

ROLE OF SOFT SKILLS FOR SHAPING A CAREER

By Vishakha Torane

Abstract

Soft skills are the skills that are difficult to systemize and automate. They are the skills that define leadership and creativity. Also known as Interpersonal Skills, or people skills, they include proficiencies such as communication skills, Personality Development, Body Language conflict resolution, negotiation, creative problem solving, decision making, positivity, time management, motivation, flexibility, Lateral thinking, team building, Leadership skills and selling skills, to name a few. Regardless of your industry, position or whether you're content at your current job or looking for another, honing the soft skills will positively influence the way you interact with others, get along with your manager, approach conflict — and, ultimately, influence whether your career thrives or withers. This paper tries to signify the importance of soft skills in shaping up of your career and how it plays a vital role in sustaining and above all excelling in your career. The data for the research paper is collected from different sources.

Keywords

Soft Skills, Interpersonal skills, Successful career

Introduction

Soft skills are character traits and interpersonal skills that characterize a person's relationships with other people. The Soft skills" is simply a term relating to a collection of personality traits, positive attributes, social graces, communication abilities and competencies that enhance an employee's relationship and performance on the job that lead to a "total fit". For a long time, the importance of soft skills has been undervalued. Most companies assumed that people knew how behave on the job and how to fit in as well as how to be on time, take initiative, and rank as a high level producer or top performer. However, because businesses have become less dictatorial and more social, the value of soft skills to an organization is growing. In addition, in order to gain a competitive edge, employers want people who know how to handle themselves at work and how to relate to customers and colleagues.

Basics about Soft Skills

Soft skills are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. Unlike hard skills, which tend to be specific to a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are broadly applicable. They are the subtle behaviors and communication styles that help make a work environment or interaction with another person easier to manage. Also the best thing about soft skills is you don't need qualifications to get them and you can start working on them right now, whether you are at school, in training or in work. Thus soft skills allow us to effectively and efficiently use our technical skills and knowledge. They improve the way we interact with our bosses, co-workers and customers. They permit us to get our work done on time. They influence how we feel about our jobs and how others perceive us.



Source: (Training Magazine, 2014)

Comparison between Hard skills v/s Soft skills

Criteria	Hard skills	Soft skills
Careers that need hard skills and little soft skills	High Hard skills are required in this profession – E.g.: programming, finance, statistics, etc...	Comparatively Soft skills are less required
Careers that need mostly soft skills and little hard skills	Comparatively Hard skills are less required	High Soft skills are required in this profession – E.g. Hospitality, Sales, etc.
Careers that need both hard and soft skills	High Hard skills are required in this profession ; Lawyer	High Soft skills are required in this profession; Accountant

Literature review

Johnson and Burden (2003) found employers expected younger people to be less likely to have work experience and therefore they 'tend to focus upon 'softer skills' and behavioral attitudes in the recruitment process, with a less prominent role played by qualifications'. Employers report that technical and occupational skills can be taught on-the-job if the recruit has the right soft skills, such as motivation and willingness to learn

Costin (2002) has found that hard skill performance is often dependent upon soft skill capacity, primarily because learning itself is a soft-skill. This implies that a competent evaluation of a potential employee's soft-skills is likely to be more indicative of future performance than any measure of hard skills alone. The prominence employers place on assessing soft skills in the recruitment process not only depends on the job, but can also depend on the nature of the candidate.

A brief overview of Today's Competitive Scenario

There are several things that can be said about today's competitive scenario. This competitive scenario is more volatile and unpredictable. Environmental changes are likely to be discontinuous. There is a declining emphasis on single domestic markets and an increasing emphasis on global markets as more industries globalise. Companies find that they must compete differently to achieve strategic competitiveness and earn above-average or superior returns. There will be a need for managers to make significant and even painful decisions to achieve strategic competitiveness. Therefore, the need of the hour is that the companies must learn to compete differently if they are to achieve strategic competitiveness in the new competitive scenario. This is where the different types of skills come into play and more so ever increases the importance of effective and efficient employees in the organisations. Therefore a sharp soft skill in an employee has become a need of an hour.

Research Methodology

The data for the paper was selected from secondary sources. Secondary data was collected from different sources like Websites, Research papers etc.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the relationship between effective Soft skills and Smooth Career Growth.
2. To study how soft skills has an impact on shaping a career of an individual.
3. To evaluate the impact of soft skills which is indispensable not only in improving the work but it also helps you become an invaluable asset in the eyes of your employers.

Findings

As per the secondary data from different sources the following are the findings:

The need for the ability to communicate well and effectively is directly in proportion to the importance of the role and the level of the position.

Soft skills will ensure a faster career growth through increments, a smoother success path through promotions and also in improving all other aspects of your life.

The more experience and better soft skills you have, the better chance you have on landing a position in your field of choice.

It helps to know how to get along with people and displaying a positive attitude are crucial for success. The problem is, the importance of these **soft skills** is often less valued, and there is very less training provided for them than hard **skills**.

Suggestion / Recommendation

Your style of communication and clarity can build unity and productivity.

Team collaboration and an ability to listen and synthesize a great deal of information are required.

A positive attitude suggests cooperation, even in stressful or time limiting situations.

Good communication is indispensable tools in skillfully interacting with others who matter to get them do or behave in a desired manner.

To be a good employee, you need to know how to solve problems as they come along. Problem solving skills allow you to understand how to look at tasks asked of you and find more efficient ways to complete the jobs.

Conclusion

Soft skills are critical successful factor in career & life .It might be your hard skills that get you the interview, but it's the soft skills that bring you success in your career. In today's competitive scenario you won't be asked whether you have soft skills or not rather you will be directly ask to show them. Having invaluable yet useful soft skills will surely set you apart from those who have never understood their importance. Soft skills are the good manners and personality traits needed to get along with others and build positive relationships. These are the skill which adds value not only to your personality which would help in personal life but also it helps in shaping and enhancing your career goals.

References

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Bio

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