

# The Importance Of Soft Skills Training In The Curriculum Of Higher Education

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## INTRODUCTION

Soft skills are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. Unlike hard skills, which are about a person's skill set and ability to perform a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are interpersonal and broadly applicable. Soft skills are often described by using terms often associated with personality traits, such as: Optimism, Common Sense, Responsibility, A Sense of Humor, Integrity; and abilities that can be practiced (but require the individual to genuinely like other people) such as: Empathy, Teamwork, Leadership, Communication, Good Manners, Negotiation, Sociability, the Ability To Teach (<http://searchcio.techtarget.com>).

Soft Skills are vital for all graduates, irrespective of the stream they have undertaken. The different aspects of Soft Skills such as: Communication Skills, Leadership Skills, Analytical Skills, etc. are some of the essential skills that an organization looks into the employees that it is keen to hire. Whether a candidate takes a job as a Teacher, Manager, Accountant or as a Technician, Soft Skills play an important role. According to Crosbie (2005), apart from helping a person to get a good job, Soft Skills assist in career advancement and attaining accomplishments at work. The youth of today dreams of a good and decent job after they enter into higher education, and for that, they load their resumes with many certificates. However, today, certificates and experience are not an adequate requirement for ingress and escalation in the professional world. Jide Awe, Founder & CEO, Jidaw.com said, *"no matter how 'good' you think you are, you will not get success in the corporate world, you feel you deserve, if you cannot well communicate with your colleagues or clients."*<sup>1</sup> Communication Skills are an important feature of Soft Skills and play an important role in our life as well as our profession. Dearth of Soft Skills has resulted in low hiring in jobs, which has resulted in reduced layers of employers. Sean Hewitt said, *"Employers value Soft Skills because research suggests that they are just as good an indicator of job performance as traditional job qualifications."*<sup>2</sup>

Soft skills form a crucial and increasingly important topic in careers, and are part of promotion and appreciation in one's career track. The requirements for Soft Skills in a job have made the competition for job acquisition and job sustainability tougher. The researcher was asked to visit Anuradha Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Jaipur, Rajasthan to deliver a session on Effective Communication Skills of Teachers, and all teachers took an active participation in the session, which implies that now, even the teachers look forward to effective delivery of the content to their students. This shows that now, Soft Skills are relevant even for teachers, and are not limited to the domain of the corporate world. While casting our vote, we tend to look for a leader who relates well, speaks well - in short, the one who effectively displays his/her soft skills. The reason as to why Soft Skills have come to acquire an important pedestal is that now, every candidate wishes to get an edge over his competitor. Therefore, if Soft Skills are incorporated in the curriculum of Higher Education, this will improve the complete personality of the students and help them to secure a respectable position in the social & professional world. Richard Serby said that contemporary professional requirements are such that they look for specifically those candidates who can add value to the organization with their Soft Skills. He said that, *"the ability to develop and use Soft Skills can make the difference between a job offer and enjoyment of new employment."*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Jide Awe (2008), Founder & CEO, [Jidaw.com](http://Jidaw.com) (for About .com) *"Eight Great Reasons to Develop your Soft Skills"* [certification.about.com/od/certification\\_by\\_topic/a/softskills.html](http://certification.about.com/od/certification_by_topic/a/softskills.html) accessed on March 23, 2012.

<sup>2</sup>SeanHewitt(2008), [Askmen.com](http://Askmen.com), *"9 soft skills for Success"* [www.askmen.com/money/career\\_100/121\\_career.html](http://www.askmen.com/money/career_100/121_career.html) accessed on March 25, 2012.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Serby (2008), [Geo Search.Inc](http://Geo Search.Inc), *"Importance of Soft Skills"*. [www.directionsmag.com/article.php?article\\_id=418](http://www.directionsmag.com/article.php?article_id=418) accessed on March 25, 2012.

## WHAT ARE SOFT SKILLS?

Soft skills are essentially people's skills or personality specific skills. These skills play a vital role for personal and professional success; they assist one to excel in the workplace and one should not overlook their importance in this age of competition and achievement. Sean Hewitt (2008) said that soft skills are "*non-technical, intangible, personality specific skills*" which determine an individual's strength as "*a leader, listener and negotiator, or as a conflict mediator*"<sup>4</sup>. Research shows that, in the times to come, higher level of skills will become a prime requirement to get good jobs. This is the reason that new features of skills are to be incorporated in today's education. Colleges of today have a vague idea as to what Soft Skills are. They do not own these skills in the curriculum of the colleges because according to them, Soft Skills are not associated with knowledge development and improvement. The Center for Career Opportunities at Purdue University (USA) includes the following traits in their list of Soft Skills - Work Ethic, Teamwork, Self-Discipline, Confidence, and Language Proficiency<sup>5</sup>. These skills are different and distinct from Hard Skills. Soft Skills are a foil for Hard Skills, that are essential for getting a job. Critics like Sean Hewitt, Jide Awen, Carole Martin gave their views concerning the difference between Hard Skills and Soft Skills. Carole Martin noted that Hard Skills are more "*along the lines of what might appear on your resume*", whereas soft skills are "*a cluster of personality traits, social graces, personal habits, friendliness and optimism.*"<sup>6</sup>

## IMPORTANCE OF SOFT SKILLS

Superior Soft Skills play a very important role in this spirited commercial era. If one has advanced Soft Skills, then definitely, he/she would be marked as distinct amongst the other graduate job seekers. Regarding the importance of Soft Skills in higher education, Thacker and Yost (2002) noted that students required training to be effective team members. It is because employers often find that "graduates" who are giving interviews for acquiring a job "lack good team leadership skills". Similarly, Mayur Kumar Gadewar, an ERP consultant with Price Waterhouse Coopers, said, "*It is essential to be technically sound, but one should also have the ability to convey the technical knowledge to the masses in the simplest possible manner.*"<sup>7</sup> KPMG International (a Swiss Cooperation) and UKIERI (UK- India Education and Research Initiative) conducted a research survey, which stated, "*a 'Soft Skills gap' is making itself increasingly apparent.*"<sup>8</sup> Dr. S. S. Vaishnav, Principal, Commerce College, Jaipur, expressed his views regarding the absence of Soft Skills in the curriculum of his college in a telephonic interview conducted by the researcher. He said, "*Indeed, Soft Skills play a very important role, and we do not have the prescribed curriculum for the same.*" However, he continued that they went in for "*outsourcing a trainer*" for the final year graduates of his college. Similar views were of the Campus Heads of Colleges like, Deepshikha, Centre of Management Studies, Jaipur, Subodh College, Jaipur and Kanodia College For Girls, Jaipur.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Now-a-days, nobody wishes to gain knowledge to be a scholar as in the previous ages. In fact, knowledge has become a stepping stone to land up a good paying job, and to get a reputed position in the society. Because of these reasons, higher education now demands a transformation to meet the elevated desires of the students. Irrespective of the professional qualification, today's professionals need to possess a high Soft Skills quotient, apart from domain knowledge in order to succeed in this competitive era. Due to the great importance of soft skills, some of the colleges have introduced it as their add-on course. However, many of them are yet to introduce Soft Skills in their prescribed curriculum. This article deals with the importance of Soft Skills in the curriculum of Higher Education and its role in

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<sup>4</sup> Sean Hewitt(2008)(Askmen.com) "*9 Soft Skills for Success*" [www.askmen.com/money/career\\_100/121\\_career.htm](http://www.askmen.com/money/career_100/121_career.htm) accessed on March 25, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Prof. Paticks M. Bujenele (2008), in a Seminar "*Role of Soft Skills in the Modern World*", at Centurion Institute of Professional Studies, Jaipur held on January 22, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Carole Martin(2008) in "*How to stand out from a Crowd of Candidates*". [http://www.career\\_intelligence.com/Transcation/uniqueness.asp](http://www.career_intelligence.com/Transcation/uniqueness.asp) accessed on March 25, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Mayur Kumar Gadewar, an ERP consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

<sup>8</sup> "Global Skills for Graduates in Financial Services", pp.15-18, a research conducted by UKIERI & KPMG [http://www.avesthagen.com/press/01\\_july\\_2005pt.html](http://www.avesthagen.com/press/01_july_2005pt.html) accessed on March 25, 2012.

making the student placement worthy. This study is a comparative analysis between students who are regularly exposed to Soft Skills sessions and those not exposed to the same, with respect to their overall Soft Skills.

The specific objectives of the study are :

- 1) To find out the nature of impact of Soft Skills training on the Soft Skills levels of higher education students.
- 2) To find out the major Soft Skills components that can be improved after the exposure to Soft Skills training.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper aims to find out the significant improvement that Soft Skills training can bring forth in the life of a Graduate and Postgraduate student. This level of significance of Soft Skills was analyzed by finding out the impact of Soft Skills training on the Soft Skills of the above-mentioned segment of students.

❖ **Research Design :** The research design adopted for the study was a 'post- test' experimental design with one Control Group. For the study, the researcher segregated two groups - one Experimental Group and another Control Group of 40 students each. The Experimental Group was exposed to Soft Skills training (the independent variable), while the Control Group was exposed only to regular content related training. A Pilot study was conducted to find the Homogeneity between the Experimental Group and the Control Group. For the study, the researcher selected only those students who were homogeneous with respect to certain demographic factors like educational qualification, age group, gender, and economic background. It was assumed in the study that all other extraneous variables like; parenting and environment in the college had an equal and similar impact on the students.

❖ **Universe :** The research was conducted on students pursuing their second year of graduation from different colleges situated in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

❖ **Sample Size :** The total sample size was 80. 40 students were included in the Control Group and 40 students were included in the Experimental Group.

❖ **Sampling Design :** The sampling method that was used for the study was Simple Random Sampling. Those students who were given Soft Skills training/ coaching constituted the Experimental Group as they were regularly exposed to Soft Skills training. The Control Group consisted of those students who were not exposed to Soft Skills training sessions.

❖ **Tools of Data Collection :** Soft Skills of the students were measured using a Soft Skills scale from the website of *Monster Track*. The scale consisted of 25 questions related to different Soft Skills components. It was a five-point scale. The scoring of the scale was done in such a way that the cumulative value of one individual's response to the scale gave the overall Soft Skills value of that respondent.

The main objectives of the Soft Skills training imparted to the Experimental Group were to:

- ❖ Develop effective communication skills (spoken and written).
- ❖ Build up effective presentation skills, equip them for effective business correspondence, and prepare business reports.
- ❖ Develop inter-personal skills, team management skills, and leadership skills.
- ❖ Make the student competent with respect to the current job requirements, by expanding their Skill Set.

The study aimed to improve the self-awareness of the students and aimed to develop eagerness and enthusiasm in the students so that they emerge as winners, irrespective of the difficulty of the situation.

❖ **Analysis Plan :** The study assumed that both the Experimental Group and the Control Group were homogeneous at the time of constitution and any significant differences found in the experimental group, compared to the control group with respect to their Soft Skills was due to the impact of the Soft Skills training. The significance and the nature of impact were calculated with the help of a 't' test. The outcomes of this analysis will prove or disprove the hypothesis that Soft Skills play a significant role in the higher education. The researcher collected the data from both the Experimental Group and the Control Group at the same point of time to avoid the influence of any extraneous variables like personality development sessions, placement related training, and maturity of the respondents.

❖ **Limitation Of The Study :** The limitation of the study was that the researcher was not able to impose equal control

over both the Experimental Group and the Control Group with respect to their overall life experiences, personality traits as well as learning from daily classroom exposures.

## HYPOTHESIS

❖ **Soft Skills training can significantly improve higher-education standards.**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The average value of the responses given by all the respondents in each group to the Soft Skills scale was as an average of the cumulated Soft Skills value of each respondent. Average Soft Skills value was inferred separately for the Experimental Group and Control Group.

The first objective of the research was to find out the nature of impact of the soft skills training on the students.

The impact of soft skills training was deliberated using the impact score, calculated as the difference between the post-test scores found separately for the Control and Experimental Group. 'T' test was performed to find out whether there is any statistically significant difference between the post-test scores of the Control Group and the Experimental Group. The outcome of the 'T' test proves or disprove the formulated hypotheses.

	Mean	SD	N	t	p
Experimental Group	94.6	9.1	40	4.73**	0.000
Control Group	85.3	8.3	40		
Impact score					
Source: Author's Research ** : significant at 0.01 level					

94.6 is the average of the Soft Skills of the students in the Experimental Group, similarly, the mean score of 85.3 shows that on an average, the Control Group members had good Soft Skills value. Mean Soft Skills value of both the Experimental Group and the Control Group was good - that means both the group members had good Soft Skills. However, an analysis of the Soft Skills level of both the groups showed that the Experimental Group members were having significantly higher Soft Skills as compared to the Control Group, t value - 4.7, significant at 0.01 level (Refer to Table 1). This gives us the inference that by providing Soft Skills training, we can significantly improve Soft Skills of graduate students. These results demonstrate that by providing Soft Skills training, we can achieve the objective of holistic development of the students. These results are positively related to the views and results of KPMG & UKIERI and are similar to the findings of the research work conducted by researchers such as Jide Awe, (2008); Richard Serby, (2008); S. Thacker and Yost (2002). The above results prove the hypothesis that Soft Skills training can significantly improve higher-education standards. Therefore, it should become an essential part of the curriculum. After proving the hypothesis, the researcher tried to find out the major Soft Skills components that can be significantly improved using Soft Skills training. These components form the essence of the Soft Skills Curriculum. The Table 2 reflects that students in the Experimental Group were found to be significantly higher with respect to Oral/ Spoken Skills, Honesty, Teamwork, Risk-taking Skills, Working Under Pressure, Influencing Skills, Training Skills, and Time Management Skills. The difference found between the Experimental Group and the Control Group with respect to these soft skills components were found to be significant at 0.01 levels.

Similarly, statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 was found between the Experimental Group and the Control Group with respect to Soft Skills components of Self-motivation, Critical Thinking, Interpersonal Skill, Research Skills and Problem-Solving Skills. The research evidence shows that students' knowledge and personality can be enhanced significantly with respect to almost all the major Soft Skills components through Soft Skills training sessions.

## CONCLUSION

It can be inferred from the results that Soft Skills play an immense role in shaping up the mind of future leaders. This is

Group	Experimental Group			Control Group			t	p
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N		
Oral/spoken Skills	3.8	0.6	40	3.3	0.7	40	3.26**	0.002
Written Communication	3.7	0.7	40	3.5	0.9	40	1.42	0.159
Honesty	4.0	0.9	40	3.5	0.7	40	2.69**	0.009
Teamwork	4.0	0.9	40	3.3	1.0	40	3.47**	0.001
Self Motivation/ Initiative	3.8	0.9	40	3.3	1.1	40	2.5*	0.015
Work Ethic/ Dependability	3.7	0.8	40	3.3	0.9	40	1.96	0.054
Critical Thinking	3.4	0.8	40	3.8	1.1	40	2.11*	0.038
Risk Taking Skills	3.8	0.7	40	3.3	1.0	40	2.76**	0.007
Flexibility/adaptability	4.1	0.7	40	3.0	0.9	40	6.33**	0.000
Leadership Skills	4.1	0.7	40	3.7	0.6	40	2.81**	0.006
Interpersonal Skills	4.0	0.6	40	3.5	0.9	40	2.57*	0.012
Working Under Pressure	3.9	0.6	40	3.3	1.1	40	3.24**	0.002
Questioning Skills	3.6	0.7	40	3.3	0.9	40	1.68	0.098
Creativity	3.9	0.8	40	3.7	1.0	40	0.99	0.323
Influencing Skills	3.9	0.6	40	3.4	0.9	40	3.43**	0.001
Research Skills	3.5	0.7	40	3.1	0.8	40	2.45*	0.016
Organization Skills	3.4	0.8	40	3.3	0.8	40	0.42	0.676
Problem Solving Skills	4.1	0.7	40	3.7	0.6	40	2.29*	0.024
Multicultural Skills	3.6	0.8	40	3.4	0.9	40	1.03	0.308
Computer Skills	3.7	0.7	40	3.9	1.0	40	1.13	0.261
Academic Skills	3.9	0.7	40	3.7	0.8	40	0.91	0.365
Detail Orientation	3.5	0.8	40	3.3	0.8	40	1.09	0.280
Quantitative Skills	3.5	0.8	40	3.4	0.7	40	0.63	0.533
Teaching/ Training Skills	3.8	0.6	40	3.3	0.7	40	2.97**	0.004
Time Management Skills	4.2	0.7	40	3.4	0.9	40	4.01**	0.000

\* : significant at 0.05 level    \*\* : significant at 0.01 level  
Source: Author's Research.

why these skills have become an integral job requirement now-a- days. Students of today can become leaders of tomorrow only if they adorn Soft Skills along with the technical/ hard skills. However, introduction of Soft Skills is not an effortless task, but an uphill mission to be achieved. However, the consistent efforts of the teachers will enable the students to handle the constraint effortlessly. It is a tendency of the graduate students to copy and learn the notes given to them in the classroom. They don't supplement the class notes with further relevant information of the topic being taught in the classroom. The students are more focused towards attaining marks rather than adhering to self-development. However, with persistent efforts of the teachers, this mindset of the students can be changed. Another constraint that may crop is large number of students in the classroom. In India, each classroom has a large number of students, and as a result, Soft Skills components such as Presentation Skills; Case Study Methodology cannot be implemented in its proper spirit. This is because, with such a huge group of students, the teacher cannot provide one to one teaching to each student to impart knowledge about the basic content of the topic. This can be sorted out by the creative skills of the teachers. They can make the classroom very interactive and take some innovative initiations to impart knowledge - such as division of the class in groups, creating peer activities etc. The introduction of soft skills will enhance the oral and written skills of the students, and they would learn the concepts of Leadership, Time Management etc.

In fulfilling the training needs of the managers, a new concept of Management Development Programs (MDPs), in which the managers are taught new concepts of Soft Skills is being introduced. However, the session planners and curriculum designers still have to consider the pros and cons before incorporating it in the curriculum of the management students. The students, if they want to take the responsibility of their future, then they should have the ability to understand situations, fill in the missing conversations, have the ability to connect and coordinate, and should know how to enlist the support from others. The ability to work in a team and good interpersonal skills definitely add significance in the growth and promotion of an individual in his/her professional and personal life. The research results show that these skills can be refined if higher-education institutes are able to impart the adequately framed and standardized training sessions to the students. The research results show that the Experimental Group students had an edge over the Control Group in their Soft Skills levels, and this difference is attributed as the impact of Soft Skills training. The research result of this paper proves that by regularly exposing students to Soft Skills training sessions, we can significantly enhance the Soft Skills of the students. Thus, introduction of Soft Skills in the curriculum of higher education is the need of the hour, as this will contribute in holistic development of the students.

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## Annexure 1 : The Life Skills Scale - Adapted From “Monster Track”

Scoring of the scale:

0 = Nonexistent

1 = Poor

2 = Average

3 = Good

4 = Excellent

(Questionnaire to be filled in by the Experimental and Control Group)

<b>1. Oral/spoken communication skills: Both one-on-one and in groups (e.g., presentations). Do you just listen, or do you get invited to speak at gatherings?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>2. Written Communication Skills: Both printed and online written work, including reports, letters and email. Do you always use the phone, or has your work been published?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>3. Honesty: Being truthful and having integrity. Do you always tell people, "I never lie," or do your friends entrust you with their keys and money at parties?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>4. Teamwork/Collaboration Skills : Working with others to accomplish tasks. Do you think working in groups wastes your time or encourages your best work?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>5. Self-motivation/Initiative: Doing things without needing to be told or persuaded. Are your projects always due till the last week, or did your class project go public already?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>6. Work Ethics/Dependability: Being thorough and accurate so colleagues can count on you. Do you think someone else can fix it, or do your friends ask you to balance their checkbooks?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>7. Critical Thinking : Challenging things when appropriate and proposing alternatives to consider. Do you think everything you see or hear is true, or do policymakers call you for advice?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>8. Risk-taking Skills: Taking a considered chance on something new, different or unknown. Do you think taking risks is too risky, or do your friends earn great returns on your investment advice?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent

<b>9. Flexibility/Adaptability: Going with the flow and adjusting with unforeseen circumstances. Do you keep the rulebook on your bedside table, or do your friends admire the way you handled both the traffic court and the Royal Court?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>10. Leadership Skills: Guiding and supporting others in order to accomplish something. Do you think leaders are megalomaniacs, or are you asked to chair committee meetings?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>11. Interpersonal Skills: Relating with other people and communicating with them in everyday interactions. Do you like to be alone, or do you aspire to be the next Oprah Winfrey or Jay Leno?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>12. Working Under Pressure: Handling the stress that accompanies deadlines and other limitations or constraints. Do you handle deadlines by ignoring them or by doing your most creative work under pressure?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>13. Questioning Skills: Asking questions in order to learn or clarify something. Do you already know all the answers, or is your nickname Detective Colombo?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>14. Creativity : Having the imagination to come up with new or off-the-beaten-path ideas. Do think it's all been done before, or did you earn a patent and win an art prize in grade school?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>15. Influencing Skills: Persuading others to think about or adopt a different point of view. Would you rather die than sell, or do you want the air conditioner franchise in Nome?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>16. Research Skills: Gathering information in order to study or answer questions. Are your papers based on what you see on FOX News, or did you wear out your library card?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>17. Organization Skills: Being organized and methodical, especially in work-related situations. Do you celebrate random actions all day every day, or did NASA ask you to help plan the Mars missions?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>18. Problem -Solving Skills: Analyzing the potential causes of a problem and coming up with a solution. Do people ask you to leave the problem to them or to help them find the solution?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>19. Multicultural Skills: Understanding and relating to people who are different from you, perhaps by using a second language. Are all your friends just like you, or when someone says, "hello," do you need to think for a moment about what language to reply in?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent

<b>20. Computer Skills: Using basic word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software as well as the Internet. Do you always get someone to help you, or are you the one providing the help and advice?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>21. Academic/Learning Skills: Learning new things quickly and thoroughly, and being willing to learn continuously. Are you taking basic geology for the third time, or did you start taking post-grad courses sophomore year?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>22. Detail Orientation: Making sure that even the little things are done and done correctly. Do you specialize in big-picture thinking, or do your friends ask you to plan their weddings?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>23. Quantitative Skills: Compiling and using numbers to study an issue or answer a question. "Numbers are for geeks," or "Metrics are my life"?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>24. Teaching/Training Skills: Showing other people how to do something in a way that allows them to learn quickly and thoroughly. Do you think everyone should figure things out for themselves, or do you get asked to help teach your friends?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
<b>25. Time Management Skills: Using your time wisely and consistently staying on schedule and meeting deadlines. Did you take this quiz instead of finishing your assignment, or are you taking this while checking email between classes?</b>				
<input type="radio"/> Nonexistent	<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Average	<input type="radio"/> Good	<input type="radio"/> Excellent