

RELEVANCE OF LANGUAGE IN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

Employers look for an employee equipped with skills required to do justice to a job position. Each job of an organization requires a unique set of employability skills. For example, a manager should possess good inter-personal and intra-personal skills to get his work done by his/her sub-ordinates, but an attender should always be alert to the directions given by the boss. Thus, some jobs need physical skills (hard skills), some need intelligence (smart skills), some need interactive skills (soft skills), and others need the combination of two or three of these hard, smart and soft skills. All these three skills commonly share the medium of a language in execution, to integrate their piece of work with other fragments done by others. Each employee may be doing his /her work in isolation, but every work of an organization is linked and to be coordinated with every other work of that organization. This integration of work can be done well with continuous communication. There comes in language aiding the process of communication. Language has various features like colloquialism, slang, connotation, implication, standard vocabulary, strong structures etc. Thus, my paper focuses on the some relevant features of language in demonstrating proper employability skills.

Key words:

Language as a medium. Employability skills, Inter-personal skills, Intra-personal skills, Organizational goals

Introduction:

Every organization is set up with some objectives and goals. They recruit employees in order to materialize the set objectives and realize the goals. Collective effort is the pre-requisite for all the people working in that organization. Based on skills and qualifications, employees are given certain positions and titles. These titles and positions segregate employees into different strata. This forms an organizational hierarchy where directions and instructions flow downward and suggestions and feedback flow upward. Management of information systems takes frontline priority in an organization.

To meet these requirements, while hiring employees, managers look for skills required to do a job which vary from one position to another. General skills like communication, critical thinking, problem solving, behavioral smartness etc. and traits like attitude, leadership, assertiveness, self-composure etc. are usually considered while assessing employee's potential.

These contribute for employability skills.

Types of Employability Skills:

As one is aware, level of education as well as necessity for a job imparts in the candidate certain level of skills. Accordingly there are three kinds of employability skills, namely hard skills, soft skills and smart skills. These three can be curtailed into two viz. soft skills and professional skills. Soft skills denote ‘getting things done by working honestly and moving along with others well’. But professional skills determine ‘calculation of one’s success in the workplace’.

The following are generally considered as employability skills:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication skills• Interactive skills• Team work• Critical thinking• Lateral thinking• Adaptability• Creativity• Mental alertness• Fearlessness• Leadership qualities• Work morale• Professional ethics• Problem-solving skills• Knowledge on ICT enabled services• Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting deadlines• Self-motivation• Persuading skills• Empathy• Active listening skills• Interpersonal skills• Single-minded focus• Resource-sharing• Personality traits• Hard working nature• Valuing other’s ideas• Self-controlling• Readiness to give/seek help• Behavioral smartness• Technical skills
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When an employee possesses the skills listed above, it makes the interaction between and among fellow employees easier subsequently management of an organization becomes much easier and its business transactions will be smooth and fetch better results.

It should be understood that no employee can possess all the skills mentioned above. At least the skills like readiness to work, adoptability, obeying superior’s orders, collaborating with others and self-expression are minimum requirements that an organization expects from a prospective employee. All these have a common thread of communication integrating all the skills. As it is rightly said by Meenakshi Raman, “When one becomes a part of an organization, one needs to communicate, and communicate effectively. All the activities of an organization undertakes have communication at their hub. The better our communication skills, the greater are our chances of quick progress.”

Now with a look at job preparedness of aspiring candidates, one can notice that they are putting their efforts to improvise their subject knowledge, technical skills, communication skills, interview skills and most importantly resume preparation. It’s a fact that this entire preparation is done on the platform of language.

That makes the point that both job aspirants and organizations highly depend on continuous

communication. Now the question 'Is communication possible without a medium of language?' arises. Non-verbal communication may be possible but with a limited scope. No authentication or future reference is possible with non-verbal communication. So language is a necessary element of communication and communication skills are integral part of employability skills.

Language vs. Employability Skills:

After getting his/her degree, job aspirants earnestly look for job opportunities and grab every opportunity that they come across. The first step in this process is resume preparation. A resume should be a concise summary of job suitability of a candidate. Candidate who is good at condensation skills can prepare a lucid, complete, concise and attractive resume.

In the same way, during a job interview, unless the candidate has effective oral communication skills, he/she cannot impress the interviewer. Candidate with language fluency, oral clarity, relevance of expression can outsmart others in a job interview.

These two important episodes of a job aspirant's life clearly demonstrate the significant stand of language and its sub-skills in determining his/her career. One should acknowledge that most of today's professional communication is done through the medium of English language.

Sub-Skills of English Language:

English as a medium of communication is used in four ways – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Each of these serves various purposes like information sharing, information gathering, giving instructions, taking directions, seeking suggestions, sending feedback, writing letters/reports/proposals/thesis, making presentations, giving demonstrations, describing a phenomenon, promoting a product, understanding organizational goals, work delegation, motivating oneself towards achievement of goals etc.

Preparation for Placements:

If the above sub-skills are applied in a job aspirant's preparation for placements, it begins with resume preparation which needs good writing skills like fine vocabulary, suitable phrases, use of bullets and borders and summarizing skills. In addition, resumes accompany cover letters which require accuracy and brevity of details and clarity of expression. Right words in simple sentences and concise paragraphs will give pleasant look to the resume.

In response to the resume, organization may conduct written test. Short-listed candidates may be asked to participate in group discussions, presentations or descriptions. This phase requires language fluency, relevant answers in an assertive way, spontaneous speaking ability and presence of mind.

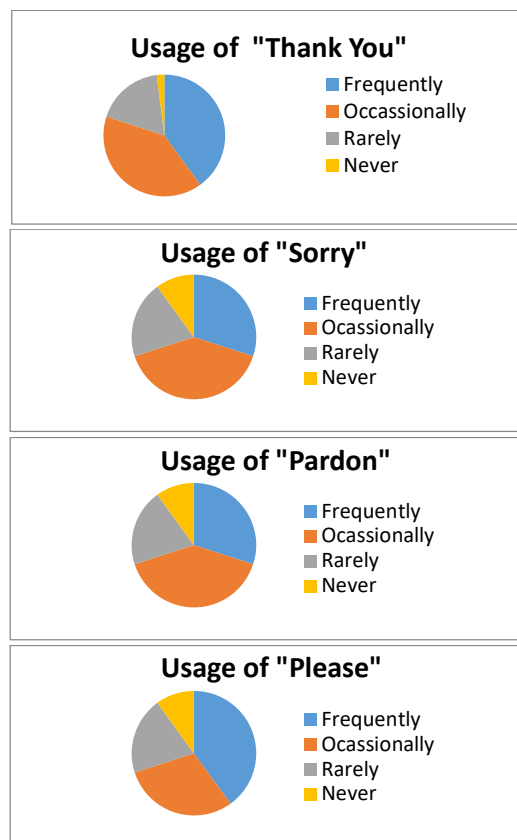
When the organization is satisfied with the candidature of the aspirant they send a call letter in an understandable format. Then the aspirant prepares for the interview with special focus on oral articulation. This preparation includes attending mock interviews, experimenting with language, imitating others and enhancing relevant vocabulary.

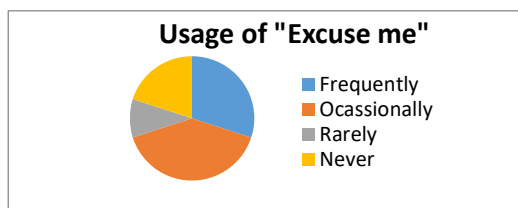
Once the interview is over and the aspirant has not received any communication even after a fortnight, the aspirant can follow it up by sending a mail of an enquiry of the results. This needs an art of composing mails in a persuasive way. Thus at every aspect of job preparedness of an aspirant involves functional aspect of language.

Any language can be a medium of the above-said contexts. But because of universal appeal, English is preferred in professional matters. Owing to different reasons, varieties of English are observed amongst the speakers. Now let's see, what can be the relevant English required in professional contexts. Of course, standard vocabulary, syntactical expression, grammatical accuracy, clarity of expression, brevity of message have significant role in verbal expression. With these, concrete message can be conveyed well. But in professional contexts, 'how something is said' is as equally important as 'what is said'.

Language plays the role of relationship builder. Relevant language and expression make people connected to one another. Critical thinking allows employees to find fresh perspectives and discover innovative solutions to tricky problems. Language also can be used in a creative way. For an instance, when an employee is struggling to climb stairs (because lift is not working) with too many files in his hand, one colleague responds by asking 'Can I help you? Another colleague says 'Let me help you'. The employee automatically connects with the second colleague. Actually both the expressions 'Can I help you? & 'Let me help you' are one and same, but choice of expression varies.

To find the awareness of employees about their verbal expression choices, a small survey is done with fifty colleagues working in four Engineering colleges of located in and around Rajampet. region. The survey is about usage of the expressions like 'thank you', 'sorry', 'pardon', 'please' and 'excuse me'.





In professional sphere, it's understood that usage of these five expressions ('thank you', 'sorry', 'pardon', 'please' and 'excuse me') makes all the difference. One can establish positive rapport with colleagues and that leads to the accomplishment of desired results and subsequently it may fulfil organizational goals too.

In an organization, relevant language brings forth:

- Establishes positive relations
- Protects organizational hierarchy
- Boosts work morale
- Creates perfect Loop of communication cycle
- Encourages creativity
- Shares information fast
- Prioritizes organizational goals
- Subordinates of personal goals
- Fosters critical thinking
- Innovative ideas are acknowledged
- Ensures inclusive growth

Conclusions:

Organizations look for employees who would uplift their firm with solid contribution. Job aspirants should try to reach out the expectations of an organization. Always aspirants and employees must be sharpening their skills both soft skills and professional skills. Soft skills take an expression of language.

With this discussion, it is clear that employability skills take the language as a platform. Right word at right place in right way, fetches the aspirant positive results. Knowledge of LSRW skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) and inclusive aspects determine the professional career of an aspirant. Relevant vocabulary and effective sentence construction help the candidate to get placed in a good position.

One should also gauge the need and mood of the hour and cautiously communicate using appropriate language. The relevance demand empathetic expressions some times; assertive voice sometimes; jargon sometimes; active listening skills always. Relevant language coupled with appropriate non-verbal cues always makes the difference and employees can have solid foundation for their professional elevation.

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