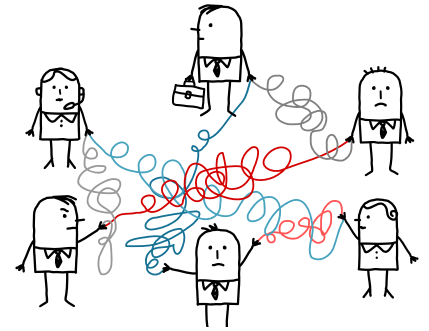


Hard Skills & Soft Skills

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) asked employers which skills and qualities are wanted in job seekers. First, employers said that three things are needed in the job seeker's history.

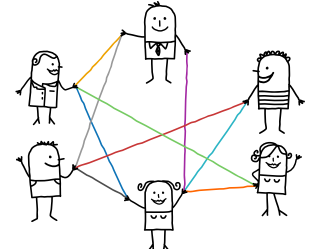
- Has the job seeker finished training or colleges classes required and earned certificate or degree required for the job (such as nurse, mechanic, or electrician)?
- Does the job seeker actually have the paid and unpaid work experience listed on the job application and resume?
- Do the personal references say good things about the job seeker?



After a job seeker passes the above three reviews, the employer invites the job seeker to an interview to ask questions that **will reveal** if this person has the hard skills and soft skills needed for the job opening.

SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT IN JOB SEEKERS

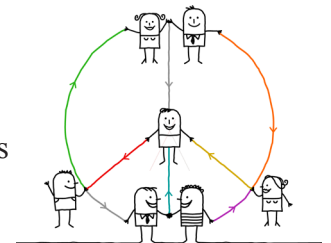
- #1 **Ability to work in a team structure (soft skill)**
- #2 **Ability to make decisions and solve problems (soft skill)**
- #3 Ability to plan, organize, and put work tasks in correct order (hard skill)
- #4 Ability to correctly think and make decisions about information (hard skill)
- #5 **Ability to communicate (talk and listen) with persons inside and outside the company (soft skill)**
- #6 Ability to analyze (figure out) numbers and math data (hard skill)
- #7 Understand technical skills required for the job (hard skill)
- #8 Understand computer skills and software programs required for the job (hard skill)
- #9 Ability to create (write) and edit (use correct grammar) written reports (hard skill)
- #10 **Ability to sell or influence others (soft skill)**



Employers said that what makes a job seeker stand out from others is evidence that the job seeker has both hard (technical) skills and soft (people) skills needed for the job and company work site.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF HARD SKILLS & SOFT SKILLS?

Hard skills — Worker's technical skills and know-how needed to perform the job tasks. **Soft skills** — Worker's personality and interpersonal (person-to-person) skills that help create relationships with other people, such as customers, coworkers, and supervisors.



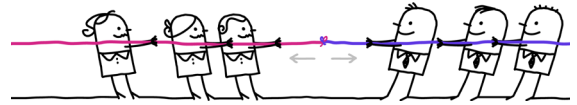
Successful workers learn both soft skills and hard skills. Hard (technical) skills are learned in training classes. Soft (people) skills are difficult to learn because there are few training classes in personality improvement. For example, nursing students learn hard skills in nursing classes to treat patients. Good nurses also need soft skills such as understanding, listening, and "bedside manners" (gentle conversations with patients after operations). **Soft skills may not taught in school, so it is the responsibility of every student to learn soft skills (develop the personality) needed for success in the job, while at the same time learning the technical hard skills.**

How can I learn soft skills now?

You can learn soft skills by knowing what soft skills are! **First**, read the four soft skills on the list — Skills Employers Want in Job Seekers. **Second**, look for situations around you to practice soft skills. For example, first soft skill listed by employers is ability to work in a team structure. How can you learn to work in a team structure while you are in school? 1) Join a sports team and find out what you can do to encourage the team to operate as a winning unit. 2) Join a club, become an officer, and help club members to work together. 3) Volunteer as a worker for a drama production to work together with others to produce a play. 4) Volunteer for your city to work as a team on a special event.

How do employers find out if a job seeker has soft skills?

Employers ask! For example, when an employer wants to know about teamwork skills, the job seeker may be asked: **Describe a project that was done successfully while you were working as a member of a team. What do you consider to be advantages of working on a team to complete a project? Do you work better alone or as part of a team?** (Correct answer is "I am able to work alone and as part of a team" and be ready with examples of successful projects you have completed alone and as part of a team.)



Additional soft skill questions employers may ask job seekers: 1) Describe a problem you had to solve in your last job and how you solved it. 2) How do you plan and organize your day? 3) Tell me about a time when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with and how you handled it. 4) Tell me about the steps you use to reach an important decision. During the interview, some employers may say, "Sell me this pen." Interviewers use the "sell" question to see how you react to surprise interview question and to test your creativity. To answer correctly: Don't panic. Just be yourself. Describe the pen. Talk about what the pen can do for the interviewer.

QUICK CHECK:

1. List 3 things needed in a job seeker's history.
2. After inviting a job seeker to an interview, the employer asks questions that will reveal what?
3. From Skills Employers Want in Job Seekers:
 - a) Write down the top 2 skills employers want in job seekers.
 - b) Are these 2 soft skills or hard skills?
 - c) Write down 2 more examples of soft skills from this list.
 - d) Write down 3 examples of hard skills from this list.
4. What do employers think makes a job seeker stand out from other applicants?
5. Define hard skills.
6. Define soft skills
7. What do successful workers learn?
- 8
 - a) Where may hard (technical) skills be learned?
 - b) Why are soft skills more difficult to learn?
 - c) For what do students have a responsibility?
9. List the first and second steps to learn soft skills.
10. List 3 ways to learn to work in a team structure while you are in school.
11. How do employers find out if a job seeker has soft skills?
12. List 2 questions employers may ask to find out about a your teamwork skills.
13. What is the correct answer to the question, "Do you work better alone or as part of a team?"
14. Write your answer to one of the 4 additional soft skill questions.
15. a) For what 2 reasons does an interviewer say "Sell me this pen?" b) Describe 4 things to do to answer this question.
16. Why do you think workers with soft skills in teamwork are hire for:
 - a) Restaurant jobs?
 - b) Car dealership sales jobs?
 - c) Cashier jobs?
17. Describe what you are going to do this school year to learn the soft skill of teamwork.