

These Soft Skills Help Employers and Employees

Sixteen percent of employers say soft skills are more important than hard skills when evaluating candidates for a job. The reasoning behind this? Employers are much more likely to take on an employee who's a good cultural fit, even if it means that they need to provide some training for their new hire. That's because their team may be able to work more efficiently and cohesively if employees have compatible attitudes, and that the new hire is less likely to leave the position if they're a good fit with the team and company. This all means good business for the organization.

“When companies are assessing job candidates, they're looking for the best of both worlds: someone who is not only proficient in a particular function, but also has the right personality,” said Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources at CareerBuilder. “Along with responsibilities, it's important to highlight soft skills that can give employers an idea of how quickly you can adapt and solve problems, whether you can be relied on to follow through and how effectively you can lead and motivate others.”

The top ten most popular soft skills companies say they look for when hiring include:

1. Candidate has a strong work ethic – 73 percent
2. Candidate is dependable – 73 percent
3. Candidate has a positive attitude – 72 percent
4. Candidate is self-motivated – 66 percent
5. Candidate is team-oriented – 60 percent
6. Candidate is organized, can manage multiple priorities – 57 percent
7. Candidate works well under pressure – 57 percent
8. Candidate is an effective communicator – 56 percent
9. Candidate is flexible – 51 percent
10. Candidate is confident – 46 percent

Show proof of your work, including soft skills

However, before you take those top ten terms and throw them into your cover letter, Haefner warns, “Saying that you're a team player is not enough; you have to show it. Provide an example of how you worked on a team to accomplish a particular goal. Provide an example of a high-pressure situation that you handled with ease. Try to make the intangible tangible.”