

What Are Soft Skills?



Soft skills are a combination of social skills and character traits that are essential for success in school, in a career, and in life.

Here are a few examples of important soft skills and how you can work on developing them.

Communication Good communication goes two ways. Being able to express yourself is important, but so is being able to listen.

Speak clearly. Be aware of your speech habits. Do you speak too fast or too slowly? Too loudly or too softly? Also be aware of your tone of voice.

Be a good listener. Make eye contact and ask questions. Focus on what the other person is saying, not just on what you want to say next.

Pay attention to your nonverbal cues. Make sure your body language shows that you are engaged and interested.

Problem-solving Your overall well-being and the way others see you are both influenced by the way you tackle life's difficulties.

Define the outcome you want. When you have a problem, visualize an outcome that's realistic and acceptable to you. Then, come up with steps that will help you achieve that outcome.

Don't let obstacles deter you. Focus on the outcome you want, and on what you can do to achieve that outcome.

For more problem-solving tips, watch this short video.



VIDEO

Adaptability Being adaptable means being flexible and keeping an open mind.

Be open-minded. Listen to others and be willing to change your thinking when presented with new information or a different perspective.

Step out of your comfort zone. Trying new things helps you grow. It also makes it much easier for you to adapt to change in the future.

Teamwork Whether you're playing a sport, participating in a group project, or working at a job, being a good team member is a valuable skill.

Maintain a positive attitude. Even when a task is difficult, frustrating, or boring, try to be friendly to all team members and keep a positive attitude.

Be reliable. Do what you say you're going to do, and don't make excuses. If you need assistance, don't hesitate to ask for help.

Be flexible. Have your own ideas, but be open to the suggestions of others.

Conflict resolution Conflict resolution means having the ability to work with others to figure out a solution to a problem.

Communicate clearly. State your point of view in a calm, clear voice. Let others talk, and listen carefully to what they have to say.

Watch your body language. Stay relaxed. Keep your hands at your sides and your palms open.

Stay calm. If things start to get heated, stop, take a deep breath, count to four, and exhale. You'll have a much better chance of resolving any conflict if you can remain calm.