

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING SCIENCES & RESEARCH
TECHNOLOGY****Soft Skills Development Through Humanities And Social Sciences Curriculum
In Technical Education****Apeksha Mishra¹, Dr. Hemant Gahlot²**¹Dept. of Humanities, Acropolis Institute of Engineering and Technology, Indore²Director of English, Arts and Science College, Ratlam**Abstract**

The purpose of Humanities and Social Sciences department in any technical institution is to develop an all-round personality of young engineers. An engineer without human values and social awareness may prove disastrous to any society. This is the high time to realize the need for developing specific courses that help in the over-all growth of the personality of the students and train them about the requirements at their workplace. Having an overview about soft skills, we can revert to the discussion that to meet the global challenges, hard core technical qualifications are not enough, but fulfillment of eligibility of having soft skills have become mandatory which is a pathway to develop an individual's personality that fits him or her best to the job.

Soft skills are not a fad at all. Our education system and mindset have been oriented towards technical knowledge and expertise and the focus so far has been on qualifications that boast of specialization in various fields like engineering, software, architecture and so on. The institutions have focused on mapping the hard technical skills of students and how these skills can fuel the entrepreneurial venture. But very less initiative has been taken to inculcate communication skills and various business ethics within students so as to compete at global platform. Students coming from various rural and cultural backgrounds face complexities in varied forms to function globally as they lack excellent communication and presentation skills, and are unable to exhibit their ideas, thoughts, and talents in full colours, resulting failure of entrepreneurial ventures. Thus, developing soft skills (leadership, decision making, conflict resolution, and presentation skills) through restructuring the technical curriculum can definitely boast humility and self-confidence within students can generate integrity in speech and actions, sensitivity to context, focus on outcomes and process and continuous learning. Resulting, optimized balance between technical and soft skills and leading to accumulation of social and financial capital.

Introduction

The purpose of Humanities and Social Sciences department in any technical institution is to develop an all-round personality of young engineers. An engineer without human values and social awareness may prove disastrous to any society. This is precisely the vision before all technical institutions that they have a full-fledged humanities and social sciences department to help students to have sound personality by imbibing social adaptability and human sensibility as an integral part of their mindset.

Human component in any organization is the most important resource. One may lay brilliant plans, may use sophisticated technology, may invest amount of capital, but if the manpower is not motivated and not utilizing all these resources to the maximum, organizational effectiveness can never be achieved.

In the changed global scenario, the technical personnel are supposed to work at the international level. So, its responsibilities and liabilities have increased manifolds. In the interest of making engineers fully aware of their social responsibilities and better able to consider related factors in the decision-making process, institutions must pursue with course work in the humanities and social sciences as the integral part of engineering program. With this objective in mind, several courses of literature, communication skills, and social sciences were designed and taught to technocrats; to develop a complete "self", to understand and appreciate the different literary forms, fine arts, society and culture. The inputs of economics, financial management, professional ethics and entrepreneur development are also important to carry out business activities efficiently. But, due to technological revolution, drastic changes in all spheres of human life have

taken place. The developments of soft skills among the technical skills have become very important. Employees are supposed to work in global scenario that is much more demanding and so the individual is required to cope up with these demands. Most of the professionals are not well-equipped to deal with these changes effectively. It is the responsibility of HSS department in technical education to provide the inputs to the technocrats so that they can work across the cultures at the global level with the minimum problems. Due to globalization, technocrats face few major problems, first, to cope up with the technological changes and secondly, to adjust with the problems and stress due to different environment.

This is the high time to realize the need for developing specific courses that help in the over-all growth of the personality of the students and train them about the requirements at their workplace. About fifty years ago, cultural difference was the subject of interest to anthropologists and missionaries. Today understanding and managing the impact of these differences are of vital concerns for most international corporations and organizations. For example, China has familiarized itself with the culture of the countries, their liking and disliking, where it wants to sell its product and goods. That is why; it pastes the picture of popular Indian heroes and heroines on the packaging of its products when they are to be sold in the Indian markets. Another study revealed that the same product when packed into the white colour (most preferred colour in Japan), the amount of the sale of that product increased manifolds. This could be possible because of the understanding of their tastes, liking and disliking. In consumer behaviour setting, presence of ethnocentrism and patriotism can significantly affect the product choices. With this view in mind, the following areas of knowledge can be explored.

Knowledge of culture and multi-culture is becoming must, as students are more than ever confronted with international realities. Training individuals to recognize cultural differences and linguistic diversities, and to use those differences to create advantages for the organization is an approach that greatly facilitate, and speed up the integration process.

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in various fields like engineering, software, architecture and so on. The institutions have focused on mapping the hard technical skills of students and how these skills can fuel the entrepreneurial venture. But very less initiative has been taken to inculcate communication skills and various business ethics within students so as to compete at global platform. Students coming from various rural and cultural backgrounds face complexities in varied forms to function globally as they lack excellent communication and presentation skills, and are unable to exhibit their ideas, thoughts, and talents in full colours, resulting failure of entrepreneurial ventures. Thus, developing soft skills (leadership, decision making, conflict resolution, and presentation skills) through restructuring the technical curriculum can definitely boost humility and self-confidence within students can generate integrity in speech and actions, sensitivity to context, focus on outcomes and process and continuous learning. Resulting, optimized balance between technical and soft skills and leading to accumulation of social and financial capital.

The globalization process has suddenly found us wanting in the area of soft skills along with hard skills, as these are essential for the success of any individual as well as an organization. Soft skills, also known as “people skills” includes communication, listening, engaging in dialogue, giving feedback, cooperating as a team member, solving problems, contributing in meeting and resolving conflicts.

Having an overview about soft skills, we can revert to the discussion that to meet the global challenges, hard core technical qualification are not enough, but fulfillment of eligibility of having soft skills has become mandatory which is a pathway to develop an individual’s personality that fits him or her best to the job, while bringing boon to the business. Further, in an era of professional complexities, having an excellent IQ is not only the criteria for success in professions, but development of emotional or cognitive competencies with humane understandings has also become vital, which empower an individual emotionally and professionally, rendering over-all success.

The real key to the effectiveness of professionals is their ability to put their domain knowledge into effective practice, and in this context, soft skills have a crucial role to play, thereby enhancing the career prospects. With this, we can state that

development of soft skills has become an integral aspect of professional lives and must be considered and initiated from the root level by restructuring the technical curriculum, by introducing courses regarding development of soft skills among technical students, while preparing them to meet the global challenges and complexities and enhancing their over-all personality. With this view in mind the following courses can be floated to develop the all-round personality of technical students as:

1. Introducing the concepts of inter-cultural Management
2. Preparing for Expatriation
3. International Professional Communication
4. Stress Management
5. Ecological Environmental Issues
6. Personality Development
7. Philosophy of Science
8. Introduction to Philosophy
9. Industrial Sociology
10. English for Specific Purposes
11. Intellectual Property Rights

Furthermore, soft skills can be acquired in two forms as: one part involves developing attitudes and attributes, and the other part involves fine-tuning communication skills to express attitudes, ideas, and thoughts as well. Thus, attitudes and attributes form the integral aspect of soft skills and for achieving global domination, development of soft skills have become a "must".

Following modules have been proposed for the development of soft skills among students, which can help students in the over-all growth of the personality and to train and inform them about the requirements of the workplace, which can help them in their selection and promotion in their professional world.

Module I: Business Communication

This includes the opportunity to learn the use of English and other foreign languages for business purposes as: business letter writing, memos, reports and e-mails, rigorous training for oral communication through different modules like presentation skills, face-to-face dialogues, business and social etiquettes, and conversational skills. This would enable students to operate successfully in cross-cultural situations, resulting greater

sensitivity and more astute observations of business scenarios, with cultural variations. Further, appropriate use of language leads to international operations as well as cosmopolitan representatives, while reducing culture shock, when on foreign deployment. Hence, encouraging multilingualism and multiculturalism and terminating the yawning of cultural chasm.

Module II: Behavioral Skills

This includes the development of array of skills which includes role plays, behavioural assessments on the basis of implementation of psychological tests as: personality, attitude, and aptitude tests, which demonstrate the attributes needed for assertiveness, interpersonal relationships, time and goal management, leadership skills and conflict management styles. This also includes assessment of decision-making styles and business ethics of an individual, while moulding an individual to fit best in the job and bringing boon to his or her business.

Module III: Acquiring Soft Skills Through E-Learning

The training imparted to develop soft skills through e-learning includes: role play simulation, simulated dialogues, case studies, audio-enabled learning, and speaking with visuals. This would encourage e-business, which can also bring economic prosperity to organizations irrespective of time, money, and energy. Companies like TCS, Wipro and Infosys run multiple programmes which are used to inculcate leadership skills as well as skills of behaving in certain tough situations. Further, most of the times companies face major shortage of people capable of delivering soft skills training and have been making to do with CBTs, videos, interactive CDs, consultants or trainers which have good industry knowledge. This has made companies shift towards the e-learning mode, which is cited as a much cheaper and faster method for most hard-pressed individuals. Some well-known e-learning sites in this area are: powerpointers.com, public-speaking.org, presenteruniversity.com, meetingplace.net, and abacon.com/pubspeak which can prove to be a learning platform for the training of employees in soft skills.

Module IV: Neuro-Linguistic Programming (Nlp) For Business Excellence

The NLP techniques offer excellent training and development capabilities across a range of business needs as: presentation skills, interpersonal skills, change management and nonverbal communication (eye contact, mirroring, body and limb movement posture and stance) and delineates the attainment of excellence in using business communication skills which escalates international business, personal motivation through expression of novel ideas and thoughts, and sharing of information concerning problem-solving techniques, problem identification, and forming of problem-solving teams, and knowledge management.

Module V: Developing Leadership And Communication Skills

Developing leadership skills forms the most vital aspect of developing soft skills, while influencing group towards the achievement of goal with high initiation and consideration. In a broader sense, we can say that developing leadership styles and specifically transformational leadership style can definitely motivate individual for better performance, resulting of accumulation of social capital in abundance. Concerning communication skills, presentation and face-to-face dialogues must be developed with the aim to articulate a realistic, credible and attractive vision of the future of the business, along developing inter-cultural relations.

Module Vi: Boot Camps For Entrepreneurship Development And Awareness Programmes

Entrepreneurship has become fashionable term and being an entrepreneur has become a significant personality construct to supersede the global complexities. For this, initiation of boot camps must be made for developing individuals as entrepreneurs who have the ability to see an opportunity and have potential in abundance to bear the risks and failures of the business. The camps must be initiated to encourage executives to be innovative and creative out of the mundane business scenarios. The camps must integrate strategies for developing appropriate decision-making styles to grab the business opportunity for optimum levels of profits and profit-sharing along with re-engineering processes and develop competency for astute interpretation and analysis of financial statements. Various stress management course must be initiated to cope up with the stress caused while facing the turbulent challenges and

helping students and executives to manage their emotions at workplace, which could sometimes get disturbed while facing the losses, hence increasing their EQ and attaining emotional stability and ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.

Module Vii: Dissemination Of Data Flow Diagrams Or Business Process Model

Data flow diagrams or business process model must disseminated among students which assist in providing a clear representation of any business function as well as a clear and easy way to communicate. Training must be imparted regarding flow diagrams which forms the new way of information system design and business re-engineering and the programs must include information regarding entity relationship diagrams, Gantt charts, pert charts, and various projects management strategies. Thus, training of data flow diagrams can prove to be a precursor for improving the performance and personality of an individual as well as of the organization.

Conclusion

We can conclude that technical skills are “threshold capabilities” and are necessary but not sufficient requirements. Components as: management, awareness, motivation, and social skills allow individual to become a star performer. And for this, initiation must be made by restructuring the technical curriculum by introducing courses that develop soft skills among students, while preparing them to meet the global challenges and enhancing their personality. We can say that, lack of soft skills is a silent killer as it bleeds a business to death and development of soft skills would bring “hard” results to business with the experience of “FLOW” along with high intrinsic motivation.

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