



## Experiential Learning Program

### Developing Workplace Skills

Employers are on the lookout for a number of key skills, which can be organized into two categories: “Hard Skills” and “Soft Skills”.

“**Hard Skills**” are those that you need to be able to perform a particular job. These vary depending on the type of role you will be performing or the industry in which you will be working in. They can usually be developed through studying and training. Examples of “Hard Skills” might include fluency in a foreign language, web design, finance, the law, medicine, knowledge of particular software, proficiency in accounting, or experience in a particular industry sector. The acquisition of “Hard Skills” are usually achieved either in post-secondary educational settings or in the actual workplace, or both!

“**Soft Skills**” on the other hand are usually self-taught and self-developed. Unlike “Hard Skills” they are not specific to an industry or job. As such they become increasingly valuable to all employers, regardless of the type of industry they operate in, as it helps them to understand how you will fit in with their working environment and how you will perform as one of their employees.

**The ELP at Learning Prep focuses on the development and improvement of the “Soft Skills” required for success in the workplace.** It is not intended that the “Hard Skills” attendant to a specific workplace assignment is to prepare you for employment in that work at any time during your career in the workplace; rather it is to provide you with the opportunity to cultivate, nurture, and refine the “Soft Skills” that will enable you to succeed in multiple workplace environments.

**These “Soft Skills” include the following:**

**Communication Skills:** Listening, Speaking, & Writing! One of the most important skills that employers want is people who can accurately interpret what others are saying and organize and express their thoughts clearly.

**Work Ethic:** All companies have objectives to meet and targets to achieve. Without a committed workforce, working hard to constantly improve their company’s performance, the company would fail. Employers therefore look for clear evidence of someone who is deeply committed not only to their own development and success, but also to their role and their company’s success. Dependability, honesty, self-confidence, personal integrity and a positive attitude are prized qualities in any line of work.

**Leadership Skills:** Another “Soft Skill” that employers value is how well you can lead. The ability to take charge and manage your co-workers, to inspire others to advance the organization's interest, should that be required.

**Personal Management Skills:** The ability to plan and manage multiple assignments and tasks, set priorities, and adapt to changing conditions and work assignments for yourself and others.

**Time Management:** Being able to manage your time in busy working environments is fundamental. With a number of tasks to complete, you will need to demonstrate that you can handle the pressure while also prioritizing and being able to allocate your time effectively to the tasks at hand. Punctuality is also key as deadlines and meetings will require you to be on time. You will also need to prove that you can adapt and demonstrate how flexible you are when things don't go as planned.

**Interpersonal Effectiveness:** Employers note whether an employee can relate to co-workers and build relationships with others in the organization. Employees with a positive, can-do attitude.

**Analytical and problem-solving skills, Initiative and Enterprise:** Employers want people who can use creativity, reasoning, and past experiences to identify and solve problems effectively. Workers who seize the moment to advance the interests of the organization. People who are good problem-solvers, finding solutions when faced with difficulties or setbacks.

**Self-Management:** Workers who get on with their work without someone else having to check up on them every five minutes. Workers who stay on top of their deadlines and are able to delegate tasks to others to make sure things are done well and on time.

**Teamwork:** In today's work environment, many jobs involve working collaboratively in one or more groups. Employers want someone who can bring out the best in others.

**Computer/Technical Literacy:** Although employers expect to provide training on job-specific software, they also expect employees to be proficient with basic computer skills.

**Learning Skills:** Jobs are constantly changing and evolving and employers want people who can grow and learn as changes come.

**Academic competence in reading and math:** Although most jobs don't require calculus, almost all jobs require the ability to read and comprehend instructions and perform basic math.

**Additional "Soft Skills" include the following: Ability to work under pressure, Decision-making, Self-motivation, Resilience, Conflict resolution, & Adaptability.**