

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

SOFT SKILLS

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Clint Cummings, Extension Specialist

Christopher T. Sneed, Assistant Professor and Consumer Economics Specialist

Ann A. Berry, Professor and Consumer Economics Specialist

Barbara Metzger, Extension Specialist

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Sreedhar Upendram, Assistant Professor

Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics

Employers are looking for dependable, reliable and professional people who can work well with others, have a positive attitude and communicate effectively. In fact, many employers say these types of skills, called soft skills, are as or more important than technical skills.

Soft skills are key to success. These are skills we possess as individuals and bring to any job situation. They cut across any occupation to complement technical training we may have and tie it all together to help us be a dependable, effective employee. Below are a list of soft skills, followed by how they are important for employment.



Soft skills include:

- Interpersonal skills
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Initiative
- Dependability and reliability
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Lifelong learning
- Communication skills
- Teamwork

GETTING A JOB

- **Reputation:** Developing a professional persona doesn't just happen at work. We constantly communicate things about ourselves so be sure you're communicating the right message. This especially applies to social media.

- **Interpersonal Communication:** Interpersonal communication includes what is written and spoken, as well as nonverbal communication. Be sure to communicate what you intend to communicate.
- **Dress:** Dress like you want the job. This is your chance to make a first impression and convey a professional appearance.
- **Preparation:** Take the initiative to learn about the job you're applying for and the organization as a whole. Use this information in your cover letter, interview and interactions.

KEEPING A JOB

- **Think teamwork:** Whatever the job, you are likely to be part of a team. This could mean working directly with others or being part of a unit or division where someone else will fill your role on the next shift. Working well with others is vital.
- **Communicate, communicate, communicate:** The same written, verbal and nonverbal skills needed to get a job apply once you're on the job as well.
- **Be a solid employee:** Prove to be dependable and reliable by doing what you say you will do.

ADVANCING YOUR CAREER

- **Go above and beyond:** Don't just do the job, take the initiative to do more than what is asked or expected.
- **Keep learning:** To be the best employee you can be both now and in the future you need to develop a deep understanding of your work.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

For additional information on developing soft skills, download a copy of UT Extension Publication "W 936-G Finding Work – Soft Skills." To learn more, connect with an Extension agent by contacting your county Extension office.



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