



**Did you know that “soft skills” are just as important to employers as technical skills?
"Soft Skills" are also called "Foundational Skills" or “Employability Skills.”**

According to CAREERwise Education, employers in various industries want and need employees with both soft skills and hands-on experience. Employers prefer employees who can:

- See the big picture
- Solve problems
- Communicate well (both written and verbal)
- Work effectively as part of a team

Here are a few comments from various employers:

- “Even when the applicant has good qualifications, they are hired based on personality and soft skills.”
- “Communication is as important as technical skills.”
- “[Employees need to understand] new ways to look at business and need to be innovative.”
- “Customer service orientation, basic work expectations such as being on time, professional dress, following rules and procedures, etc., are all lacking (in the people we see).”
- “Finding the right technical skills, combined with the ability to communicate and collaborate with business partners, is the biggest challenge.”

To discuss how your “soft skills” address employers’ needs or to learn more about these types of skills and how they apply to your chosen career, stop by the Career Resource Center (CRC).

For other career-related topics or for individual career assistance, contact:

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No appointment is necessary for career search handouts Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. when the building is open.

Soft Skills Categories

Essential General Employability Skills:

Foundational Skills

- Be organized
- Arrive to work on time, or early
- Be dependable
- Have a positive attitude toward work
- Exert high levels of effort and perseverance
- Complete tasks on time and accurately—both pleasant and unpleasant
- Seek out information to improve skills
- Be flexible and adaptable
- Follow dress code or uniform guidelines
- Maintain personal hygiene

Interpersonal Skills

- Be friendly and polite
- Respect supervisors and coworkers
- Respond appropriately to customer requests
- Request feedback
- Accept constructive criticism
- Resolve conflicts calmly and appropriately

Communication Skills

- Read and understand written materials
- Listen, understand, and ask questions
- Follow instructions
- Express ideas clearly when speaking or writing
- Learn required technology and use appropriately

Problem Solving and Critical Thinking

- Accept and adapt to change (flexibility)
- Be willing to start, stop, and switch duties (multitask)
- Work calmly in busy environments (focus)
- Start tasks without prompting (initiative)
- Ask questions to solve problems (learn/improve)

Teamwork

- Be comfortable working with people of diverse backgrounds
- Be sensitive to other peoples' needs
- Take responsibility for own share of work (accountability)
- Contribute to team goals

Ethics and Legal Responsibilities

- Take responsibility for own decisions and actions
- Understand and follow company rules and procedures
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Act professionally and with maturity

Professional Skills: (To advance or work in higher level positions)

Career Development

- Learn new skills and take on different projects
- Serve on work committees
- Take initiative and work with little supervision
- Understand the industry and common business practices
- Align your work goals with the mission and vision of your employer
- Understand the different roles of coworkers

Leadership

- Coach/mentor others
- Motivate/direct people as they work
- Be willing to take risks
- Be able to negotiate/compromise to find solutions to problems
- Demonstrate efficiency by saving time/money for the company through analyzing business needs
- Seek to simplify/improve effectiveness of processes
- Build partnerships/teams with coworkers