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## **The Difference between Developing Hard Skills and Soft Skills**



Build Skills created 13 days ago by David Jackson

Searching for a career can be very stressful. Part of this can be due to the required skills and attributes for the particular position. Hard skills—the technical or professional skills for the job—make sense because you can almost touch them, but soft skills are the non-tangible attributes that can be even more important for your career success.

Soft skills are the invaluable invisible. Their value is huge, but learning them is free. They can get you the job help you keep the job. The catch is that, unlike hard skills, soft skills are much harder to practice and hone.

Hard skills can be the familiarity with Microsoft Office, how to drive a bus or truck, welding or glazing. Soft skills are customer service, punctuality, enthusiasm and being coachable. These two types of skills go hand in hand but, are very different, mostly because hard skills can be learned in a classroom or while doing the job, but soft skills come from a different kind of experience and depend as much on our personalities as anything else.

But soft skills support your ability with hard skills; you can be taught a certain hard skill, but you also need the discipline to show up to class, do the homework and do it well if you're going to learn. And once the hard skill is gained, it takes soft skills to clearly demonstrate it and package it effectively.

So while both hard and soft skills are crucial to your career success, developing them means taking different approaches. When you're evaluating education and training options and looking for the best fit, think about the level of your soft skills and what that might mean for your career.

Are you punctual? Respectful? Able to lead and be led? Resourceful? You may want to think about whether programs include internship, work study, cooperative or other options that let you work on those skills in a way that connects to the training; if you're working or can work, can you work on soft skills in that environment for better use later?

If you feel like your soft skills could use some work, there are a number of ways to get help:

- [GCFLearnFree has resources for workplace success.](#)
- [Your local Goodwill](#) may have programs to help you work on your soft skills.
- You can [connect with a GoodProspects virtual career mentor](#) for guidance.

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