



soft skills & professionalism

WHAT ARE SOFT SKILLS?

Did you know that soft skills are just as important as technical skills to your professional success? Soft skills relate to how you work with others—something employers are paying more and more attention to in the hiring process.

Soft skills include your ability to:

- Communicate
- Think critically and solve problems
- Learn new skills
- Lead others
- Function independently
- Work as part of a team to accomplish a common goal
- Accept and thrive in an atmosphere of change

HOW DO I WORK ON PROFESSIONALISM?

Professionalism is more than your outward appearance. While your attire and body language are important, being professional means being the best version of yourself. A true professional embodies the following qualities:

- **Preparation:** Read the required documents ahead of the meeting or class. If it's an interview, research the company beforehand. Be on time and bring the necessary

tools. Get enough sleep so you are alert, and plan for all possible outcomes.

- **Initiative / Being Proactive:** Rather than waiting to be told what to do, successful professionals take the initiative to recognize problems and suggest solutions. Keep an eye open for opportunities and volunteer strategically.
- **Prioritization:** If you have more things to do in a day than you can accomplish, prioritize the most important tasks each day and make time for them, using less time and energy on other tasks and distractions.
- **Communication:** Connect and keep up with the people who need to know what you are working on, and update them on your progress. What are the best channels to communicate? What are the appropriate timelines to accomplish your tasks? If you are anticipating a problem, reach out and inform those who need to know.
- **Engagement and Commitment:** If you are merely going through the motions and not invested in the larger context of your work, you are not being professional. Make the work you do a top priority and give it your best energy and talent—it will show.

85% OF SUCCESS IS DETERMINED BY SOFT SKILLS

More In-Demand Soft Skills...

STRONG WORK ETHIC
Initiative, reliability and doing the job right the first time

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
Identifying and managing your and others' emotions

COMPUTER AND TECHNICAL LITERACY
Basic computer competency is a must nowadays

RESEARCH SKILLS
Assess situations, seek multiple perspectives and gather more in-depth, harder-to-locate information

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT
Be an expert at optimizing business procedures