Job interview - Soft skills

Exercise 1: Read the words below and divide them into two categories. What do you think the categories are?

- bilingual
- creativity
- database management
- dependibility

- empathy
- organisation
- programming
- problem-solving

- SEO marketing
- statistical analysis
- teamwork
- typing proficiency

Category 1	Category 2

Exercise 2: What's the difference between hard skills and soft skills?

Hard skills

Hard skills are technical knowledge or training that you have gained through any life experience, including in your career or education. Every job will require certain technical skills specific to that industry. If you want to work as an architect, for example, you will need to know how to use drafting software. Many other industries have such tests in place, requiring prior knowledge and skills essential for career success. Other employers may have the availability to teach certain technicalskills on the job.

Soft skills

Soft skills are personal habits and traits that shape how you work, on your own and with others. They are essential to your career and as you search for jobs. While hard skills are necessary to successfully perform technical tasks in a job, soft skills are necessary to create a positive and functional work environment. Employers often seek individuals who possess proven soft and hard skills. Some employers may prefer to select candidates who have a stronger set of soft skills over hard skills,as soft skills are at times more difficult to develop.

Job interview - Soft skills

Exercise 3: Decide which actions highlight soft skills and which highlight hard skills.

- Showing up on time or early to the interview.
- Providing a portfolio.
- Maintaining eye contact.

- Asking follow-up questions.
- Answering technical questions related to the work.
- Working through skills tests.

Exercise 4: What other actions may highlight soft and hard skills?

....

....

Exercise 5: Have you ever heard of the STAR technique? What do you think it is?

The most effective way to showcase your hard and soft skills is the

STAR

technique.

Exercise 6: Decode the acronym.

S ....
....

T ....
....

A ....
....

R ....
....

Job interview - Soft skills

Exercise 7: Read a sample interview question and an answer. Identify and underline the STAR techniques.

Can you discuss a time when you had to manage your team through a difficult situation?

"I worked for a web development company, and our team needed to complete the design for a client's website by the end of the month. The UX designer and the senior web developer disagreed on the final changes to the landing page. Our team fell one week behind on the project. I scheduled a meeting the next day, and they both came to an agreement on the design and we delivered it to the client on time. Addressing problems quickly is an important part of being a manager, and I think I can use my judgment from this situation to excel in this role."

Exercise 8: Read the question and plan your answer following the STAR technique and the example below.

What is the most significant problem you solved in the workplace?

Situation: One of the biggest problems I've faced occurred when two top clients decided not to re-sign with the company.

Task: This situation put a lot of pressure on me and the rest of the sales team to increase our production.

Action: I hired two sales interns to make cold calls to local prospects and update our lead generation software. I spent the next quarter working later and making sure each employee had a full sales pipeline.

Result: We ended up signing four new clients and made up for revenue losses from losing our previous clients.

Situation:
....

Task:
....

Action:
....

Result:
....

By JoannaESL

Job interview - Soft skills

Exercise 9: Write your answers to the following job interview questions.

How do you prioritize your tasks when you have multiple deadlines to meet?

Situation:
....

Task:
....

Action:
....

Result:
....

How do you explain new topics to coworkers unfamiliar with them?

Situation:
....

Task:
....

Action:
....

Result:
....

Exercise 10: Discuss your answers to the following questions.

- Describe a situation where results went against expectations. How did you adapt to this change?
- What are your actions if employees disagree with your decision?
- Name three of your most important considerations when working for an employer?
- Highlight a situation where you had to make a decision without managerial supervision. How did you approach this situation, and who else did you speak with?
- When have you performed a task without preexisting experience?

Job interview - Soft skills
ANSWERS

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HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS
• bilingual • database management • programming • SEO marketing • statistical analysis • typing proficiency	• creativity • dependibility • empathy • organisation • problem-solving • teamwork

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Job interview - Soft skills

ANSWERS

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- Providing a portfolio. Hard skills
- Maintaining eye contact. Soft skills

- Asking follow-up questions. Soft skills
- Answering technical questions related to the work. Hard skills
- Working through skills tests. Hard skills

Exercise 4: What other actions may highlight soft and hard skills?

Hard skills: elaborating on your experience

Soft skills: speaking clearly

Exercise 5: Have you ever heard of the STAR technique? What do you think it is?

The most effective way to showcase your hard and soft skills is the

S T A R

technique.

Exercise 6: Decode the acronym.

S Situation: introduce what happened

T Task: describe what you had to do

A Action: describe what you did

R Result: say what you achieved

Job interview - Soft skills
ANSWERS

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Situation

Task

Action

Result

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Situation: Students' own answers.
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ANSWERS

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