

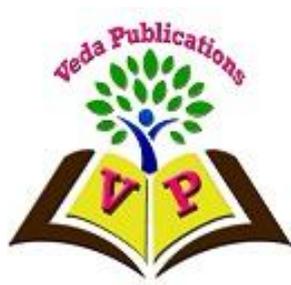


SMART WORK THROUGH SOFT SKILLS

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ABSTRACT



“Personality and soft skills are the indispensable wheels that help the monolith of modern industry run smoothly.” In the process of globalization different trends have been emerging in teaching learning process specifically in the field of English language and communication. In conjunction with hard skills and domain expertise, soft skills play an important role in the first job interview one faces, but also for subsequent career advancement.

In my paper, I would like to discuss soft skills as one of the emerging trends in English language pedagogy. Soft skill is a term often used by career advisers and employers to describe the kind of essential personal and social skills people need to do most jobs. Beyond educational qualifications, technical expertise and quantitative expertise, there lies the importance for soft skills. Soft skills help us to excel in our positions. Knowing how to get along with the people and displaying a positive attitude are crucial for success.

Keywords: *Career Advisers, Essential Personal Skills, Quantitative Expertise*

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Sociologists define the term soft skill as ‘Emotional Intelligence Quotient.’ They are non-technical, intangible personality specific skills that made a person a leader, negotiator and conflict mediator. Hard skills on the other hand are said to be ‘Intelligence Quotient’, i.e., the educational qualifications, experience and expertise etc. With increased globalization and rapid changing in business expectations, the professional managers seeking something beyond educational expertise, which we call today soft skills. According to the results of research conducted by Stanford Research

Institute, among 500 CEOs long term success in job is 75% due to soft skills and only 25% due to technical skill.

IMPORTANCE OF SOFT SKILLS

The importance of soft skills often undervalued and there is far less training provided for it than hard skills. Developing soft skills is a hard work. It requires courage and perseverance. It takes discipline to learn these skills. For some people soft skills come naturally but for some, they need to work harder to acquire them. Soft skills are very important to handle inter personal relations, to take



appropriate decisions, to communicate effectively, to have a good impression and impact to gain professional development. Soft skills help us to excel in our positions. In fact, the ever changing impact of and the style of management pay so much attention to soft skills. Soft skills in the highly competitive corporate world will help you stand out in a crowd of regular job seekers with ordinary skills and talent. The act of listening and presenting ideas, resolving conflict and fostering an open and honest work environment help to build and maintain relationships with people. It is that relation that allows people to participate fully in team work, show appreciation for others and enlist support for their work.

It's important for us to recognise the vital role soft skills play in the entire job field. The soft skills have a significant impact on the attitude of a person to interact with clients, customers, colleagues, supervisors and stake holders. The more positive some one's attitude is, the better that person's relationship will be. This fosters great team performance, and leads people to contribute strongly to the organization's vision and strategy.

Soft skills can be classified into two broad categories; personal traits, inter personal traits. Personal traits include time management, stress management, conflict management, positive attitude, responsibility, self-confidence, self-esteem, courage, honesty, presentation skills, professional ethics and leadership skills. Inter personal traits include team work, communication, networking, empathy, listening skills, problem solving, trouble shooting, leadership, body language and etiquettes. Time Management: "Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michaelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonard da vinci"-Jackson Brown.

Managing time is not about squeezing as many tasks into a day as possible, it's about simplifying how a person works, doing tasks faster without undergoing stress. So, prioritize the work and schedule the time accordingly. Plan your work and work your plan.

Stress Management: "The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future or anticipate troubles but to live in

the present moment wisely and earnestly."-Goutam Buddha.

Stress management refers to the wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapist aimed at controlling a person's levels of stress. Practicing yoga will considerably reduce the physical, emotional and mental stress of an individual.

Conflict Management: "Peace is not absence of conflict; it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means."- Ronald Regan.

The economy is getting increasingly globalised. Effective team work and inter personal skills play vital role in managing conflicts across the globe. It is an ability to identify and handle conflicts sensibly, fairly and efficiently. It is an acquired skill. Careful planning of work would make our life a bit less nerve-racking and more enjoyable.

Positive Attitude: "A positive attitude causes a chain of reactions of positive thoughts, events and outcomes. It is a catalyst and it sparks extra ordinary results" – Wade Boggs.

Positive attitude is another important personal trait. A negative thinker sees a difficulty in every opportunity and a positive thinker sees an opportunity in every difficulty. A strong positive attitude creates more miracles than any other thing, because life is 10% how you make it and 90% how you take it. Positive thinking and positive attitude attracts prosperity, peace and happiness. It also exposes us towards the path of achievements and success. So, accept the challenges whatever we face in our lives.

Responsibility: "The greatest day in your life and mine is when we take total responsibility for our attitudes. That's the day we truly grow up". – John Maxwell.

Responsibility is another personal trait which could be possessed by every human being. It always originates from the superior to subordinate. Normally responsibility moves upwards, where as authority flows downwards. The person accepting the responsibility is accountable for the performance of assigned duties.

Self confidence and courage: These two personal traits are like two sides of a coin. Courageous and self confident leaders usually get identified by senior management of companies or Organizations to drive



complex details. These leaders have the differentiated skill over their peers of being self assured, driven solely by what they feel is right.

Honesty: "Honesty is the best policy" – Honesty refers to facet of moral character and connotes positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, straight forwardness of conduct. Simply, it's being trust worthy.

Professional Ethics: Professional ethics encompass the personal, the organizational and corporate standards of behaviour. Professional ethics is the need of the hour in India. When a person is at the work spot, he must think of his work only. He must put his heart and soul into the work. Each employee is an organic part of the Organization and must strive to contribute his mind to the successful functioning of the organization.

Inter personal Skills: Man is a social animal and his success in life largely depends in his relationship and interaction with others. We must respect the views and sentiments of others. When we want to differ their views, we must very politely give hints to them without affecting their feelings.

Team Work: Team work is an inter personal trait which is also a soft skill. Since most activity in today's world depend to a great extent on how a person works in team environment. This soft skill is a key component that has a high correlation with one's career progression. Poor inter personal skill in a team work may lead to conflicts between members. So adapting this skill by the members of the team very is essential and it helps them to boost their confidence.

Communication: A very critical soft skill in any profession is communication – both written and verbal. A strong communicator earns the respect of his team. A poor communicator, on the other hand is often verbose and long-winded. He tests the patients of the audience. A related and extension of communication is net working.

Listening: God has given us one mouth but two ears. May be He wanted us to listen more. A vast majority of people are very poor listeners. Listening skill coupled with empathy is a careful blend of being perceptive considerate and understanding of other's view point.

Leadership: Leaders, Executives and Managers need to be very clear about what they expect from others.

They must trust themselves. They should always smile and stay together. A leader always learns new things; accept responsibility and one's action. He searches for source of a problem and resolving it. This is also considered as soft skills. This is what one needs to get adapted. Such a leader leads a team confidently in order to achieve the goal of any organization.

Body language and Etiquettes: The last important inter personal traits are body language and etiquettes. Body language is a term for communication using body movements or gestures instead words. Etiquette is a code that governs the expectations of social behaviour within a society. Civility at the work place is essential to retain the dignity of professionalism.

Antiquity of soft skills: Soft skill is a term that is used most recently after the development of science and technology. But it is also important to internalise that soft skills have existed for years in the past in various forms. The book of Proverb written by the wisest King on earth, King Solomon in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible has group of wise sayings, composed from the 10th to the 4th century BC. The sayings mostly admonition to behave in a particular way, abound with sharp statements. The essence of many of these in modern parlance may be called what we refer to as soft skills today. Here are few examples: Proverbs 29:20 "Do you see a Man who speaks in hast? There is more hope for a fool than for him" This refers to effective communication skill in modern terminology. The meaning here is that one must speak with high clarity so that it is intelligible to others, otherwise it has no value to others. Another example: "If you falter at times of trouble, how small is your strength". This reflects our leadership qualities especially in times of crisis.

Another book that discuss many concepts that have several linings of soft skills. The famous book written by Dale Carnegie – "How to win friends and influence others."

Self Assessment of Soft Skills: Here are some situations through which you can easily assess whether soft skills are present in you or not. Example: If you are good at getting clients, and not so good in retaining them – it means you have soft skills gap.



If you are Manager of a big Organization and suddenly many of your employees turned against you – It means you have soft skills gap. We have a number of examples in our day to day life situations. Today, our work places demand that people do not become cynical when situation get tough. An optimistic and enthusiastic attitude coupled with courage and confidence is required to take up the risk. We plan many things in our life. How far we are successful in getting these things done? Planning is necessary but execution of plan is equally important and it takes soft skills to do that. It's just not enough to be highly trained in technical skills without developing the soft interpersonal and relationship building skills that help people to communicate and collaborate effectively. These people skills are more critical than ever as organizations struggle to find meaningful ways to remain competitive and productive. Team work, leadership and communication are under pinned by soft skills development. Since each is an essential element for organizational and personal success, developing these skills is very important. Therefore assuming the growing importance of soft skills, one should be aware of these skills in order to be successful in life. Soft skills being internal and innate they can be acquired by constant practice. To train you can be a part of team activities, ask family members and friends to write down your best and worst traits, practice the habit of giving feed back and live consciously. To conclude soft skills add friends, subtract enemies, multiply joy, divide sorrows leaving the remainder as success in our personal and professional life.

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