



Soft Skills for Workplace Success

Working Smart: Soft Skills for Workplace Success is a five-module, 16-lesson soft-skills curriculum taught over a minimum of 24 hours. Certified participants have successfully completed all modules/lessons and are expected to show key competencies in all areas.

Employers are looking for good people who not only have the technical skills and experience to do the job, but also bring the "soft skills" that lead to success: communication skills, problem-solving, time management, accountability and more. **Working Smart** provides the tools to help you keep a job, excel at your job and be more productive.

1. Self-Awareness skills needed to portray a confident and authentic sense of self. Examples include (a) identifying one's core values and goals, (b) avoiding a victim mentality, and (c) understanding the process of change.
2. Employer-Awareness skills needed to separate one's personal and professional selves. Examples include (a) understanding employer unspoken behavioral expectations, (b) managing competing home vs. work demands, (c) taking initiative/pulling your weight, and (d) using professional judgment regarding personal vs. professional boundaries (clothing, language, relationships, texting) while at work.
3. Self-Management skills needed to de-escalate oneself in highly stressful situations which could put jobs at risk. Examples include (a) understanding the impact of stress on body and behavior (fight, flight, and freeze), (b) recognizing triggering situations, and (c) using de-escalation strategies when angry or anxious.
4. Communication skills needed to handle everyday interactions with supervisors and coworkers in the workplace. Examples include (a) how to listen effectively, (b) how to ask for clarification, (c) how to express oneself in writing including written cyber communication, and (d) how to understand the impact of non-verbal/para-verbal communication (e.g., tone of voice, body gestures, street versus standard language).
5. Conflict Resolution skills (aka Teamwork or Interpersonal skills) needed to handle more stressful interactions with supervisors and co-workers in the workplace. Examples include (a) how to deal with feedback or constructive criticism, (b) how to express feelings/concerns, and (c) how to reach compromise during a disagreement.
6. Problem Solving/Critical Thinking skills needed to work through complicated work-related interpersonal problems. Examples include (a) how to identify a problem quickly and focus on a goal rather than blame, (b) how to gather factual information about a

work-related problem rather than making assumptions, and (c) how to analyze pros and cons of various options when making decisions.

Module 1: Self-Awareness Skills

- Lesson 1: Personal Branding
- Lesson 2: Self-Change
- Lesson 3: Cognitive Cycle

Module 2: Self-Management Skills

- Lesson 4: Dealing with Stress
- Lesson 5: Warning Signs
- Lesson 6: Personal Reactions
- Lesson 7: Staying Calm & Clear

Module 3: Work Ethics

- Lesson 8: Employer Expectations
- Lesson 9: Code-Switching

Module 4: Communication Skills

- Lesson 10: Active Listening
- Lesson 11: Four C's of Communication
- Lesson 12: Expressing Concerns
- Lesson 13: Handling Feedback

Module 5: Problem Solving Skills

- Lesson 14: Problems and Goals
- Lesson 15: Facts vs. Opinions
- Lesson 16: Options and Outcomes



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