



Image via [Unsplash](#)

The 5 Soft Skills You Need to Get the Job

Skilled industries like the tech sector and the trades are facing a shortage of qualified workers, but there's another skills shortage that doesn't receive quite as much attention. Applicants across industries consistently fall short in what's known as soft skills — those traits that make someone a good employee, coworker, salesperson, or manager. Since colleges and trade schools tend to focus on hard skills, which tend to be more concrete and quantifiable than personality-based soft skills, prospective employees often fail to recognize where they fall short and end up wondering why they didn't get a job they were, on paper, qualified for.

From the employee's end, soft skills can seem hard to nail down. After all, every business has its own company culture and vision of the ideal employee. However, employers across industries consistently report that applicants are lacking in many of the same areas. Whether you're providing front-end customer service or back-end support, these are the skills every employee ought to have:

1. Communication

Workplace communication is about more than emails and phone calls. The way you communicate with superiors, colleagues, and customers affects your [company's culture](#) and

reputation. The [best employees](#) not only can communicate clearly in written and verbal form, they understand how to cater communication to different audiences and match their voice to the company's. Research so you understand what that voice is before the interview.

2. Ability to Accept and Give Feedback

It's not unusual for people to feel defensive upon hearing criticism, but it's a response that needs to be reformed before you can be a truly great employee. [Feedback](#) is an important part of growing as a team member and employee, and the best workers can both give and receive it with grace. Let go of justifying and defending yourself when receiving constructive criticism, and instead focus on hearing what the other person is saying. When it's time to give feedback, Hubspot [recommends](#) focusing on the person's strengths and how they can use them to reach a solution.

3. Reliability

It might seem like the importance of reliability goes without saying, but employees who can't be counted on create a constant struggle for companies. A person who fails to show up on time, meet deadlines, and complete work to a consistent quality can affect the entire company's productivity and morale. Thankfully, [reliability](#) is a habit that can be developed if you make honesty a priority. While it might mean turning down tasks you'd like to say yes to, you'll gain respect by being upfront about what you can accomplish.

4. Grooming

In many workplaces, little attention is given to the dress code outside of distributing an employee handbook. However, the way employees present themselves can make or break a company's reputation. No matter if you work at a creative agency or a production floor, always be clean and well-groomed. If you're not sure what your company's dress code means, read [this guide](#) from Comstock's.

5. Problem Solving

No one enjoys being a micromanager, but it's necessary when employees show themselves incapable of solving problems on their own. A strong critical thinker and problem solver is one of the best things you can be on the job. However, don't make the mistake of thinking you have to fix everything solo. Knowing when to ask for help is just as important as being able to solve problems.

Employees entering today's workforce have more impressive resumes than ever. As high-tech skills become increasingly common, soft skills that are harder to quantify have been pushed to the wayside. Unfortunately, that creates people who are capable workers but not successful employees. Focus on developing these five soft skills and you'll stand out from the crowd.