

Soft Skills: The “Other” Skills Needed to Get and Keep a Job!



TIP SHEET

Each job requires a person to have certain work skills that match the tasks required to be successful. For example, car mechanics must be able to use tools, teachers need to be able to use computers, and those who answer phones need good speaking and often notetaking skills. Just as important are the “soft” skills that often are the decision maker in getting or keeping a job.

WHY ARE SOFT SKILLS IMPORTANT?

Employers look for people who have a positive attitude, are polite, on time, call in when sick, dress appropriately for the job, are willing to learn and improve, and are someone they can depend on. Employees need to be able to follow instructions and ask for help when needed. When working with others, it is important to know how to be a team player who listens well and speaks up for themselves. Social communication skills, such as a “hello” with a smile, are very important in the workplace.

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

Communication Skills:

- Teach appropriate and personal space
- Practice asking for help, listening, hand shaking, and social conversations
- Participate in school social events and activities
- Encourage good posture, eye contact, and body language

Interpersonal Skills:

- Play games and sports that encourage teamwork
- Teach phone skills and practice working through difficult situations and misunderstandings
- Give constructive criticism and suggestions for improvements
- Explain the importance of personal appearance and hygiene

Personal Responsibility Skills:

- Teach use of alarms, timers, organizers
- Allow failure and risk-taking
- Explain the importance of being dependable
- Practice self-advocacy skills

