

Importance of Soft Skills for MBA Students: An Overview

Ruchita Ramani

Assistant Professor, ASM IPS, Pune

Abstract: In today's scenario soft skills are the need of the hour. This article will throw light on the concept of soft skills and its importance in the life of a student.

This article will cover all the major soft skills which are highly essential for all MBA students. Both, hard and soft skills should be blended together for grooming the students and improving the employability of students.

If both soft skills and hard skills are blended together, outcome will be an extraordinary professional and an excellent human being.

In this article, we will also discuss about the importance of soft skills in student's career, various ways to acquire these soft skills and the role of management institutes, lecturers in helping the students acquire these skills.

Introduction

In today's competitive world when employers come to management institutes for campus recruitment for placement of fresh MBAs (without experience), they either reject them or offer them jobs with very low compensation due to lack of soft skills or they are unemployable.

The institutes focus on hard skills i.e. the technical knowledge and education, soft skills are being ignored due to which the students are far behind in soft skills and etiquette training.

The most predominant soft skills which are highly ignored are excellent communication skills, English linguistic abilities and presentation skills.

To be most competent, one needs to be skilled in hard skills as well as soft skills.

Definition of Soft Skills

'Wikipedia' gives definition of soft skills as 'soft skills refers to the cluster of personality traits, social graces and facility with language, personal habits, friendliness and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills which are the technical requirement of a job.

(Wikipedia 2007)

Soft skills are a combination of multiple skills. It includes:

- Excellent communication skills.
- English linguistic abilities.

- Good presentation skills.
- Optimistic attitude.
- Fine etiquette training.
- Good body language.
- Exceptional team handling capabilities.
- Confidence.
- Time management.
- Flexible approach.
- Perfect grooming.
- Motivational skills.
- Efficient decision making.
- Punctuality quality.
- Adaptability towards changes.
- Honest approach.
- Hygiene factors.
- Leadership skills.
- Moral values and ethics.
- Good code of conduct.
- Integrity.
- Loyalty.
- Curiosity in learning new things.
- Willingness to learn.
- Enthusiastic.
- Good listening skills.
- Good analytical skills.
- Creativity
- Problem solving abilities.

- Good interpersonal skills.
- Knowledge of automation.
- Excellent command over languages.

Significance of Soft Skills

These days, competition is too tough. In job market, jobs are few and the job seekers are too many. As per Charles Darwin's Theory of Survival – “**Survival of the fittest**” is applicable.

Only the skilled people, both in hard skills and soft skills are able to survive the cut throat competition. Those who lack soft skills are left unemployed, or are unemployable.

Role of Management Institute, Lecturer in Development of Soft Skills

- Soft skills should be included as a part of the curriculum.
- Lectures should be a combination of both hard skills and soft skills.
- Communication in English should be emphasized and should be made mandatory for both faculties and students in Institute premises in order to improve their speaking skills thereby leading to better listening and understanding abilities. Also, to make them excellent in their communication and increase their confidence level.
- English linguistic abilities should be made a part of their curriculum with a special focus on building vocabulary of students.
- Body language training should be imparted to the students.
- Group discussions, personal interviews and case studies should be regularly taken to enhance their presentation skills and to increase their confidence.
- News reading should be made compulsory for students to keep students updated about the current affairs.
- Every week, mentors should conduct a workshop on current affairs to make the students competitive and updated with a quiz to understand was the topic clear to the students has to be prepared by the faculty or mentor.
- Compulsory book reading should be given as assignment to all students and students should be asked to give review of the book.

All students should be given different books so that no assignments are copied, they read them and formulate the reviews and a final workshop should be conducted where students will discuss the book–learnings from the book in a summarized way.

- Faculty should do the SWOT analysis of students. They should guide the students to work on their weak areas and focus on their strengths.
- Etiquette Training Workshop should be introduced for the students to make them more polished.
- Excellent grooming of students should be done to make them more polished in their behavior, so that they are more adaptable in corporate companies with the corporate culture.

Conclusion

The observational study indicates that management institutes and education plays a very vital role in synergizing industry efforts.

Management institutes can groom the students well, so that they are highly employable and become an excellent professional.

The institutes should be rethinking on their current approach and modify the entire curriculum to work in the interest of students who are the future managers and to develop highly skilled and efficient management professionals with excellent communication skills, outstanding presentation skills thereby meeting and synergizing with industry's expectations.

Reference

- [1] <http://www.wikipedia.com/softskill>