

The Real Skills Gap

April 8, 2016 By [National Soft Skills Association 2 Comments](#)



Research conducted by Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation and Stanford Research Center has concluded that 85% of job success comes from having well-developed soft and people skills, and only 15% of job success comes from technical

skills and knowledge (hard skills). This research finds its beginning with the work of Charles Riborg Mann from a Study of Engineering Education in 1918. There is a span of almost 100 years since Mann published his findings. But, what have we done with this information learned so long ago?

The short answer: Not enough.

The long answer: While soft skills are increasingly becoming the hard skills of today's workforce, many people continue to come to organizations without them. As we learned 100 years ago, it's just not enough to be highly trained in technical skills without developing soft skills.

These softer, interpersonal and relationship-building skills help people to communicate and collaborate effectively. These people skills are more critical than ever as organizations struggle to find meaningful ways to remain competitive and be productive. Teamwork, leadership and communication are underpinned by soft skills development. Since each is an essential element for organizational and personal success, developing these skills is crucial.

Since soft skills are so important for your personal and professional success, you may wonder what can be done to increase your set of soft skills. The first step is to take some time to reflect on the soft skills you have right now. Consider skills in the following areas:

- Personal accountability



- Teamwork
- Negotiation skills
- Conflict resolution
- Flexibility
- Communication
- Problem solving
- Interpersonal relations (mentoring, coaching, etc.)



How would you score yourself on these skills? Chances are, like most of us, you could use some improvement. Improving your soft skills will make you a better employee, and when you improve as an employee, you improve as a team member. When team members

improve themselves, they strengthen entire teams and organizations. Now you must ask yourself some important questions: *Do I solely focus on learning hard skills? Do I lack the soft skills necessary for job success? Do I have a soft-skills gap?* If you answer yes to any of these questions, it's time to put into practice what we learned almost 100 years ago and develop your soft skills. How can you do it? A good place to start is with our previous post, "Practice Makes Perfect".

Learn more at: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_34.htm

