



“BRIDGING THE DIVIDE” CROSSING THE GENERIC BARRIER

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ABSTRACT

Ever since the emergence of Globalization, the dimensions of a qualified professional, with distinctive abilities have become major selection criteria in corporate recruitment processes.

The present research article will illustrate the statement that “Language & Personality work in synergy to produce the effectiveness of one’s speech.” Students those who are having soft skills exposure are welcomed by the corporate or in the market as they are ready to take up their duties the day when they join. The attitude, communication skills, confidence all in combination form the generic group which have created a divide for a talented potential to cross par and it is then that the language & soft skill training program at an initial stage plays a role. The basic aim would be to study the importance of soft skills and its need to be a part of all course curriculums to provide developed and groomed individuals.

Key Words: soft skills, curriculum, generic barrier

INTRODUCTION

The individual as a personality develops in due course of time primarily with a three “E” concept. “Education, Experience and Environment”

They all play an equal role in grooming a self into a diversified professional. Individual experiences in life may vary but professional degree courses through their programs have the ability to develop a common platform for the learners to impart professional education, the right approach, attitude, broadmindedness and the generic skills required to adapt & perform at a work place. Educational institutes are the right place to create a common learning environment and so the focus would be divided into the importance of generic skills into various industries and the ways through which it can be bridged.

Importance of Skills in Industries:

The purpose of communication is to convey one’s beliefs, ideas, thoughts or needs with clarity so as to reach a consensus or a mutually acceptable solution. The lack of effective communication skills has a negative impact on the personal as well as professional life of a person. While focus on communication skills tends to be targeted to managers and leaders, good communication skills are important no matter what position one holds.

Survey Reports on Graduate Employability:**Source: European Commission****Employers’ perception of graduate employability****Analytical report**

Fieldwork: August-September 2010

Publication: November 2010

Findings:

Almost all skills and capabilities listed in the survey – such as the ability to work in a team or computer literacy – were considered to be *very* or *rather* important when recruiting higher education graduates. In total, between 88% and 98% of respondents ranked these skills as “very” or “rather important”.

In terms of rating certain skills and capabilities as being “very important”, graduate recruiters were most likely to highlight the importance of team working (67%), by sector-specific skills,

communication skills, computer literacy, being able to adapt to new situations, first-class ability in reading/writing, and analytical and problem-solving skills (all 58%-62%). Graduate employers were less likely to highlight the importance of foreign language skills: 33% rated these skills as “very important” and 34% as “rather important”.

Foreign languages skills, however, were the only skills that were ranked higher as a requirement for future graduates. Graduate employers’ satisfaction with their employees’ foreign language capabilities was lower as just two-thirds (67%) said they were *satisfied*.

A third (34%) of graduate employers reported that more than 50% of their employees with higher education degrees had received training to update their skills in the past two years. The proportion who said that less than 10% had received such training was 33%.

When asked to name the two most important challenges they faced in filling vacancies, almost half (47%) of graduate recruiters mentioned a shortage of applicants, in their country, with the right skills and capabilities.

Source: AMA 2010 Critical Skills Survey

Executives Say the 21st Century Requires More Skilled Workers

Critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills will become more important in a fast-paced, competitive global economy

In order to improve their employees’ skill levels in these areas, respondents identified one-on-one coaching and mentoring as the most effective methods, followed by professional development and training, in-house job training, and job rotation. The AMA survey also shows that managers and executives believe **it is easier to develop these skills in students** than it is to develop them in experienced workers, suggesting that students and recent graduates may be more open to new ideas, versus experienced workers with established work patterns and habits.

Source: EMPLOYERS SKILL SURVEY**Case Study - Local and Central Government****Employment Studies Research Unit****Bristol Business School**

University of the West of England

Skills required by employers were grouped into three categories: industry-specific or vocational skills (mainly technical skills such as food production and preparation, stock management, cost control); generic skills (e.g. managerial skills, particularly small business management, communication, problem-solving, selling skills, literacy and foreign language competence) and competence deriving from attitude to work (e.g. enthusiasm, commitment, the will to learn). While nearly all employers reported a willingness to train staff in most technical skills and, to an increasing extent, in generic skills, it was the third category which they found the most critical in terms of recruitment, hardest to address, and which they were most likely to see as a problem outside their remit and beyond their means to remedy ICT and foreign languages skills were both declared and unrecognised areas of skill gaps among current employees: the latter two rarely acknowledged by managers but identified by the researchers as current and latent obstacles to realisation of potential service quality and commercial success. Some Most employers emphasised the primacy of personality attributes or 'attitudinal skills' such as enthusiasm, commitment, and the will to learn. There were many anecdotes of successful job applicants whose sole qualification was 'the right personality'. Several employers said words to the effect of 'Give us people with the right attitudes and we will teach the skills.'

Illustration with the example of Hospitality Industry:

The emerging westernization has changed the lifestyle trends making populace spend lavishly on travel & leisure. With the heavy expenditures one does, the expectations of quality service from the hospitality industry has certainly seen a boom, be it a kiosk at a public place or a multi starrer property.

Communication in hospitality, hence, becomes a prioritized issue which is regularly addressed by employers and staffs alike as the customers pay not only for the product, the food, the room, or facilities but they are also paying for the service and Service is just as much about communication at it is a skill.

Hospitality Communication moreover covers two important areas; Customer service & Inter management staff interaction.

Good Communication in both areas is essential for the high standards of operation everyone expects in the industry.

To illustrate, a genuine smile and a warm welcome from the receptionist & from all the staff may change the bad day or bad mood of the client and can rather just change their outlook for the rest of that day and the days to come. The same applies for the waitperson at the restaurant, the housekeeping or maintenance staff, or any other employee that comes in contact with the guests. A caring, positive atmosphere makes the difference between just a place you pass through and a place your guests will remember.

Other important aspect of hospitality communication with customers is providing clear and useful information when asked by customers. It is part of the service, and guests appreciate well-informed and courteous staff - it can make a difference between "just another day" and a memorable day.

In addition to the above, communication skills in the inter management level calls for the Employers to take the time to explain and train their employees to always maintain a warm, welcoming and professional environment in the workplace, not only where customers are concerned, but also among the staff themselves. Additionally, efficiency in language plays the central role in having effective communication skills. Inappropriate use of it may become a barrier to the right delivery of message; it requires thorough knowledge when dealing with customers from overseas who have a hard time making themselves understood in English. Likewise it becomes important for the guides too to be well versed with the foreign languages so that the culture and history for which a traveler is exploring stays well informed.

All & All, Smiling & happy staff is one of management's most important assets in the hospitality industry. Therefore, people who are looking at a career in this sector should know that the skills required include 'people skills' - understanding, patience, the ability to perform well as a team, and,

above all, a positive disposition. Bad tempered people have no place in the hospitality industry - it's a place where people come to relax and enjoy themselves. A happy and relaxed atmosphere is what anyone entering the facility should immediately feel, and if staff and management can communicate this at all times, they can be assured that their guests will be coming back for more.

Crossing the Generic Barrier:

As with various aspects it has been noted and considered that students are a much easier target to train, it becomes crucial that student from day one of their college should develop sincerity and seriousness towards their career. Majority of the colleges today have their mode of education in English medium but the problem arises when the students' education is kept restricted to the learning of core papers. Language should be dealt with from day one as the end minute professional development courses cannot turn any miracle and may not be successful in turning the oblivion of polishing a 18 years old learned in a single day.

There is complete agreement in the fact that the realization of the importance has been felt by the education institutions but its adoption and treatment is executed only before the campus placements.

Language and skill development come gradually and with a process, the treatment to both has to come necessarily with varied approach beyond a subject training.

The student has to go through an artificial environment in his college with continuous speaking and listening where irrespective of his education, experience and environment, he is given a common platform of rigorous learning.

The language training in colleges is restricted to core grammar but be it vernacular medium or English medium, the student has gained sufficient and the same grammatical modules. The problem has lied in its application and confidence to pronounce it properly, basically it is that he or she has lacked the opportunity to speak in it.

One to one or short ratio trainings would prove very effective in gaining the desired results. Moreover a

student can cross the language barrier with self preparatory resources.

In this the first myth of translation practices and rote learning has to be changed and motivation should be on idea generation activities.

Sharp accuracy and hold can be developed through writing. Reading in general would help the student develop his language resource and lexical ability.

Listening and Speaking in role plays, compulsory English speaking days will all act as major turmoil in the development.

Skill development, attitudinal changes and positive behavioral patterns can be brought about by moral conduct workshops, case studies, and dummy working projects keeping in mind that the students are in a learning stage so the absorbance and espousal will be much easier as they have not reached to any obstinate affirmations of life.

CONCLUSION

The inevitability of skill development and language learning for enhanced employability is sky-scraping and the key strategies to gain them is earnestness, early authoritative learning and simulated environment practices where the training and activities may be many but the foundation idea has to remain unaffected. It is then when a prospective scholar would be able to cross the barrier.

Review of Literature

Dr. Subhash Sharma, Dr. Digvijay Pandey(2012) in their article "Nail the Talent, Hammer it with Soft Skills" laid emphasis on the grooming of students in terms of Soft Skills , so that their place ability becomes more strong and can take up the challenges in the corporate world easily

Dr. Sharma, Dr. Sukhwal (2009) in their article laid emphasis on the communication skills, kinesics, and presentation skills, to gain success in the market place. They also suggested that the professional institutes should include Soft Skills in their curriculum, so that the students may get the exposure and have good knowledge prior to join the corporate.

Rao, Bedia, Sugandhi, Namita (2009) in their article presented Corporate communication as an extension to the basic communication. In one sentence

corporate communication is the communication between the organization and their public.

Kaul and Pandit (2008) in their article focused on the managerial communication in an organization and the emphasis was laid on using drama as a tool to understand the process of communication. Through this process all parts of communication are covered named as listening, reading, writing and speaking.

Mishra and Muraille (2007) in their article opine that as the new and advanced technology is used in all process of communication therefore it becomes mandatory to grasp the things prevailing in the current market or scene in the society to have a good competition.

Khanna (2008), put forward in their article that very few people understand the importance and value of body language in communication. The success and the failure is dependent upon communication.

Sievert, Westermann (2005), tried to advocate that the importance of communication in successful corporate management is growing all the time. The present article presents an importance of communication and how a manager can use the tool as a weapon to conquer the hearts of customers.

Chandrashekhar (2008) in his article dealt with prevailing scenario of "Education to" all and the task of the manager is to manage, recruiting and retaining employees.

Derrick, Paul (2008) in their article focused on how learners interact in the current scenario when there is a tight situation of the market. And how the policy makers to shift the new ways of teaching and learning contemporary skills, attributes, creativity, curiosity, self direction etc.

Nieragdon, Goeran (2008) in their article reveal the importance of the recent notion of soft skills for work-related language coaching, especially its role in Business English. Both a number of general principles and concrete examples of making Soft Skills 'work' in the class-room are discussed.

Randy, Bancino & Claire (2008) talk about the importance of soft skills for hard-core technical professionals in focus to (1) necessity for improvements to the bottom line; (2) increasing competition; and (3) globalization.

Flaura, Floris (2008) in their paper discussed the methodology of developing English for the People who deny that English plays a very important role in this globalize era. It is the most widely spoken language in the world. A good mastery of English can be said to be a prerequisite for the success of developing oneself and business deal with.

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