skills and why these skills are important for students as well as for the employee. This study also discussed the difference between soft skills and hard skills, the significance of the soft skills, steps to improve soft skills, and the various types of soft skills. Soft skills are very important for students, both in terms of their education and in terms of their future professions. Students who acknowledge the importance of soft skills early on are better able to master their studies, finish their student obligations with ease, make more connections with people who may be important in the future, as well as present themselves more effectively to professors who may play a key role in their career prospects.

**Keywords:** creativity, communication, hard skills, soft skills, students

## 1. Introduction

Soft talents are abilities that assist us in forming, maintaining, and strengthening relationships. They're helpful because they enable us to adjust to the changes that occur with age, life experience, and employment. Soft skills become more important when we advance in our jobs or face new problems at work as shown in Figure 1. We increase our capacity to execute our best job when we can create and maintain great connections with others. The good news is that, contrary to common belief, soft skills can be taught and developed. Our capacity to perform hard work and our soft abilities are not mutually exclusive (M. Caeiro-Rodriguez 2021, P. Ricchiardi and F. Emanuel 2018, V. Dolce, F. Emanuel, M. Cisi, and C. Ghislieri 2020). They allow us to connect to people more effectively, resulting in more productive relationships. They facilitate collaboration and assist us in navigating new issues that may develop in the workplace. When we examine the definition of soft skills, we can see that they are linked to emotional intelligence, or the capacity to recognize ourselves in the context of others and how our actions influence others (A. K. Touloumakos 2020, B. X. F. Da Silva, V. Carolina Neto, and N. H. S. Gritti 2020).

Character qualities and interpersonal skills that describe a person's connections with others are known as soft skills. Soft skills are seen as a complement to hard skills in the workplace, which pertain to a person's knowledge and vocational abilities. Soft skills, as opposed to intelligence quotient, are a phrase used by sociologists to define a person's emotional intelligence quotient. Soft skills have less to do with what individuals know and more to do with who they are. As a result, they contain the personality qualities that determine how successfully one interacts with others and are often a distinct element of a person's personality. Employees that display a solid blend of hard and soft talents frequently perceive a higher demand for their services in a competitive labor market. Personality characteristics and behaviors are examples of soft skills. Soft skills, unlike technical or 'hard' talents, are defined by the behaviors you exhibit in various contexts rather than the information you possess (M. A. Husain, I. Mohammad, V. Nageshwar, and K. M. K. Sridhar 2019, S. G. Lal 2019, S. G. Lal, K. Chithra, and V. Nageshwar 2019).

Any talent that may be defined as a personality characteristic or habit is considered soft. Many businesses search for certain soft skills in job prospects, such as interpersonal skills and communication abilities. Soft skills are a collection of personality characteristics, behaviors, and social attitudes that enable individuals to communicate effectively, cooperate effectively, and handle conflict successfully. People with high soft skills have great situational awareness and emotional intelligence, allowing them to negotiate challenging work circumstances while still achieving positive outcomes. This is particularly crucial in leadership roles since excellent leadership is more about managing people and directing their efforts toward the desired objective than it is about bringing specialized technical abilities to bear. Another advantage of soft skills in the job is that they assist workers in adapting to changing conditions. Whether in a leadership role or not, the ability to communicate effectively during a period of uncertainty or engage with others when answers aren't immediately clear is crucial. Given their wide range of applications, it's not unexpected that employers are paying greater attention to a candidate's soft skills during the interview (S. Kaur and N. V. Muninarayanappa 2017, A. Ahmad 2015, S. Yadav and I. Mohammad 2019).



Figure 1. Illustrating the Various Types of Soft Skills that are Most Valued (Luthans, F., Avolio, B. J., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. 2007)

Soft skills are equally critical to most company's success. After all, practically every profession necessitates some kind of interaction with coworkers. Another reason hiring managers and companies search for soft skills candidates are that soft skills are transferable talents that can be used in any position. As a result, personnel with soft skills are more adaptive. Soft skills are very important in customer-facing employment. Customers come into touch with these staff regularly. Listening to a client and providing helpful and courteous service requires several soft skills.

Soft skill is a personal trait that aids situational awareness and improves a person's ability to complete a task. Soft skills are often used interchangeably with people skills and emotional intelligence. Soft skills, as a contrast to hard skills, which reflect a person's technical competence to do a given activity, are transferable across job titles and sectors. While hard talents may earn you an interview, it's commonly believed that soft skills will help you obtain (and maintain) the job.

During a job interview, soft skills may make all the difference. People's careers, as well as certificates, are significant, but employers are more interested in Soft Skills, and a candidate with fewer qualifications but many soft skills may be favored over a more qualified individual. Soft skills are crucial since they will determine if someone is a team player capable of forming positive relationships with coworkers and consumers. They also reveal your ability to adapt and grow. It will evaluate whether or not a corporation would want to gamble on your application over another.

#### 1.1 Soft Skills and Hard Skills

Emotional intelligence and the natural ability to communicate successfully with people are referred to as soft skills. They may be used in a variety of sectors and jobs. Technical skills or other job-specific abilities that may be obtained via education or training are known as hard skills. Hard skills are acquired via formal education, training programs, including concerted effort on the part of workers. Hard skills are the quantitative abilities that employees must

possess to do a certain profession effectively. Before hiring, employers often test or assess a candidate's hard skills. Computer programming, scripting, web design, and graphic design are examples of hard talents (A. F. Hendarman and U. Cantner 2018).

Some hard talents are in more demand than others, therefore firms may need to use recruiting agencies or headhunters to fill high-level positions soft talents are more difficult to obtain and alter than hard skills, which may be learned and developed over time. Empathy, understanding, active listening, and a decent bedside manner, for example, are soft skills necessary for a doctor. Hard skills required of a doctor, on the other hand, would include a complete awareness of ailments, the ability to evaluate test findings and symptoms, and a deep understanding of anatomy as well as physiology as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Illustrates the Common Difference between Hard Skills and Soft Skills (Carmeli, A., Gelbard, R., & Gefen, D 2010)

### 1.2 Significance of the Soft Skills

Soft skills are crucial for resume writing, interviewing, and succeeding in connecting with people at work and in other aspects of life. When you're looking for work, you may notice that many companies specify certain soft talents in the 'required' or 'desired' areas of their job postings. Attention to detail may be listed as a desirable attribute in a job advertising for a Human Resources associate, while 'leadership' and 'excellent communication skills' may be included in a job posting for a Marketing Specialist (C. Y. Tan, A. G. K. Abdullah, and A. J. Ali 2021, B. P. Dwi Riyanti, C. W. Sandroto, and M. T. Warmiyati D.W 2016).

Soft talents may be used in a variety of jobs and sectors. As a consequence, even if you don't fit the precise profile in a job description, you may discover that you possess many of the needed attributes. Pay extra attention to job postings that ask for individuals with soft talents or characteristics that you have. Even if the job title isn't a perfect match, you could discover that the work description is. Keep your resume updated as you proceed through the job search process to reflect the soft skills that are most relevant to the positions you're looking for.

Consider how you may demonstrate your soft talents in an interview. While certain talents, such as effective communication, may be shown, you might try weaving others into your responses to interview questions. When answering a question like "Tell me about a time you overcome a hurdle," you may mention your problem-solving abilities. If the company asks for references, think of people who can offer concrete examples of your soft talents and other assets.

### 1.3 Categories of the Soft Skills

Personal qualities, personality characteristics, as well as communication ability are examples of soft skills that are required for work success. Soft skills are the characteristics of a person's interactions with others. The various kinds of soft skills are as follows:

- Leadership Qualities

Employees who can oversee and guide others are sought after by employers. Employees that can build connections up, down, and across the business are in high demand. Leaders must evaluate, inspire, encourage, and punish employees, as well as form teams, handle problems, and create the desired culture of the company. Understanding how to influence others and meet their needs is an important part of becoming a leader. When someone with the highest technical skill is placed in a position of power, far too many firms disregard this. Leadership development often includes the development of soft skills.

- Communications

Effective communication skills can help you succeed in the interview process and your job. Knowing how to talk to people in various contexts or places is part of communication competence. When working on a project with a group, for example, you may need to express when you feel a concept or procedure is unsuccessful. Employers respect employees who can disagree with others on the work in a considerate and competent manner without causing confrontation. The successful spoken or written methods you communicate yourself in the job are known as communication skills. Communication is an important sales talent that can be used in a wide range of businesses, from human resources to management.

- Teamwork

Employers are continuously on the lookout for applicants that excel at working as part of a team. Teamwork abilities enable you to work successfully in a group and complete things swiftly and efficiently. In reality, occupations in market research, event organizing, and software engineering all need cooperation. The majority of workers work as part of a team, department, or division, and even those who are not on an official team must work with others. It may prefer to work alone, but it's critical to show that you understand and respect the need for teamwork and collaboration to achieve the company's objectives. This demonstrates that you have the soft skills needed to collaborate effectively (M. A. Rosen 2018, J. E. Driskell, E. Salas, and T. Driskell 2018).

- Creativity

Creativity is a wide talent that encompasses a variety of skill sets, including both soft and technical abilities. Creative employees may come up with innovative methods to do jobs, enhance procedures, or even come up with new and interesting areas for the company to pursue. Creativity may be used in every situation and at any level. Creativity is a wide soft talent that may vary from assisting in the development of inventive ideas to being a skilled graphic designer. Some experts believe that creativity will be the most crucial soft talent in the future. While creativity is crucial in every sector, instructional designers, architects, and artists are particularly reliant on it.

- Adaptability

Adaptability is particularly vital if you work in a technology-driven sector or for a startup. Processes, technologies, and customers you deal with may all change fast. Employees that can adjust to different environments and work styles are useful in a variety of vocations and sectors. For accepting and adapting to change, adaptability, as well as flexibility, are crucial abilities. These soft skills are especially vital in fast-paced or ever-changing professional situations including public relations, event planning, technology, nursing, and advertising.

- Self-Motivation

A pleasant attitude and the ability to perform efficiently without constant supervision are essential soft skills for every job. It not only demonstrates dependability and devotion but also demonstrates that you can work well inside an organizational framework without continual monitoring.

- Problem Solving

Issue solving requires not just analytical, creative, and critical thinking abilities, but also a specific attitude; individuals who can approach a problem with a calm, level head can typically arrive at a solution more quickly than those who cannot. This is a soft talent that often relies on excellent collaboration. Problems do not necessarily have to be solved by themselves. Knowing who can assist you in finding a solution and how they can do so may be beneficial. The capacity to solve problems relies on your ability to think analytically and creatively. Problem-solving abilities will always be important in some capacity, no matter what field you work in since every profession has challenges that must be addressed. Candidates that can solve challenges and come up with creative solutions will always be in demand.

- Work Ethic

Work ethic is among the most fundamental and universally transferrable soft skills there are, it is the cornerstone for

every excellent employee. By demonstrating your work ethic, you demonstrate to employers that you value work and the necessity of putting up your best effort. Work ethic is crucial in every industry, but it is especially critical for high-stress positions like first responders, educators, as well as nurses.

- Time Management

The capacity to work effectively and successfully by managing your time is referred to as time management abilities. This soft ability is valued by most companies, but it's especially valuable if you're a project manager, level manager, or work in the loss prevention or legal professions.

#### 1.4 Soft Skills Training

Soft Personal qualities, communication talents, personality traits, and other social and professional characteristics are worked on during skill training. These abilities assist you with a variety of tasks on the job. Soft skills are critical to a person's success and development. Employees must be able to communicate effectively with people since every profession and function requires interaction with customers, coworkers, bosses, and others. Employees with strong soft skills, regardless of their specialty or business, are exceptionally flexible in their roles and environments. Employers consider them to be effective prospects.

Typically, people feel that soft skills are only necessary for candidates working in customer service jobs, where they must engage with and communicate with consumers to persuade them to purchase a product or respond to their questions and complaints. Soft skill training, as previously said, helps you develop your traits as well as your communication ability. Soft skills include not just communication and message delivery, but also how well you deal with people and situations, as well as how well you manage your work, procedures, and duties in a department. Soft skills become even more vital when a person needs to collaborate with various departments and teams (S. Chalupa and K. Chadt 2021, Ekon. Manajemen, Bisnis dan Akunt 2020).

## 2. Discussion

Soft skills are a collection of personality characteristics, behaviors, and social attitudes that enable individuals to communicate effectively, cooperate effectively, and handle conflict successfully. People with high soft skills have great situational awareness and emotional intelligence, allowing them to negotiate challenging work circumstances while still achieving positive outcomes. This is particularly crucial in leadership roles since excellent leadership is more about people management as well as directing their activities toward the desired objective than it is about bringing specialized technical abilities to bear. Personal characteristics that improve an individual's relationships, work performance, and career prospects are known as soft skills. In other words, they are the subtle behaviors and communication styles that aid in the management of a work environment or a relationship with another person as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The above Figure Illustrates the Elements of the Soft Skills

A skill is a knowledge base or the capacity to do a task successfully in a certain amount of time, energy, or both. It is the ability to successfully use one's knowledge and skills in execution or performance. Hard skills and soft skills are the two sorts of abilities that are often used. Soft skills are essential and must be had by every person. A person's potential might be limited by a lack of certain talents. Soft skills, on the other hand, enhance one's capacity to collaborate with others and have a good influence on expanding one's career or even favorably affecting one's personal life through enhancing interpersonal interactions. Soft abilities, as previously said, cannot be learned via training and are more difficult to develop. They are more concerned with a person's character, relationships, and personality.

### *2.1 Steps for Improving Soft Skills*

Because soft skills are frequently personality attributes gained over a lifetime and difficult to teach, many companies value them more than technical abilities. However, with effort and experience, anybody may develop their soft skills (H. Tadjer, Y. Lafifi, H. Seridi-Bouchelaghem, and S. Gülse ğen 2020, S. Deep, B. M. Salleh, and H. Othman 2019). For example, you could discover that an employer is looking for someone good at resolving conflicts. While successful communication may come easily to you, it may be beneficial to practice working through issues with others. The steps of soft skills as shown below.

- Choose a soft skill to work on and practice it regularly

The majority of soft skills are learned daily. You may develop dependability at work and home, for example, by increasing punctuality (showing up on time or early to work or activities) and beginning tasks at work earlier so you can finish them ahead of schedule.

- Pay attention to and imitate the good soft talents

Professionals you know or work with are likely to excel in a variety of soft skills. By studying others' behaviors and implementing them into your daily routine, you may be able to build essential soft skills. Effective communicators, for example, may discover that they take notes while others are speaking during meetings. This assists children in organizing their ideas so that they may ask and respond to critical questions. This is also an active listening technique that you may want to include in your work.

- To strengthen soft skills, set milestone targets.

Carefully set clear, quantifiable objectives by reviewing your performance assessments at work or seeking constructive feedback from trustworthy friends and colleagues This may assist you in identifying crucial areas for growth for goal-setting as well as areas of strength to emphasize on your CV and during interviews. It's may prioritize which soft skills to improve depending on whether you need them to acquire a certain job or advance in your current position.

- Locate resources to assist you in your learning:

You may acquire techniques for strengthening the soft skills you wish to concentrate on from a variety of sources, including books, podcasts, and online programs. While some need money, the majority are free and available at any time. It may check out a few various sorts of resources to discover which ones work best for you.

### *2.2 Benefits and Hazards of the Soft Skills*

Everyone has at least one soft talent. These abilities are gained through time and via a combination of experience and prior roles held by a person. They are talents that can be transferred and cannot be taken away. Soft skills enable individuals to operate in any business or organization, and they are not restricted to doing certain tasks or operating in specific work contexts. Soft skills enable a person to show what soft talents he has via his personality, traits, and attitude.

The most significant drawback of soft talents is that they cannot be used to replace hard or technical abilities. In every firm or organization, having a desired qualification or certification is required for all forms of job. A strong soft skill set offers a person an advantage in the competitive landscape, but it is not a substitute for hard talents that are necessary for a certain task to be completed. Another issue is that they can't be quantified or measured until they've been shown. It is tough to demonstrate that you possess a needed soft skill, which is a significant disadvantage.

### *2.3 Soft Skills at Workplace*

Hard abilities are thought to get you an interview, but soft skills are needed to earn and maintain the job. Being an expert in a subject of expertise is no longer sufficient. The stakes are enormous, and it will be your soft talents that set you apart from the pack. More and more businesses are realizing that to obtain a competitive edge, they must

ensure that their employees understand how to conduct themselves at work and interact with customers and colleagues. Soft skills are vital in occupations that do not directly interact with clients. They are, nonetheless, critical for every employee in a company. Take a look at the individuals at the top of your field and ask yourself these questions (D. P. Sreehari 2021).

#### 2.4 Importance of Soft Skills for Students

Soft skills are very important for students, both in terms of their education and in terms of their future professions. Students who recognize the importance of soft skills early on are better able to master their studies, complete their student obligations without difficulty, make more acquaintances who may be useful in the future, and present themselves more effectively to professors who may play an important role in their future careers. Students should acquire soft skills for the benefit of their education as well as their professional careers since they are directly related to greater academic accomplishment.

Furthermore, since students will join the ranks of academic citizens after graduation, they must acquire desirable and suitable types of conduct, features, and abilities that correspond to their social and educational position. As a result, they should serve as role models for persons who are well-developed and balanced, possessing the characteristics and traits that are required of people with their degrees.

### 3. Conclusion

Soft skills are just as crucial for the corporation as they are for the individual. If someone can't operate successfully in a team, combining your technical talents with additional soft skills like creativity and invention, then the company you work for will either be uncompetitive or ineffective. Soft skills are very important in every sector its play a vital role. As a result, it is critical to combine hard and soft talents to advance quickly in your profession. Soft skills are qualities that fall into one of three categories: people skills, social skills, and personal professional traits. Soft skills training, according to experts, should begin while a person is a student for them to function well in both their academic and future employment environments.

Today's workforce's soft talents are rapidly becoming hard skills. It's just not enough to be well-versed in technical abilities without also honing the softer, interpersonal, and relationship-building skills that enable individuals to successfully communicate and cooperate. Organizations are struggling to find meaningful methods to stay competitive and productive, and these people skills are more important than ever. Soft skills development underpins teamwork, leadership, and communication. Because each is a necessary component for organizational and personal success, honing these abilities is critical. The difficulty is that the significance of these soft talents is often underestimated, and they get significantly less training than hard abilities. Organizations seem to expect employees to know how to act on the work for some reason.

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