

The Importance of Soft Skills for mModern Day Professions



Literature

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ABSTRACT

The professional world of learning has undergone a tremendous change. Scores of graduates are losing out in the job market because of lack of soft skills. Having mere hard skills are not sufficient to make one's professional life complete, successful and satisfactory. At present, companies are looking for candidates who are smart and can present themselves well. Hence, an integrated and blended approach of subject know-how with soft skills is required to be successful over others in the present arena. This paper tries to highlight the importance of Soft skills in making students employable for modern professions.

INTRODUCTION

As the educational trends and courses undergo dramatic changes, there are a multitude of opportunity and career options which are available to students today. But getting a decent job in the present scenario has really become difficult as there is rise in competition for jobs. During the last decades in many societies the opinion on Soft skills has changed considerably. Whereas in the past the mastering of hard skills was rated first and Soft skills were considered as "nice to have", the perception has been turned upside down. Presently, Companies are looking for candidates those who really possess excellent Soft skills which include interpersonal skills, presentation skills, communication skills, listening skills, group dynamics, team work, body language, confidence building etc. Soft skills will enable students with strong conceptual and practical framework to build, develop and manage teams. Undoubtedly, they play a very significant role in making students employable. The term soft skills was first used in 1972 and was not widely used until the early 1990s. The Wikipedia (2007) defines soft skills as "Soft skills refers to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, social traits, personal habits, friendliness, positive nature, that mark people to varying degrees." These are essential at every level of the organization.

The importance of Soft skills has been recently acknowledged by corporate. Soft skills fulfill an important role in shaping an individual's personality. It is of high importance for every student to acquire adequate skills beyond academic or technical knowledge. Having scored good percentages in academics and earned some diplomas are not sufficient, students should also possess required Soft skills to be successful in the present tough environment. A person who is having good soft skills can change the problems into opportunities and deal with the negatives in a more constructive and better way. Studies conducted by Stanford Research Institute and Carnegie Mellon Foundation among Fortune 500 CEOs found that 75% of long-term job success depended on people skills, and only 25% on technical skills. Hence soft skills are extremely important in increasing one's own productivity in an organization.

Soft skills play the following important roles in making students employable for modern professions.

- Soft skills play a crucial role in making students employable as it enables them to be flexible, positive to change, handle ever-increasing expectations of employers and to stay globally competitive.
- They empower students to understand and realize their potentiality and how best they can come across as competent individuals in any given situation.
- They help students to tackle difficult situations and come

out with flying colours.

- They motivate students to develop positive attitude and with which they can influence the team members to achieve greater success in their professional life.
- They encourage students to have the presence of mind to take timely decisions at the time of crisis.
- They also encourage students to adopt ethical ways for long-term growth and to stick to the work ethics and cultures of the organization.
- In today's competitive age, everyone is running behind time. It has become a necessity for all companies to work on timely schedules to meet and surpass the competitors. Soft skills enable a student to strictly adhere to the timely schedules that are to be completed on time.
- Soft skills make students to augment their presentation skills as every area of corporate life requires presentation. It is incumbent upon them to become good presenters.
- Days are gone for individual glory or recognition. Team efforts are appreciated by the companies these days. Soft skills make students to realize the growing importance of team spirit.
- Soft skills encourage students to improve the communication skills, both oral as well as written forms. Effective oral communication has a strong role to play in getting the desired results and Good written communication is also equally important in any back office jobs too.
- There is a good saying in English i.e. one cannot become a good communicator unless one is a good listener. Soft skills enable students to develop their good active listening skills.
- Soft skills are playing an important role in shaping a student's personality, they enable social competence, and they complement the hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job.

CONCLUSION

Soft skills are very important to enhance employability. Soft skills need to be enhanced in students to make them competent enough to meet the demands of the current job market. At college level education, it will be a productive venture to incorporate these skills in the syllabus. This will certainly help students develop their employability skills and it will make them execute the assigned works efficiently in any institution after the selection process. Mere academic abilities alone will not be adequate. What is essential is something beyond academic domain such as communication skills, problem solving skills, communication skills which are known as Soft skills. When applicants possess these skills then it becomes easier for employers to train other technical skills easily, both educational institutions and industry should work together for enhancing soft skills as it is rightly said that you need to clap with both hands to get the results.

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