

BIO
SCI

Soft Skills

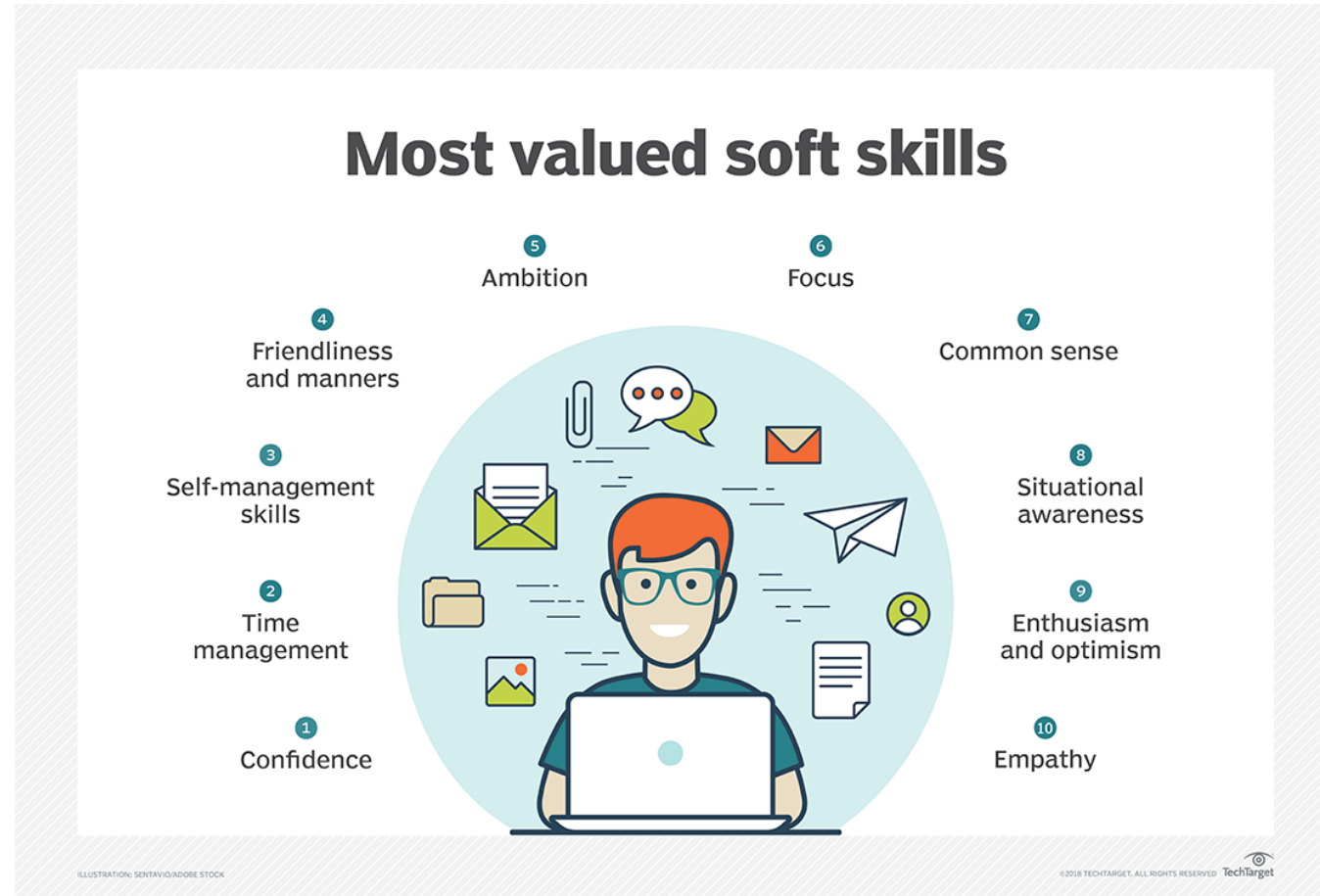
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What are Soft Skills?

- Soft skills are interpersonal skills, including communication, listening and empathy
- It is important to demonstrate your soft skills to an employer during an interview and on the job because this is how they can infer your ability to work well with others, get work done and communicate
- Soft skills differ from hard/technical skills because they showcase your personality and character, whereas hard/technical skills highlight your scientific and technical abilities, such as PCR and gel electrophoresis

Examples of Soft Skills



Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills

Hard Skills

- Technical skills – data analysis, lab skills, coding
- Easy to teach on the job = not as valuable to an employer as soft skills
- Most applicants have the basic required hard skills, so hard skills don't make you as competitive
- You don't need to have 100% of the hard skills an employer is asking for

Soft Skills

- Interpersonal skills – communication, decision-making, adaptability, flexibility
- Developed over long periods of time – highly valuable to an employer
- Soft skills (the way you handle work situations and projects, and work with others) are very unique to each individual and therefore can make you a highly competitive candidate
- If you have some of the soft skills an employer is asking for, this could help you if you don't have all the hard skills they're asking for

How to Develop and Strengthen Soft Skills

- You are constantly practicing soft skills in your daily life; it's all about how you interact with others – that's why discussions in this class are so important
- When you work on class projects, how do you interact with others? What communication style do you use when sharing your ideas with others? Do you listen to others or dismiss them? How do you work under pressure? Do you visibly get stressed or do you remain calm under stress and in turn encourage others to focus?
- How are you in your relationships and friendships? Are you quick to interject your opinion, or do you truly listen when others are telling you about things they're going through?
- Written communication is also a soft skill – practice your written communication to others

How to Showcase Soft Skills in an Interview and on the Job

- Know how to tell your story – STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result)
- If you get stuck answering a question, explain your thought process and explain where you're stuck (on the job, you can ask for help; in an interview, you can ask the interviewer questions)
- Show enthusiasm! Being enthusiastic is magnetic; it is infectious energy that can make people excited to work with you
- Be curious. Curiosity shows that you're interested and invested in the job or project. Ask questions and don't be afraid to ask for help.