

Top 10 Soft Skills for Job Hunters

By [Kate Lorenz](#), Posted Jan 26th 2009 @ 2:40PM

From: <http://jobs.aol.com/articles/2009/01/26/top-10-soft-skills-for-job-hunters/>

Each company looks for a different mix of skills and experience depending on the business it's in. Yet it's no longer enough to be a functional expert. To complement these unique core competencies, there are certain "soft skills" every company looks for in a potential hire.

"Soft skills" refer to a cluster of personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that make someone a good employee and compatible to work with. Companies value soft skills because research suggests, and experience shows that they can be just as important an indicator of job performance as hard skills.

Today's service economy and the ascendance of work teams in large organizations puts a new premium on people skills and relationship-building," Portland-based human resources expert Lori Kocon says. "And with business being done at an increasingly fast pace, employers also want people who are agile, adaptable and creative at solving problems."

Kocon advises all job candidates -- especially those who aspire to managerial positions -- to get in touch with their soft sides. Some of the most common soft skills employers are looking for and will be assessing you on include:

1. Strong Work Ethic

Are you motivated and dedicated to getting the job done, no matter what? Will you be conscientious and do your best work?

2. Positive Attitude

Are you optimistic and upbeat? Will you generate good energy and good will?

3. Good Communication Skills

Are you both verbally articulate and a good listener? Can you make your case and express your needs in a way that builds bridges with colleagues, customers, and vendors?

4. Time Management Abilities

Do you know how to prioritize tasks and work on several different projects at once? Will you use your time on the job wisely?

5. Problem-Solving Skills

Are you resourceful and able to creatively solve problems that will inevitably arise? Will you take ownership of problems or leave them for someone else?

6. Acting as a Team Player

Will you work well in groups and teams? Will you be cooperative and take a leadership role when appropriate?

7. Self-Confidence

Do you truly believe you can do the job? Will you project a sense of calm and inspire confidence in others? Will you have the courage to ask questions that need to be asked and to freely contribute your ideas?

8. Ability to Accept and Learn from Criticism

Will you be able to handle criticism? Are you coachable and open to learning and growing as a person and as a professional?

9. Flexibility/Adaptability

Are you able to adapt to new situations and challenges? Will you embrace change and be open to new ideas?

10. Working Well Under Pressure

Can you handle the stress that accompanies deadlines and crises? Will you be able to do your best work and come through in a pinch?

Your Reaction: Today, we have been talking about technical skills, executive functioning skills, and social skills. Please answer the following questions.

1. What technical skills are mentioned in this article?

2. What executive functioning skills are mentioned in this article?

3. What social skills are mentioned in this article?

4. What do you do well?

5. What do you need to work on?