Ready to Work- Developing Soft Skills for Success in the Workplace

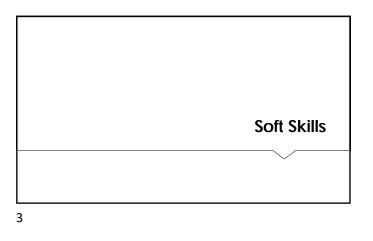
Lakshmi Mahadevan Associate Professor & Extension Specialist – Special Populations Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Imahadevan@ag.tamu.edu <u>https://twitter.com/ctespecialpops</u>

Objectives

O Soft Skills

- O Self Advocacy Skills
- O Teaching Tips
- O Strategies for Success
- OResources for additional reference

1



Appearance

OAre clothes appropriate for the job?

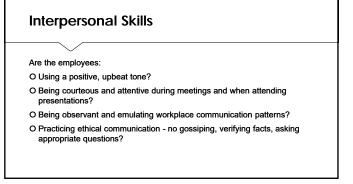
OAre office dress codes/protocol being followed?

OAre recommendations regarding body piercing, tattoos etc. followed?

Ols good hygiene maintained?



2



Communication Skills

Remind employees that all conversations must be :

- O Professional by default.
- O Cautious even in an informal setting
- O Considered formal unless speaking to work friends.
- O Considered confidential unless it applies to the whole group.

Teamwork Skills

Members of the team should:

OKnow the teams' job description.

OBe flexible: respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group.

ORecognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences and perspectives.

OAccept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner. OContribute effectively and know to ask for help in appropriate circumstances.

7

Problem-Solving Skills

Employees should be encouraged to:

- O Examine the problem from all angles.
- O Ask appropriate questions.
- O Listen for issues or problems that recur.
- O Paraphrase what is heard to clarify understanding.
- O Work with "experts" from the team.
- O Apply a solution and re-evaluate often.

8

Work Ethics Employees must be reminded that: O Accountability means – OBeing present for the entire required shift OCompleting tasks that have been assigned

- O Responsibility means Being responsible for carrying out the specific duties that go along with the job
- O Integrity means Doing the right thing in a reliable way
- O A positive attitude means Maintaining a happy and optimistic outlook

O A negative attitude implies - No regard for rules

9



10

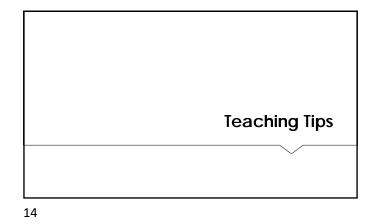
Self Advocacy Skills Employees must be able to: O Provide eligibility documentation. Have a one-on-one meeting with employer regarding disability and related needs. Recognize when accommodations need to be changed, added or no longer needed. Know who they can speak with. When and how to report or complain as needed. Seek to and/or work with a mentor.

Self Advocacy cont'd

- Employees must be able to:
- OChoose not to self-disclose.
- OAsk for help in case of routine or personnel changes.
- OAsk for transportation.
- OAsk for work environment adjustments.
- O Communicate effectively their goals for career advancement and ask for help with planning.

Likely Liability Concerns

O Transportation O Physical access O Noise Reduction O Over stimulation O Off-site activities



13

Teaching Tips

O Demonstrate through examples.

O Reiterate rules often.

O Highlight instances when appropriate rule following occurs during the regular routine.

O Encourage curiosity.

O Set and consistently apply operational definitions.

15

Tips cont'd

O Don't accept blame as an excuse for poor performance.

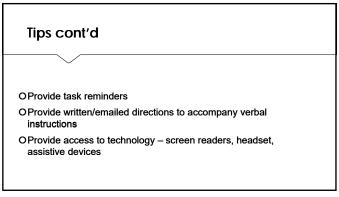
O Maintain eye contact during verbal instruction.

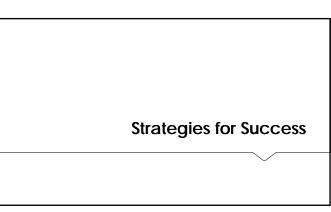
O Use humor and personal examples as appropriate. O Paraphrase and have employee clarify understanding.

O Allow extra time for task completion.

O Provide time management and stress management skills training.







Strategies for Success

- O Create and update comprehensive job training plan.
- O Consider need for transportation (potential liability issue).
- O Ensure the employment site is ADA accessible (building and equipment).
- O Consult with Job Accommodations Network for aid with specific accommodation needs.
- O Employees can choose to disclose nature of disability it is very likely they will perform well despite a disability.

19

Strategies cont'd

- O Determine the safety concerns and ensure that employees will not be in harm's way or perhaps be an encumbrance in case of emergencies.
- O Consider a risk management plan ahead of placement.
- O Plan and practice exit procedures in case of emergency.
- O Determine risks, establish policies, and analyze applicable local, state, and federal regulations in conjunction with appropriate legal counsel.

20

Resources • 4 ways to hire more people with disabilities - https://www.shm.org/resourcesandtoole/hrtopics/behavioral-competencies/global-and-cultural-effectiveness/pages/4-ways-to-hire-more-peoplewith-disabilities aspat: • Guide for Hiring People with Disabilities: https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/businesses/guide-hiring-peoplewith-disabilities-twc.pdf • Job accommodation Network: https://askjan.org/contact-us.cfm • Employment Rights as an Individual with a Disability: https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/youremployment Rights as an Individual with a Disability: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/disabilityemployment • Polecy, Data, Oversight - Disability Employment: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/disabilityemployment • Opes of Assistive Devices: https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/rehabtech/conditioninfo/device • Checklist included

21

Ready to Work- Developing Soft Skills for Success in the Workplace Checklist Lakshmi Mahadevan - <u>lmahadevan@ag.tamu.edu</u>

Skill	Component	Currently in Place	Will Add
Appearance	Appropriate clothing		
	Dress codes/protocol		
Interpersonal Skills	Emulating workplace communication patterns		
	Practicing ethical communication		
Communication	Professional conversations		
Skills	Cautious, confidential and formal		
Teamwork Skills	Supportive of others		
	Accept and provide considerate feedback		
	Respect, individual differences		
	Be flexible		
	Contribute effectively		
	Ask appropriate questions		
Problem-Solving Skills	Paraphrase what is heard to clarify understanding		
	Work with "experts" from the team		
	Apply a solution and re-evaluate		
Work Ethics			
WORK Ethics	Accountability		
	Responsibility		
	Integrity		
0.10.4.1	Attitude		
Self-Advocacy Skills	Employees must be able to:		
	Provide eligibility documentation.		
	Have a one-on-one meeting with employer regarding disability and related needs.		
	Recognize when accommodations need to		
	be changed, added or no longer needed.		
	Know who they can speak with.		
	When and how to report or complain as needed.		
	Seek to and/or work with a mentor.		
	Employees must be able to:		
	Choose not to self-disclose.		1
	Ask for help in case of routine or personnel		
	changes.		
	Ask for transportation		
	Ask for work environment adjustments		

	Communicate effectively their goals for	
	career advancement and ask for help with	
	planning	
Liability Concerns	Transportation	
	Physical access	
	Noise Reduction	
	Over stimulation	
	Off-site activities	
Teaching Tips	Demonstrate through examples	
	Reiterate rules often	
	Highlight instances when they occur during	
	the regular routine	
	Encourage curiosity	
	Set and consistently apply operational	
	definitions	
	Paraphrase and have employee clarify	
	understanding.	
	Allow extra time for task completion	
	Time and tress management skills training	
	Provide task reminders;	
	Provide written/emailed directions to	
	accompany verbal instructions	
	Provide access to technology – screen	
	readers, headset, assistive devices	
Strategies for	Create and update comprehensive job	
Success	training plan.	
	Consider need for transportation.	
	Ensure ADA accessibility	
	Consult with Job Accommodations	
	Network.	
	Determine safety concerns.	
	Plan for risk management.	
	Plan exit procedures in case of emergency.	
	Establish policies in conjunction with	
	appropriate legal counsel.	