



Skill Development

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ABSTRACT

Skill is a term that encompasses the knowledge, competencies and abilities to perform operational tasks. Skills are developed through life and work experiences and they can also be learned through study. There are different types of skills and some may be easier to access for some people than others, based on things like dexterity, physical abilities and intelligence.

Skills can also be measured, and levels determined by skill tests. Most jobs require multiple skills, and likewise, some skills will be more useful for certain professions than others.

Skill development refers to the identification of skill gaps and developing the existing skills to enable a person to achieve his/her goals. The current generation lacks the necessary skills and there is a humongous gap between the skills existing in a person and the skills demanded by the industry.

- 1) Skill development is important in the overall development of a student.
- 2) For opportunities better- There are a few students who may not be academically strong. Introducing skill training and encouraging the weak students will help in providing equal opportunities. An idea of different career prospects Introducing skill development initiatives for the school students will help them to get an understanding of different career options. This will help them to plan their future accordingly.
- 3) Preparing for future- The process of skill development introduces the students to employability-skills at a very young age. This ensures the right development of the students.
- 4) Personal development- Learning skills will not only increase the opportunities but will also empower an individual.
- 5) Skills like networking and communication go a long way in aiding the overall development of a person.
- 6) Nurturing talents- Skill development helps to identify, develop and nurture talents/skills in a given field.

What is Skills Development?

Skills development is the process of (1) identifying your skill gaps, and (2) developing and honing these skills. It is important because your skills determine your ability to execute your plans with success.

Imagine a carpenter trying to build a house. He has the raw materials but lacks good wood working tools. He has, however, a flimsy hammer and a small screwdriver.

Without the right tools like a hand saw, he can't turn these raw materials into house building pieces.

It's the same with goal achievement. In goal achievement, your skills are your tools. The house is your goal. Just as you need the right tools to build a house, you need the right skills to build your goal. Without the right skills, you will only frustrate yourself, waste your time, and spend a lot of time dealing with rudimentary issues caused by the lack of knowledge or lack of skills, as opposed to progressing in your goal. While difficulty and struggle is part and parcel of any goal pursuit, without the right skills, you find yourself struggling more than necessary. Worse still, this struggle is unconstructive and doesn't help you move forward.

Why Skills Development is Neglected Yet, why is skills development neglected?

There are 2 big reasons:

Firstly, people are often impressed by what others have accomplished without realizing what they went through to get there. We see their accolades and victories, and make gross assumptions about what it takes to succeed. Then we become disappointed when we attempt the goal, only to find out that it's not as easy as it seems.

This is very common in blogging. People see big name internet “gurus” making 6–7 figure income from blogging. Thinking that it's easy, and perhaps perpetuated by the claims of said gurus who happen to sell you courses claiming to help you do the same, these folks start blogging as well, expecting to achieve the same results in a short period of time. They become rudely awakened when they don't even get a trickle of traffic after a few months, much less earn an income. Some press on; many give up.

Secondly, some of us can be heavily self-critical. We look at how successful others are — the top coaches, internet gurus, award-winning performers, winners of the society — and conclude that we can never achieve the same. We feel that these people are somehow blessed with some special power that we don't have. I often have clients who say they want to achieve XYZ goal, but after seeing very established folks in the field, feel unconfident about their abilities. They then wonder, “What makes me think that I can succeed? I should just give up because these people are already so good and experienced. Who am I to compete?”

Yet, it's about skills development. When we see others' successes, what we don't see are the countless hours they spent behind the scenes, honing their craft, and building their skills. What we see as “talent” in others is the result of their 10,000 hours of hard work where raw passion and human potential are turned into hard skills. Skills development is where we turn from beginner to novice, to intermediate, to senior, to expert. And henceforth, having the ability to conquer our goal.

Your Skills Development: Hard and Soft Skills In developing your skills, I'd like you to consider 2 groups of skills:

Hard skills: Skills relating to any specific task; they are usually easily quantifiable. They tend to be knowledge-based, such as proficiency in a subject, certification, and technical skills. Fluency in Spanish, skills in XYZ software, graphic design, and programming are all hard skills.

Soft skills: Skills relating to personality and tend to be transferable, such as communication, leadership, time management, stress management, decision making, adaptability, ability to deal with adversity, and networking.

It's obvious why hard skills are important. You need domain-level knowledge to thrive in a goal. To be a successful YouTuber, you should at least have some video editing skills. To be a good blogger, you should have good writing skills and a good command of the language. To be a good software engineer, you need to know programming.

But many people miss out on soft skills. For example, a writer may insist he is great at writing but get 0 book sales. Assuming his writing skills are top-notch, perhaps he lacks certain soft skills necessary for success, like networking, pitching, and self-marketing. After all, writing a successful book isn't just about having good writing skills:

- You need to pitch to publishers/collaborators.
- You need to market yourself to people.
- You need insightfulness that helps you understand what people want and how to write stories that resonate with people.
- Many best-selling authors today aren't necessary good writers but are either personalities with a large following (some of these folks don't even write their own books but use a ghost writer) or everyday people with a story that resonates with an audience

That's not to say you focus on soft skills over knowledge. Both hard and soft skills are important. When you succeed based on only soft skills but with no hard skills, you lack the foundation to create new wins. It's a matter of time before people call you out on your bullshit. When you have only hard but no soft skills, you lack the savviness to hustle and showcase your talent to a bigger crowd out there. Both skills are equally important and complementary to each other.

How to Start Developing Skills

1) Start with the core skills

If you're starting from ground zero, such as learning programming when you don't know anything about coding, it can be intimidating as there are a multitude of things to learn. Start with core skills first.

Core skills are skills you absolutely need to succeed in your goal. They have a direct impact on your success.

Secondary skills are of lower importance vs. the core skills. While they accentuate your success, your expertise in them do not make or break your goal.

For example, when I started my business, there were many skills I had to pick up. I started with the core skills that I felt would be instrumental to my success: writing, coaching, training, and web marketing. These skills had a make-or-break effect on my goal. On the other hand, Pinterest, Facebook marketing, Twitter, and fancy web design, while helpful, were not instrumental to my success. These were consequently my secondary skills. While I took some time to learn the secondary skills, I dedicated the bulk of my time to mastering my core skills.

What determines a core or secondary skill? It depends on your goal. As long as the skill has a critical impact on your goal, it is considered a core skill. If your goal is to be a life coach with a team of sub-coaches, then life coaching, leadership, team management, and training will be your core skills. If your goal is to be a life coach with an online setup, then life coaching, web marketing, content writing, and good technical skills will be your core skills.

In times when it's not effective to learn certain skills, I recommend to outsource instead. Read my outsourcing guide [here](#).

2) Break into little steps

With each skill, break the learning into small steps.

Back when I was learning life coaching, I identified the sub-skills that would make a good coach, including listening skills, questioning skills, empathy, and patience. I subsequently gave myself a rating of 1–10 on each skill and worked on these skills by giving free sessions, taking a coaching workshop, reading books, and most importantly, working with people. I also developed my own coaching guidebook, which is my repository of coaching concepts and frameworks to coach people. I would collect feedback and review my performance after each coaching session, including identifying things that I did and didn't do well in, so I could improve.

Doing these steps helped me become proficient quickly. I moved from coaching 1 person, to 2, to 4, to 8, to 10 people within a few months. Soon I was coaching my 20th client, and then my 50th, and then my 100th.

Before long I was seeing clear trends in my clients' aspirations and problems and could help them in a pinpointed manner. I also became proficient where I was able to accurately analyze each client's problems with a brief background and simple questions, and subsequently guide them out of their mental blocks.

Developing a skill can be a lofty project, so break it up into little chunks. Don't expect to reach “master” status right away but focus on conquering each section, one bit at a time. For seemingly unquantifiable soft skills, assign quantifiable milestones to guide you. For example, if you want to cultivate networking skills, you can start by going to X new events and reaching out to X new people each week, and subsequently practice how you introduce yourself and pitch your ideas to others, iterate accordingly, and so on.

3) Learn from the best

One of the best ways to learn is to learn from the best. That's because you can understand from someone who's “been there done that” and get their wisdom rather than proceed unguided. Here are some tips:

Who are the people you know, who have experience in this area? Approach them for advice. Ask them: How should you build your skill in this area? Do they have any tips for you? What should you watch out on?

Engage a coach. Getting a coach isn't cheap, but if you have the financial resources and you get the right coach, you can shave hundreds of hours off your learning curve. My clients, through our sessions together, have saved hundreds of hours and sped ahead in their goals, compared to if they had struggled and dealt with these issues alone.

Get a mentor. Is there a senior in your company or your network of contacts who would be willing to mentor you?

Study experts in the industry. Who are the experts in your field? Study them and understand what makes them so good at what they do. Model their behavior, while adapting it to fit you.

4) Research

Research to gather different insights and perspectives. The internet has made information more accessible than ever. Research via these tools:

Blogs. Blogs have become the primary way we receive information. Use Google to find new blogs. Bookmark the blogs that look promising.

Podcasts. In our modern world where most of our time is spent at computers, I find audio a refreshing way to learn. iTunes and Stitcher are podcast directories with tons of free podcasts, while Audible is an audio book portal (it's a premium service, though your first audio book is free). PE Podcast is listed on iTunes and Stitcher.

Books. Books are great sources of information as they are essentially very structured forms of content, usually a collection of the author's best wisdom on the topic. Is there a library where you live? If so, head to the library and borrow books related to the subject. If not, hit the bookstores and check out their recommended books.

Free online courses. Online courses has become a huge thing in recent years. Here are some free course portals, including from renowned universities:

Coursera edX

Harvard online courses Stanford online courses Academic Earth

5) Attend trainings

Courses and workshops are great ways to quickly develop skills. Think of it as a concentrated source of information that has been organized into a structured program for your learning. Depending on the workshop, some workshops with a lot of activities allow for experiential learning, which means you get hands-on practice rather than learning through theory via reading. When you attend a training, you are in the company of like-minds, which gives you added motivation and social support in your goal.

When looking for a training, be careful to look for one with actual content and taught by a credible trainer. Ask for a breakdown of the course curriculum. There are many courses today that are filled with fluff and taught by people who are more interested in profits than in the teaching, and you want to stay away from these.

6) Take action

With all that said and done, it comes down to doing. Like I share in this article, doing helps you learn faster than simply reading.

Earlier in the article, I shared that I built my coaching skills by reading up, taking a workshop, and working with people. The latter was the most crucial part of my learning process, for if I had never practiced by working with real people, I would never have known what are the things people need help in, how to best help them, and whether my methods work. This is something I mentioned in *Are Coaching Courses Necessary To Be a Coach?* — ultimately, what builds expertise isn't theory, but practice. This is especially so if your skill has a actionable component. That's when you know how good you are, your blind spots, the gap between hypothesis and reality, and your areas for improvement.

What Skills Do You Need to Develop? What is a goal you're working on now?

What are the hard and soft skills needed to pursue this goal?

Out of these skills, which are the core skills and which are the secondary skills?

For your core skills, how can you start developing them? How can you apply the above tips?

When can you start taking action on these steps?

Start developing your skills and soon enough, you will see the rewards of your labor.

Conclusion

Skill development is very important for every human. it is help in personal development of a human being. It help's to build up our confidence

Reference

- Times of India
- India Today
- Google