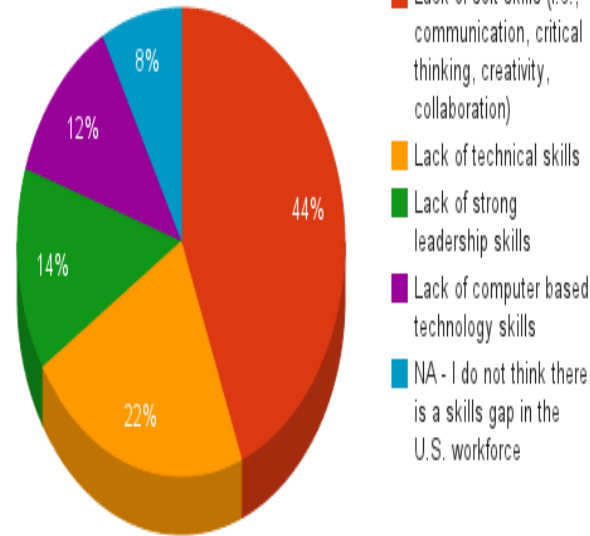


Ways of Improving Soft Skills.....

- **Improving communication skills-**
Make eye contact and acknowledge everyone's presence in the room. Practice both formal and conversational speaking. Hone your writing skills and ALWAYS proofread.
- **ACCEPT & LEARN FROM ALL CRITICISM-** Though difficult at times, it is crucial to learn to listen carefully to constructive criticism, hold off sharing your initial thoughts until you have had time to reflect, turn a negative into a positive, learn from the person sharing their feedback and be appreciative of your chance to grow.
- **LEARN TO LISTEN-** Much of the time, importance is placed on the ability to speak effectively, but it's equally important to listen effectively. To listen properly it's important to look at the topic being discussed from the speaker's viewpoint, allowing them to finish speaking before asking a question and MAKE EYE CONTACT. Listening effectively improves relationships, solves problems and ensures understanding.

Which of the following do you feel BEST defines the "gap" in the U.S. workforce skills gap?



SOURCE: ADECCO

CNBC



School-to-Career Services
Mynderse Academy Guidance Office
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SOFT SKILLS

Soft skills (n):

a combination of people skills, social skills, communication skills, character traits, attitudes, career attributes, social intelligence and emotional intelligence quotients among others that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills.



Hard skills (n):

specific, teachable abilities that can be defined and measured, such as typing, writing, math, reading and the ability to use software programs.

Top *Soft Skills* Employers Are Looking For

1. COMMUNICATION

The ability to articulately communicate (in writing and verbally) with colleagues and clients is considered one of the **MOST HIGHLY VALUED** skills by employers.

2. TEAMWORK

It is as vital to have the ability to work within a team setting as it is to work independently. Rarely does a company's success depend on one person; rather it is a collaborative effort to bring everyone's skills together to achieve a common goal. It also contributes to a friendly office culture.

3. FLEXIBILITY

The ability to adapt to change is critical. Employers are looking for employees who are capable of pivoting when necessary and finding alternative solutions or new direction toward the company's goals.

4. PROBLEM SOLVING

Companies want employees who can think on their feet; those who look for solutions to unexpected challenges. Bring a solution to the table when bringing awareness of a problem.

5. ANALYTICAL THINKING

Having an ability to analyze information and putting it to use is a highly desirable trait by employers. Analytical thinking involves working around challenges, and developing new strategies to overcome obstacles.

6. LEADERSHIP

Leadership attributes allow you to inspire and motivate workers around you; thus allowing others to reach their full potential and achieve the company goals.

7. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict is inevitable in nearly all workplaces; having the ability to resolve issues with co-workers will help you maintain relationships with peers and work more effectively.

8. TIME MANAGEMENT

Employers are looking for employees who can strategically manage their time and balance multiple tasks in order to effectively accomplish company goals.

9. ASSERTIVENESS

Having confidence in your abilities and willingness to assert your opinion when necessary demonstrate that you hold yourself accountable for the quality of work you produce.

10. CREATIVITY

The ability to come up with imaginative and original ways to solve problems...**THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX!**



Research conducted by Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation and Stanford Research Center has concluded that 85% of job success comes from having well-developed soft and people skills, and only 15% of job success comes from technical skills and knowledge (hard skills).

SOURCE: <http://www.nationalskills.org/the-real-skills-gap/>