

Soft Skills Hold the Key to Workplace Success

One of the most important things parents and teachers can do to prepare students with and without disabilities for future success in school and in employment is to teach them "soft skills." Soft skills are a combination of people skills, communication, and character traits that make it easier to work in harmony with others. The Department of Labor has outlined six of these "skills to pay the bills" that make it easier for transitioning students to get a job, stay employed and build a successful career.



Communication

Communication includes speaking, listening, facial expressions, writing, body language, and pictures or signs. Most employers consider this a "must have" skill.



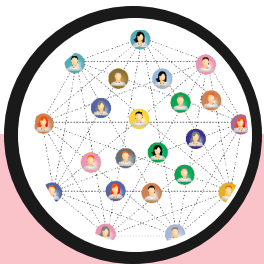
Enthusiasm

People with enthusiasm and a positive attitude have an advantage in job interviews. They send the message that they will do whatever it takes to get the job done.



Teamwork

Potential employers look for employees who can work well with others, share ideas, work toward team goals, and participate in group decision making.



Networking

Talking with family, friends, neighbors and others with whom one has contact about job goals and interests is one of the best ways for someone to find a job.



Problem solving

Being able to think on the job, examine problems and come up with solutions is highly valued. It involves the ability to use knowledge, facts and data to complete a task.



Professionalism

Acting professionally involves a combination of skills including being on time and productive, holding high standards, and being responsible for one's own behavior.

