LONDON SCHOOL
OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

Knowledge Triumphs

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THE IMPORTANCE OF
SOFT SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

Today's business world is extremely fast-paced and competitive, which means that companies need their employees to be at the top of their game at all times. To stand out and stay ahead of the competition, hiring managers are looking for applicants who have superior technical skills along with a blend of "softer" skills as well. In today's job market, prospective employees who can demonstrate not only technical proficiency but also soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and problem-solving will have a distinct advantage over others when it comes to getting hired or advancing their career. Whether you're currently searching for a new job or trying to take your career to the next level in your current one, developing and showcasing these so-called "soft skills" is essential for success.

What Are Soft Skills?

Soft skills are the interpersonal and "people skills" that are not necessarily specific to the job itself, such as communication and team-building. In contrast, hard skills are the actual technical proficiencies that an employee needs to perform the job. For example, a marketing manager who is responsible for creating sales materials will need to have strong hard skills

in marketing and sales, along with some soft skills, such as the ability to work well in a team, manage multiple projects at once, and stay organized. Some of the most important soft skills in the workplace include: Communication: This includes listening, speaking clearly, and being able to convey your ideas in a manner that resonates with your audience. Collaboration: This refers to your ability to work with others in a team setting, resolve conflicts, and respect each person's ideas and contributions. Problem-Solving: This involves using critical thinking skills to identify the root cause of problems, generate innovative solutions, and implement them successfully.

Why Are Soft Skills Important in the Workplace?

The competitive nature of the job market is leading many hiring managers to focus more on finding employees who possess a variety of soft skills as opposed to only hard skills. Technical proficiency is definitely important, but having the ability to work well with others, communicate clearly, and problem-solve creatively will also help you to advance your career and succeed in your job. These skills will also help you to build strong relationships with your co-workers, clients, and other stakeholders. This, in turn, will help you to get more projects done, build a positive rapport with your team members, and earn more recognition and rewards at work.

Developing Your Soft Skills

If you've ever felt that you're lacking in soft skills compared to your peers, you're not alone. In fact, these skills tend to be more difficult to develop than hard skills, as they are less tangible and can't be easily measured. However, there are a few ways that you can work on improving your soft skills, such as: Networking: This is one of the easiest and most effective ways to develop your soft skills. By forming relationships with others in your industry, you'll have the opportunity to learn from other experts, get introduced to valuable contacts, and receive more positive feedback about your skills and abilities. Many career experts recommend that you network at least six hours each week to maximize the benefits. Taking on a challenging project: If you've been feeling that your skills are lagging behind, taking on a challenging project that requires you to use advanced techniques will give you the opportunity to improve your soft skills. Be sure to discuss your project with your manager to ensure that you have the necessary time to complete the task successfully.
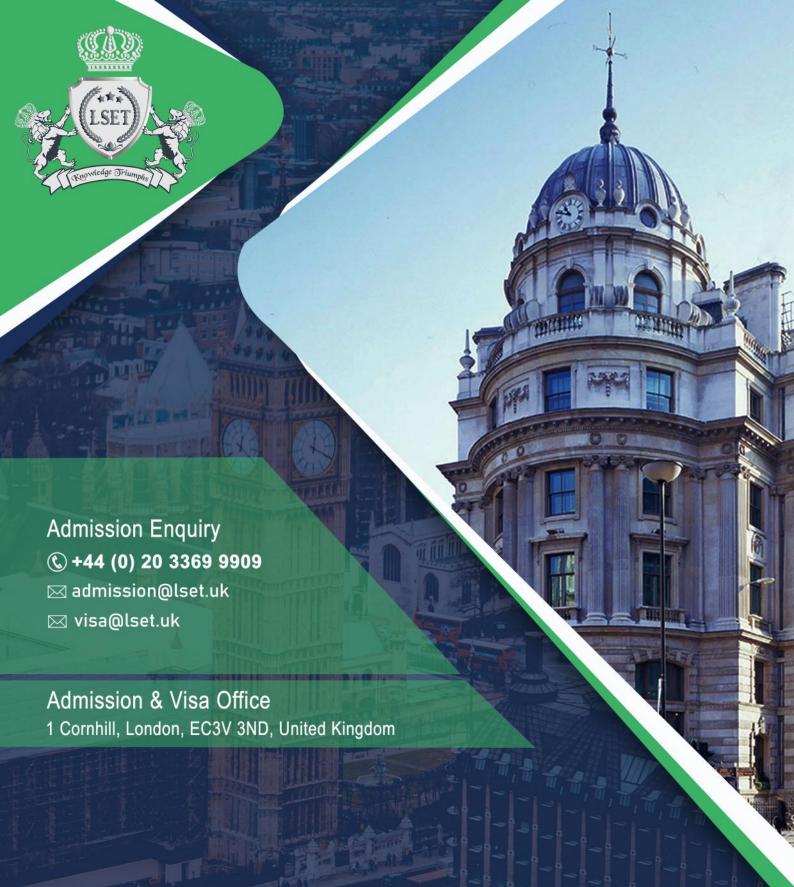
Networking to Develop Your Soft Skills

One of the best ways to develop your soft skills and network at the same time is to join professional associations and attend events hosted by your industry's top associations like ISACA. There are many other ways to network as well, including: Asking your mentors and colleagues for advice and feedback Participating in industry-specific forums and online groups Joining industry-specific LinkedIn groups

Conclusion

The workplace is changing, and companies are looking for employees who possess a wide range of skills that go beyond technical proficiency. Developing and showcasing your soft skills will give you a distinct advantage over others when it comes to getting hired and landing a promotion.

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