**10 INTERPERSONAL SKILLSTO LAND YOU THAT DREAM JOB**







When we think of “skills” for work, often we think only of those competencies we put on our resume: the core skills we’ve learned such as programs, platforms, diplomas and degrees. Often, we forget that we possess many different core skills, particularly those interpersonal skills that could land us the job of our dreams.

**Consider this scenario: you are looking to hire a tutor for your child.You are obviously going to hire somebody who has the right job skills, qualifications and experience that you are able to pay and that meet your needs. Beyond that, what else do you look for? Somebody who…**

* **…is never late?**

* **…always shows up with a smile?**

* **…has kids of their own?**

* **…is a strict disciplinarian?**

* **…is flexible and open?**

What you are looking at is a bunch of personality and character traits. You want somebody who will be a good fit for your family and makes an effort to build a rapport with your child. And all these skills – and skills they are – fall in the category of interpersonal skills. So, what are some examples of interpersonal skills?





**WHAT ARE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS?**

According to Wikipedia, interpersonal skills relate to a person’s “EQ” (Emotional Intelligence Quotient). This is the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that characterise our relationships with other people

**In today’s job market, having technical skills is not enough. You need to go beyond the call of duty and show that you have what it takes to fit within the organisation’s culture.**

Recruiters today have pre-screening tests available at their disposal, to weed out applicants before they even get to the interview stage. They use personality tests and assessments and gauge who will be a better fit between two applicants of similar qualifications and experience.

They rely on identifying interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills will give you a chance to differentiate from other job applicants as well as work mates and move up the ladder. These complement your technical skills, enhance your job performance and social interactions, and work hard to give you an edge over others. Unlike hard skills, these are interpersonal.



**1. SELF CONFIDENCE**





**How confident are you that you are the best person for this job?**

The answer to this question is easy: research the company and the position you are applying for. When you have done your homework, you get that inner sense of assuredness. In the interview, you are fully prepared and nothing can throw you off balance. In the job itself, you are totally confident.

A meticulous 2003 study by the Cornell psychologist David Dunning and the Washington State University psychologist Joyce Ehrlinger honed in on the relationship between female confidence and competence. It found that, “the less competent people are, the more they overestimate their abilities.”

When in an interview, the recruiter might ask you a tricky question and you struggle to get the right words. Failing to leave a good first impression tells the prospective employer that you are not qualified and will not be able to carry out the duties. The interview is the place to prove to the person on the other side that you have what it takes to deliver.



**2. POSITIVE ATTITUDE**





**“The largest part to your overall health is from your mental health. Having positive mental health gives us the motivation to do our best. It also makes us strive to do better.”**

How can you show your interviewer that you have a positive attitude?

Easy – be positive during the whole process, from writing the cover letter, to appearing in the interview and to nailing that job.



**3. COMMUNICATION**





This skill is particularly important: the ability to read, write and speak clearly is essential.

Subscribers to the Harvard Business Review rated "the ability to communicate" the most important factor in making an executive "promotable," more important than ambition, education, and capacity for hard work. Graduates (as measured by both career advancement and salary) shared personality traits and critical thinking skills that distinguish good communicators: a desire to persuade, an interest in talking and working with other people, and an outgoing, ascendant personality.

**Your cover letter**

Write a personalised letter for all the job openings. Highlight your interests and relevant work experience. Infuse your personality and be professional at the same time. End with a strong close.



**4. TEAM PLAYER**





This one is especially useful if you are applying for a highly technical position and/or requires independent work like IT, design, writing etc. People who can go beyond working in their area of expertise, demonstrate big picture thinking, take leadership roles when necessary and work for the greater good are considered a great asset to any organisation.

**Ability to work in a culturally diverse environment and get along fairly well with people from different nationalities is also a plus.**



**5. CRITICAL THINKING
AND PROBLEM SOLVING**





Are you generally a resourceful person? Even if you don’t have all the answers, would you be able to look for them? Know what to do? People who take ownership and are ready to own up their mistakes are highly regarded by the organisation.

**They like to hire big picture thinkers and those who can be accountable for problems, if required.**



**6. TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS**





**“It's important that you develop effective strategies for managing your time to balance the conflicting demands of time for study, leisure, earning money and job" Kent University**

“Time management skills are valuable in job hunting, but also in many other aspects of life, from revising for examinations to working.” You should aim to make time management into an art form. Know when to prioritise and when to let go. Good time managers multitask or understand the importance of tacking one issue at a time.



**7. COPING WITH PRESSURE**





**“In 2013, Australians reported significantly higher levels of stress and distress compared with findings in 2012.”**

According to the Stress and wellbeing in Australia survey. Significantly more Australians reported moderate to severe levels of distress compared with findings of 2012.

Also, similar to previous years’ findings, younger adults continued to report much higher levels of stress and distress compared with older Australians.

Some jobs are easy-going where some demand a high level of pressure tolerance: Jobs where you are working to meet strict deadlines or where things can get turned around at the last minute. The employer might prefer you over others if you are known for crisis control and staying calm when all hell breaks loose.

Have you got a colourful story to demonstrate your past experience of working under pressure? Maybe you constantly had deadline stress or maybe you were working in a busy emergency department for the local hospital. Bringing that experience to light won’t hurt.



**8. FLEXIBILITY**





The demand for flexible working arrangements, as well as flexible methods of study, has grown in recent years. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that nearly 150,000 students are studying online or “off-campus” in higher education alone – and that number is much higher when you include VET students.



**9. ABILITY TO ACCEPT
CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK**





**Some people take any form of criticism personally.**

* 1

Are you coachable and open to training or advice?

* 2

If a senior manager made a suggestion, how would you react?

* 3

If the interviewer pointed out an error and suggested something, would you thank them?

Accepting negative feedback gracefully speaks volumes about your character and makes you extremely interesting in the eyes of the interview panel.



**10. STRONG WORK ETHIC**





A survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management compared the skills gap between older workers approaching retirement and younger workers starting work found that “professionalism” or “work ethic” is the top skill that younger workers lack. It said that companies are finding it harder to find punctual, reliable workers today.







All these skills are crucial to develop to get the job of your dreams. But what if you are lacking in some of these areas, what should you do? You cannot change your personality overnight or develop traits that take a lifetime. You can’t change your temperament. That being said, here are some ways you can speed up the process.

* 1

Number one on this list is to do a skills inventory and identify areas where you need to improve. Enlist family and friends to help you out.

* 2

Be more active in team activities, especially if you normally are very independent in the way you work and make your decisions.

* 3

Think about how you spend your time, both at work and home.

* 4

Reflect on how you react to criticism. Do you lash out, get defensive or just refuse to listen?

* 5

Do you ask people tough questions? Are you confident enough to raise thorny issues?

* 6

Ponder some high level questions like what your life purpose is and how your career fits in the greater scheme of life.



**An organisation is made of people and your interpersonal skills can be greatly improved just by getting along with people and living your life with a sense of purpose and conscience.**