

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Define and develop an understanding of soft skills
- Learn to differentiate between hard and soft skills
- Recognize how soft skills are important to professional success
- Determine what soft skills they already possess
- Develop a solid set of soft skills

Key Takeaways

- Consider different ways you can incorporate soft skills in your daily life to prepare for the workforce and your career
- Discover which professional fields align with both your hard and soft skills so you can be most effective at your job
- Identify soft skills you still need to work on and create a plan to work on them

Approximate time

- Lesson length: 100 minutes
- Project: 90 mins

Resources

	Resources	Questions	Approx Time
0	Unit Plan for Career		
1	Lesson Guide for Teachers		
2	Student Activity Packet FY-9.8		
3	Discussion Prompts	Discussion Prompts: Discuss these questions with your classmates or with a partner: • Let's say you were offered a chance to meet with a potential employer over coffee about your dream job. You want to make a good impression! Describe how you would make the best first impression possible when you meet your potential employer. • Soft skills are defined as: <i>personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people</i>. Identify aspects from	5 mins

		your description above that would be categorized as Soft Skills.	
4	INFOGRAPHIC • Hard Skills v. Soft Skills • Publisher: The Balance	Hard Skills v. Soft Skills Hard skills and soft skills are equally important in preparing yourself for the working world. Read through this infographic to better understand the difference between these skill types. Then, answer the following questions: 1. What are hard skills and why are they important in preparing for a career? 2. Why would it be difficult to find success in your job if you ONLY had hard skills? 3. Since soft skills are difficult to measure, how do you think they are observed?	15 mins
5	QUESTION OF THE DAY • What percent of employers say that soft skills are equally as important as hard skills? • Publisher: Next Gen Personal Finance	What Percent of Employers say that Soft Skills are Equally as Important as Hard Skills? Answer the question on the first slide in your Student Activity Packet. Then, follow your teacher's directions on how to answer the follow-up questions.	10 mins
6	ARTICLE • The Soft Skills That Matter Most For Millennials in the Workplace • Publisher: Forbes	The Soft Skills That Matter Most For Millennials in the Workplace While hard "technical" skills are required for any job you take on, soft skills are becoming increasingly more important in the workplace. Millennials in the workplace are currently being evaluated on their soft skills. Read this article, which details how you can start to practice six basic soft skills from the get-go. When you finish, list the top THREE things you took away from this article, and describe how you're going to implement them into your daily routine. Write your responses in your Student Activity Packet.	20 mins
7	VIDEO (5:41) • Starting a New Job! • Publisher: How to Adult	Starting a New Job! The first day at a new job—whether it's your first or your fifth—is full of first impressions, navigating your way, and learning the new work culture. As you watch this video on starting a new job, answer the following questions in your student activity packet: 1. How are frequent interactions with your new coworkers considered using soft skills? 2. What do you wish the two hosts could have covered? 3. If you've already had a job, what's one thing the hosts pointed out that you wish you could've done different on your first day?	10 mins
8	ARTICLE • Question: Why are Soft Skills so Important in the Workplace? • Publisher: Next Gen Personal Finance	Question: Why are Soft Skills so Important in the Workplace? Soft skills, also known as interpersonal skills, are becoming increasingly necessary for any job, as employers are looking for versatile and adapting employees who would be a good "face" for the company or organization. After you read the article, make a list of THREE personal characteristics you have developed through daily interactions that can constitute as soft skills (e.g. keeping eye contact through conversations and being a team player).	20 mins
9	VIDEO (2:28) • How to Fit In on Your First Day of	How to Fit In on Your First Day of Work Regardless of the workplace, the first day of work includes	5 mins

	Work - Publisher: Howcast	many introductions, “first day jitters,” and learning how to fit in. In this video, you’ll learn step-by-step the best practices for incorporating soft skills into your first day on the job. After watching the video, list any other examples of soft skills you think could be beneficial to incorporate into your first day of work.	
10	INFOGRAPHIC How to Communicate Effectively at Work - Publisher: Visualistan	How to Communicate Effectively at Work Interacting with your fellow colleagues in a positive manner is a transferable skill that employers hold high as a requirement. Look at this infographic, and then answer the following questions: 1. Why do you think it’s important to be aware of your body language and verbal language at work? 2. What’s another nonverbal “cheat” you’d add to this list? Explain your example. 3. Look at the list of different types of Communicators. Which one would you define yourself as? List THREE examples of how you actively practice that style of communication. 4. What piece of advice would you give to a prospective employee going into their first job interview and why?	10 mins
11	Key Takeaways	Key Takeaways - Consider different ways you can incorporate soft skills in your daily life to prepare for the workforce - Discover which professional fields align with both your hard and soft skills so you can be most effective at your job - Identify soft skills you still need to work on and create a plan to work on them	5 mins

Fast facts

- A 2014 Harris poll of more than 2,100 hiring managers revealed that a whopping 77% believe soft skills are just as important as hard skills when evaluating potential job candidates, and 16% said they were even more important. (Careerbuilder, 2014)
- 67% of HR managers indicated that they would hire an applicant with soft skills whose technical abilities were lacking. However, only 9% would hire someone with strong technical expertise but weak interpersonal skills. (HR Pulse, 2013)
- A new study from Boston College, Harvard University, and the University of Michigan found that soft skills training, like communication and problem-solving, boosts productivity and retention 12 percent and delivers a 250 percent return on investment based on higher productivity and retention. (Michigan News, 2017)