Hiring managers usually look for two types of skills in the prospective candidates – hard skills and soft skills. Hard skills are job-specific skills which are attained by attending school or training programs or through experiential learning on the job. But if you’d like to know what other important skills hiring managers look for while screening resumes, pay close attention as we explain soft skills and their importance.
WHAT ARE SOFT SKILLS?

Soft skills are interpersonal skills which are used to describe your approach to life, work, and relationships with other people. Unlike hard skills, these are not professional job-specific skills like accountancy, graphics designing, etc. Soft skills are your unique selling point which gives you a competitive edge over others in the workplace and in life.

Soft skills comprise of personal attributes, communication skills and abilities, and personality traits which differentiate people with similar hard-skill-set from each other. Other names given to soft skills are people skills, interpersonal skills, and social skills.

Some examples of soft skills are:
- Communication Skills
- Leadership
- Work Ethic
- Creative Problem Solving
- Time management
- Conflict Resolution
- Team player
You wouldn’t deny if we say that hard-skills are at the top of every hiring manager’s priority list. However, a research by Glassdoor found out that on an average, each corporate job opening attracts 250 resumes, only four to six of those candidates get an interview call, and only one gets the job.

What separates the successful candidate from the other job seekers is, most probably, a set of soft skills. Employers look for candidates with a strong work ethic, who not only does the job effectively and efficiently, but also stay focused, organized, competitive, dedicated, give ideas, knows how to work with a team, has a positive attitude and has leadership skills.

**Why?**

Because in this competitive world, work isn’t limited to just what’s offered to you by your boss. It requires you to solve the problems creatively, give ideas for better business, save time, handle conflicts, maintain a peaceful and optimistic environment in the workplace, etc.
THE TOP 7 SOFT SKILLS

Even though the knowledge, the training, and the abilities make anyone a perfect fit for a job. But when everyone possesses such knowledge, training, and abilities, the employers’ expectations increase in terms of ‘something’ that should separate the selected candidate from others. This something is where soft skills kick in.

Here’s a list of the top 7 soft skills which are deemed to be beneficial in this competitive market:

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
WORK ETHICS
TIME MANAGEMENT
LEADERSHIP SKILLS
TEAMWORK
CRITICAL THINKING
ADAPTABILITY
Communication skills is a broad soft skills category. It refers to how you communicate with clients, customers, colleagues, employees, employers, vendors, partners and almost everyone connected to the concerned business. Good communication skills constitute the ability to not only speak confidently but also good presentation skills and the ability to listen and empathize whenever necessary.

Communication skills become a hard-skill when we talk about customer service jobs. For other jobs, this category is a great soft skill and includes:

- Speaking Skills
- Presentation Skills
- Negotiation Skills
- Nonverbal communication skills
- Listening and empathizing
- Persuasion
- Public Speaking
- Storytelling
- Written Communication, etc.
Leadership skill set is among the most sought-after skill set by employers. Hiring managers look for candidates who have good potential to grow. Such candidates are self-reliant, can work with the team seamlessly, and even put efforts to make the team and their efforts better.

Leadership skills include abilities to lead a team, make decisions and work for the benefit of the company and the team keeping aside the personal viewpoints, biases, and conflicts. It stems from the experience of handling projects and teams.

**Leadership is one of the hard-skills employers look for when hiring c-level or other high ranking executives. However, it is also a very important soft skill for other positions and includes:**

- Team Management
- Conflict Management & Resolution
- Decision Making
- Drafting Delegation Strategies
- Drafting Motivation Strategies, etc.
Work ethics are inherent. It is a soft skills category which is really hard to teach and even harder to demonstrate during a job interview. It is how a person feels about his job and carries out his duties and responsibilities. Having a strong work ethic means the person acknowledges his position and does the job assigned to him honestly and diligently with all the accountability.

Some examples of soft skills which come under the work ethics category are:

- Completing tasks on time
- Punctuality
- Competitiveness
- Perseverance
- Persistence
- Being Focused & Organized
- Business Etiquettes, etc.
Different jobs have different requirements and some require you to constantly work and communicate with other team members. This makes teamwork to be one of the most important soft skills for careers in market research, event management, client servicing, etc. which require employees to do team projects and attend frequent departmental meetings, etc.

Examples of soft skills in the teamwork category are:
- Team Player
- Collaborative
- Empathetic
- Influential
- Networking Skills
- Social Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Knowledge of how to deal with difficult personalities, etc.
Critical thinking involves a careful observation and analysis of objective information to make a reasoned judgement. It involves evaluation of statistics, facts, observable phenomenon, research findings, and other trustable data to draw reasonable conclusions.

Hiring managers love candidates who can evaluate the situation using logical thought and come up with the best possible solution. Many employers even require candidates to pass a critical thinking test before appearing for the interview.

Key phrases used to convey critical thinking skills are:
- Analytical
- Problem Solving
- Artistic Sense
- Critical Observer
- Desire to Learn
- Innovator
- Logical Thinker
- Creative Thinker, etc
ADAPTABILITY

Not everyone in the workplace will share your religion, caste, or other sets of beliefs. Moreover, being adaptable and open-minded is almost a prerequisite soft skill in this rapidly changing technological environment. Adaptability is all about embracing the differences and going with the flow. It’s important to maintain a sound professional environment in the organization.

Key phrases used to convey adaptability are:
- Calm
- Optimistic
- Open Minded
- Curious, etc.
DIGITAL SOFT SKILLS TRAINING

Thanks to the digital world, soft skills training is possible if you have an internet connection and a few dollars to spare. Online learning platforms like:

- Udemy
- Edx
- Coursera
- Khan Academy

Sites such as these and many others have hundreds of courses which teach you time management, communication, and other soft skills. You can also browse through various educational applications on the Google Play store or Apple App Store for free and interactive options.
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