



*“Wisdom is in knowing what to do, skill is in knowing how to do it and virtue is in doing it and doing it well indeed”, David Starr Jordan.*

### **The 10 Most Important Skills to be Developed that will Make People Employable**

✓ Attitude / Behavioural skills	-	99%	
✓ Communication skills	-	97%	
✓ Leadership skills	-	86%	
✓ Management skills	-	84%	
✓ Human relations skills	-	82%	
✓ Innovation and creativity	-	79%	
✓ IT skills	-	73%	
✓ Time management skills	-	70%	
✓ Stress management skills	-	67%	
✓ Sales / marketing skills	-	60%	(Source: The Time Magazine)

*“The ABC's are Attitude, Behavior and Communication skills”, Gerald Chertavian*

### **What is employability?**

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) gives the simplest definition of employability in terms of skills: *'the skills almost everyone needs to do almost any job'*. This is a great definition, although employability is not just about skills, it's also about capabilities or competencies: *aptitude, attitude and behaviour*.

Employability is not the same as subject knowledge, qualifications or specialist experience. A brilliant degree, a PhD on the CV may not be enough to secure a position. One has to be aware of what employers are looking for *in any employee* and to demonstrate that one is employable as a person, a team member and as a contributing member of the employer organization.

Often, the problem is not that jobseekers in all sectors don't have employability skills and capabilities, but with so much emphasis on qualifications, particularly in the academic world, they are taken for granted or dismissed.

*“Change is the law of life. And those who only look to the past or the present are certain to miss the future”. John F. Kennedy.*

**Here is once such example.**



## Case

*George had applied for a post-doctorate industrial research position, ideal for him, that he thought he was guaranteed to get. His CV perfectly matched the job description and academic requirements, so he had not been surprised to be called for interview. He saw it as a formality. He was upset that he did not get through to second interview stage. When he phoned the company's HR department to get feedback, he was told that although the interviewing panel had been impressed with his subject knowledge, they had commented that he seemed non-committal, lacking in enthusiasm and that they were 'concerned that he would not engage' with his colleagues or the company. Shocked, George talked it through with a good friend. It hadn't occurred to him that the interview was about anything but his academic qualifications. He began to understand why the interviewers had thought him lacking in enthusiasm. He had been focusing on answering the questions carefully, so he may have come across as withdrawn or even diffident and aloof. He hadn't asked any questions about the company, the role or the team he would be working with.*

### **Why is Employability Important?**

In a survey on employability skills conducted by the IIM Bangalore a few years ago, Indian companies who employed fresh graduates were asked to rate the importance of employability skills against specific technical or academic knowledge and skills associated with their degree:

- 45% said that employability skills are much more important than academic knowledge
- 29% said that they were a slightly more important than academic knowledge
- 23% said that both employability and academic knowledge were equally important.
- 3% said that employability skills were not as important as educational knowledge.

### **So, what actually are employability skills and capabilities?**

#### **❖ Personal attributes**

- ✓ A positive attitude: a 'can do' approach, good work ethic and willingness to learn
- ✓ Good personal habits
- ✓ Honesty and integrity
- ✓ Reliability
- ✓ Time consciousness
- ✓ Team working, collaboration and co-operation
- ✓ Flexibility and adaptability

#### **❖ Skills**

- ✓ Communication – oral and written
- ✓ Analytical ability
- ✓ Computer literacy / IT skills.



*“There are good leaders who actively guide and bad leaders who actively misguide. Hence, leadership is about persuasion, presentation and people skills”. Shiv Khera*

### **How can one develop employability skills?**

The best way to develop employability skills and qualities is through well structured training and also to be employed – any kind of employment will do. No employment is ever a waste of time. In the end, ask yourself very honestly ‘**would I employ me?**’..... You got the answer.

### **How leaders can contribute to enhancing the employability quotient of people**

Technical know-how is all well and good, but it is emotional intelligence and self-awareness that will make the difference. As a professional management consultant and trainer I have learned that although personality cannot be taught, effective training and development can help people recognize and understand their own emotions and more importantly, the effect they have on others.

*“People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision”, John C. Maxwell.*

According to an article in the Harvard Business Review attributed to Daniel Goleman, the five abilities that distinguish the best leaders from the average ones are and let’s introspect whether we have it too:

- ✓ Self-awareness
- ✓ Self-regulation
- ✓ Motivation
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Social skills

To conclude, let me make a statement with this verse:

*“OTHERS MAY DO A GREATER WORK,  
BUT YOU HAVE YOUR PART TO DO  
AND NO ONE IN ALL GOD’S HERITAGE  
CAN DO IT SO WELL AS YOU”.*

*Mark Antony Sequeira, M.A., MBA, M.Phil, PGDHRM, PGDCA, BEC.  
Chief Executive Officer – Maestro Human Resources (P) Ltd.*