Selected books on soft skills and business etiquette

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Bridging the soft skills gap: how to teach the missing basics to today's young talent. Bruce Tulgan, 2015. (HF 5381 T917 2015 RHB).
This book explains how to teach new, young employees the basics of soft skills such as self-evaluation, personal responsibility, positive attitude, good work habits, people skills, proactive learning, problem solving, decision making, respect for context, good citizenship, service, and teamwork.

This book explains what to do on social occasions, along with why that behavior is appropriate. Principles of consideration, respect, and honesty are promoted throughout the book. Sections are included on the keys to success, the job applicant, at the workplace, rising to the occasion, communication, and on the road.

Social skills are necessary for everyday interaction. The lack of these skills or poor ones can isolate people with disabilities. This book tells how to teach these interactive skills. In addition to chapters (Assessing Needs and Choosing Target Skills, Rewards and Learning, Social Skills for Everyday Living), the book includes training units (Greetings and Partings, Requests and Inquiries, Apologies, Handling Praise and Criticism).
**Leader interpersonal and influence skills: the soft skills of leadership**. Sherylle J. Tan, 2014.
This volume explores different models, conceptualizations, and measures of leader interpersonal and influence, soft skills that are so necessary for effective leadership. These include the communication skills, persuasion skills, political savvy, and emotional abilities used by leaders to inspire, motivate, and move followers toward the accomplishment of goals. This title is available through Ebsco eBooks. Contact the library at (512) 776-7559 for more information.

This book provides solid information about ways to improve cross cultural interactions. It is divided into two sections: Part 1 - The new rules of communication which organizes miscommunication according to major issues, for example, body language, child rearing practices, etc.; and Part 2 - Clearing cultural confusion, in which information is presented geographically and alphabetically by cultural groups.

This book is written to provide employees with basic skills for success on the job. It prepares students for their first professional workplace experience. It includes many life skills, such as attitude, goal setting, personal financial management, time management, ethics, etiquette, customer service, communication, teamwork, accountability, conflict, and other relationship skills. It also includes career planning tools such as job search skills, resumes, interview techniques, and how to make life changes.

**You raised us: now work with us: millennials, career success, and building strong workplace teams**. Lauren Stiller Rikleen, 2014.
Millennials are often stereotyped, they are 'entitled', seek promotions prematurely, and require constant praise. They see themselves, however, buried in historically high student debt and thwarted by an outdated workplace structure. This ground-breaking book is an indispensable resource to help Millennials, Gen Xers and Baby Boomers create a more effective work environment. The author separates myths from reality, and provides practical advice, based on detailed research, to strengthen intergenerational teams and develop the next generation of talented leadership. This title is available through Ebsco eBooks. Contact the library at (512) 776-7559 for more information.

**Selected DVDs on soft skills and business etiquette**

**Barriers to communication and how to overcome them**. 35 min. 2015. (DD0722).
A closed door, an exasperated expression, a noisy workstation, a cultural misunderstanding, all of these are examples of noise, a general term for anything that gets in the way of effective communication. The key to overcoming communication barriers is to be able to identify and understand them. This program explains the various types of noise and details specific examples of physical, organizational, emotional, nonverbal, cultural, language-related or written barriers. Through expert interviews and creative vignettes, the video offers solutions to overcoming these common communication barriers.

**Communicating with tact, candor, and credibility**. 19 min. 2008. (DD0601).
This program demonstrates how to use diplomacy to successfully communicate with co-workers, team members, and supervisors. It gives you a four-step method to present your point of view with tact and diplomacy. Learn how to say no to the boss while minimizing conflict, maintain your composure with the coworker who is causing conflict and use the technique of prompt and paraphrase when the boss issues a vague angry criticism.

**Communication skills on the job**. 22 min. 2006. (DD0164).
One of the most important skills teens must learn in order to be successful at work is communication. Using short skits demonstrating good communication, this program covers such topics as introductions and titles, phone etiquette, asking questions, active listening, using “I” messages and communicating a positive attitude. Although teens are featured in this program, workers who are not teenagers will also find it helpful.
Digital communication skill's dos and don'ts. 56 min. 2015. (DV0956).
The ways in which emails, texts or voice messages are composed and conveyed make the difference in impressing or disappointing an employer or co-worker. This video explains what you should do, and what you don’t want to do, when it comes to email, texting, video-conferencing and using the phone for business calls or voice mail. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

Doiing the job: basic job skills. 30 min. 2011. (DD0669).
An employee’s best qualities may have little to do with technical or clerical issues. Often, it is a professional attitude that makes a worker valuable, an array of personal strengths that enable her or him to accomplish goals, get along with colleagues, and rise through the ranks. This video brings those all-too-elusive aspects of job success into focus, exploring professional behavior, ethics, communication, leadership, teamwork, problem solving, organization, and information management. Discussions focus on collaboration, taking initiative, and office etiquette; the hazards of procrastination, dishonesty, and unethical actions; the ability to take and give constructive criticism; the four C’s of good writing (be clear, concise, compelling, and correct); effective uses for technology in completing projects and presenting work; and much more.

This program is restricted to Texas state Health and Human Services or TWC employees. The DVD is segmented into programs that can be viewed individually or as a whole. Essential to the team: explore the qualities that comprise a great team player. Habits and the considerate coworker: check the list to see if you have habits that affect others. Open to change: see how the most difficult changes can produce positive results.

Getting along with the boss: the adventures of business man. 25 min. 1997. (DD0777).
An employee’s attitude can be a key factor in successful employment. This humorous DVD introduces viewers to a new superhero, Business Man, whose life mission is to help young employees learn the soft skills that will help them get along with their bosses. This wacky superhero reminds viewers that a boss is a human being with good and bad days, and subject to the same job pressures as everyone else. The program reinforces these attributes: being punctual, organized, loyal, responsible, committed, trustworthy, and respectful.

Getting it right. 32 min. 2008. (DD0227).
This training program uses humor to teach staff about appropriate disability etiquette. Six dramatized scenes are presented that highlight interaction with people with the following disabilities: mobility, psychiatric, deafness, speech, blindness, and prosthetics.

Manners at work. 20 min. 2006. (DD0600).
Workers will learn how to make and acknowledge introductions. They will also learn proper etiquette up and down the organizational hierarchy. Courteous behavior when working in cubicles is reviewed. This program demonstrates how to shake hands and gives tips for getting along with office co-workers. It reviews proper etiquette in the use of cell phones, voicemail, and e-mail and gives advice on how to politely share office space and equipment.

Manners boot camp. 18 min. 2015. (DD0714).
Having good manners will help you stand out from the crowd and knowing how to act with professional courtesy can help you land a job and succeed once you have your foot in the door. Join Sasha and Sean in Manners Boot Camp: Professional Courtesy as they work to get their etiquette in shape for the professional world of work. Topics include the importance of manners, job interview etiquette, business phone etiquette, and email etiquette. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

Mind your manners: practical etiquette for every day. 24 min. 20004. (DD0157).
This program provides a guide for everyday etiquette at home, in school, on the job, and with friends. It covers how to handle a phone call and how to assist a customer. It also gives tips on maintaining a friendship and dining with new acquaintances.
How should you balance social media and your job? What’s the best way to ask for a raise? Who should pick up the tab for a business lunch? In this program, both business experts and a focus group of young professionals advise viewers on the proper way to conduct themselves in different types of work-related situations. Among the many topics covered are nonverbal communication and personal space, handling dissatisfied callers, when and how to interrupt a busy colleague, composing professional e-mails, asking for a raise, and managing time effectively. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

This program provides guidance about career-appropriate demeanor. With an emphasis on having a good attitude, the DVD discusses handling mistakes, determining dress codes, staying abreast of industry trends, and maintaining a tidy workspace. A group of young professionals compare workplace successes and mistakes. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

This program addresses issues that frequently come up when working in groups. Viewers learn how to handle conflict, gossip, and office politics. They are given tips for determining what type of information to share with their supervisors. It also covers in-office and virtual meetings, asking for leave, ethics, bullying, and harassment. A group of young professionals share examples of bad behavior. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

Soft skills in the workplace, 2nd ed. 35 min. 2016. (DD0752).
This video discusses the importance of soft skills in the workplace through engaging vignettes and interviews with hiring managers. Viewers will discover how to use and improve their soft skills to be more productive on the job and successful in a career. The video is divided into five sections: making a professional impression; acting with integrity; communicating effectively; working as part of a team; pushing yourself to succeed.

Workplace etiquette. 24 min. 2009. (DD0442).
Common workplace scenarios are dramatized to show the wrong way and the right way for employees to conduct themselves. Topics include: dressing properly; treating customers and fellow employees with respect; using appropriate language; respecting personal boundaries; being punctual; using proper telephone manners; using voicemail and email properly; avoiding gossip; responding appropriately to constructive criticism; and being a good listener.

New Books

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This book attempts to explain why, in spite of advances in medication and treatment, persons with mental illness fare so poorly in the labor market. The author speaks from both professional and personal experience. The book ends with policy recommendations designed to improve employment outcomes for persons with schizophrenia.

Bringing out the best in people: how to apply the astonishing power of positive reinforcement, 3rd ed. Aubrey C. Daniels, 2016. (HF 5549.5 M63 D186b 2016 RHB).
This book teaches how to create effective recognition and rewards systems that are positively reinforcing to employees. It explains how to stimulate innovation and creativity. It demonstrates how to engage employees in ways that lead to improved performance and a stronger culture and how to motivate and empower the workforce.
College success for students with disabilities: a guide to finding and using resources, with real-world stories. Irene Ingersoll, 2016. (HF 5382 I47c 2016 RHB).
The demanding workload and fast pace of college often overwhelm students. Without access to the right resources, many of the three million U.S. college students with disabilities fail or drop out. This guide helps students, parents, counselors and psychologists find the appropriate resources and accommodations to help students with disabilities successfully transition to college.

From the army to college: transitioning from the service to higher education. Jillian Ventrone, 2015. (HF 5382 V467 2015 RHB).
This book addresses all categories of military education needs and shares insights about services and programs for veterans. Making the transition from the military to higher education can be tricky. This book makes the process easier.

This book provides information to better support individuals with autism as they attend college. At the end of each chapter, stories of success are shared with the reader. The book discusses self-determination, transition planning, communication challenges, time management, relationships, and personal independence.

Over 1,500 signs are clearly illustrated with line drawings and step-by-step descriptions of hand positions and movements. The book also includes information on the history of sign language and fingerspelling, the art of signing, language patterns of signs, and an illustrated guide for fingerspelling.

The Oxford handbook of positive psychology and disability. 2014. (WB 320 O98 2014 RHB).
Disability has been associated with "differentness" and consequently people with disabilities have throughout time been treated differently. This handbook considers disability from a strengths-based perspective and provides a catalyst to accelerate the application of positive psychology to how disability is understood.

Offering step-by-step, practical tips, the book walks the student (and his or her parents) through the major moments of the college selection process: learning about the kinds of college, devising a coherent initial list, sizing up the curricula and programs of study, planning and carrying out an informative tour of the colleges, constructing a unified and compelling application, obtaining and evaluating financial aid offers, and making a final choice that will match the student's abilities and interests to what the college has to offer.

Winning the brain game: fixing the 7 fatal flaws of thinking. Matthew E. May, 2016. (BF 441 M467w 2016 RHB).
There is a distinction between the biological brain and the conscious mind. Each day, a game of mind versus matter plays out on a field defined by the problems we must solve. This book explains fatal flaws of thinking and provides solutions to raise our thinking game to a more mindful level. The solutions lead to better decision making, higher levels of creativity, clearer strategies and overall success.

New DVDs

A traditional four-year college may not be the best option for many high school students enrolled in special education courses. Other options explored include a recent high school graduate getting a certificate in culinary arts as she pursues her dream of a catering career. An apprentice in a brick-laying program who never felt comfortable being a student decides that an apprenticeship made more sense for him. Two students with learning disabilities talk about a college program specifically designed for students like them.
Carving your own path. 30 min. 2008. (DD0776).
This DVD examines some of the different paths that exist for young people currently preparing to enter the job market. The profiles and life experiences of Andy, Harry, Lara, and Tara are explored as they enter this new work force with a view of creating career paths that link to their passions. Students are led through the steps needed for an effective career planning process. Find Your Passion (Initiation), Explore Your Options (Exploration), Make Up Your Mind (Decision-Making), Plan Each Step (Preparation) and Do It! (Implementation) are the phases that are outlined and linked to exercises for students to use. Some of the jobs profiled include massage therapist, Tae Kwon Do instructor, youth employment counselor, Internet commerce specialist, and firefighter. Viewers listen as the young workers describe the connections between their past experiences and how these experiences motivated them toward seeking and finding jobs in related fields. This program clearly demonstrates the role that personal pride contributes in helping young people find meaning in their careers.

Depression understanding the disease. 21 min. 2010. (DD0758).
This program was filmed in Australia. Depression is the most common mental illness among adults. It’s characterized by feelings of hopelessness and numbness. In this program, viewers meet two people with depression and find out first-hand what it’s like to experience the journey through the disease and recovery. Mental health professionals examine the unique characteristics of the disease and emphasize the importance of ongoing support for those with depression. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

E-networking for jobs. 23 min. 2009. (DD0773).
This program explores the benefits of e-networking and the precautions job seekers should take to ensure that their online identities accurately reflect who they are and effectively assist them in making connections, forming relationships, acquiring knowledge, and demonstrating skills. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

Face to face with your competition: approaches to group interviews. 25 min. 2007. (DD0772).
Requiring several applicants to complete some kind of shared exercise, the group interview is designed to assess collaborative and team-building skills as well as personal initiative. This program helps job seekers prepare for joint interview situations and the demands they make on applicants. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.

When the devil knocks: dissociative identity disorder. 44 min. 2010. (DD0763).
Assembled from more than 40 hours of videotaped psychotherapy sessions, this DVD explores how dissociative identity disorder (formerly known as multiple personality disorder) has shaped the life of Hilary Stanton. This program contains some explicit language and should be previewed before showing. This title is also available as a streaming video. Contact the library at (512) 776-7260 for more information.
Successful professionals. It's an evolving body of research, the concept of soft skills is still an evolving discipline. However, it is time to bust these myths with truths.

myths about soft skills that are running around in the minds of professionals. It is natural for these myths to exist—people rise in organizations because of their hard skills and fall due to a dearth of soft skills. In the L&D profession, for L&D staff to perform effectively in their jobs and whether they believe youth with disabilities have fewer skills than those without. This study used a qualitative design with a purposive sample of 19 youth employers and employment counselors. Our findings show that youth employers and employment counselors identify the following traits as enhancing young workers' employability: a well-prepared job applicant; job fit and a good attitude; and soft skills. We find youth with disabilities are perceived to be at a disadvantage. Consistent with a rising body of research, the emphasis on soft skills, and pliability, opens the door for employment discrimination.

This article focuses on the challenges faced by employee recruiters in determining whether applicants have the soft skills necessary to thrive in the 21st century workplace. Topics discussed include the difficulties in developing employee soft skills or those abilities that cannot be quantified, such as the willingness to learn and the ability to communicate face to face will always be one of the most important aspects of business. While younger generations preparing to enter the workforce should keep up with technology to but the ability to communicate face to face will always be one of the most important aspects of business. While younger generations preparing to enter the workforce should keep up with technology to remain relevant in today's economy, they should also continue to practice and focus on perfecting their soft skills—communication, interpersonal interaction, influence and personal effectiveness in a social and business setting. These abilities are the great differentiator in business of the future. In order to develop these relevant skills and to create the best team today and in the future, there are three things a leader can do. First: Learn how to be a coach to your players; this, most likely, is not what your manager did for you. Second: Identify what you want to coach. Third: Commit and implement a true practice program that requires the leader to participate.

The learning and development (L&D) function has undergone a tremendous change in the 21st century. Gone are the days when all sectors underscore technical skills alone. Currently there is a change in the mindset of companies to highlight both hard skills and soft skills. However, there are several myths associated with soft skills in the L&D profession. For L&D staff to perform effectively in the workplace, they must know the truths about soft skills. The mere acquisition of hard skills alone is not sufficient for employees to survive in the corporate world. In fact, what is needed is the perfect blend of both hard and soft skills to excel as successful professionals. It's important to differentiate between the two types of skills, as well as bust the myths about soft skills. It is rightly said that people rise in organizations because of their hard skills and fall due to a dearth of soft skills. Here are 12 myths about soft skills that are running around in the minds of professionals. It is natural for these myths to exist since the concept of soft skills is still an evolving discipline. However, it is time to bust these myths with truths.

If you would like to receive the full text of any journal articles, please contact the library at (512) 776-7559, toll-free 1-888-963-7111 ext. 7559, or e-mail library@dshs.texas.gov.
The ability to effectively manage social interactions is key to achieving many life goals. A substantial amount of research has been conducted in rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation psychology that includes a consideration of some aspect of social effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to collect and synthesize the past 30 years of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation psychology research addressing aspects of social effectiveness. A total of 13 terms (e.g., interpersonal skills, social competence, social function, and soft skills) were used to search six of the most prominent rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation psychology journals from the period January 1982 to May 2013. A total of 608 articles were identified as including at least one of the search terms, with 175 using a search term prominently and the other 433 only passively. Social skills, social functioning, and social competence were among the most frequently used search terms, accounting for almost 90% of all used terms. It was found that social effectiveness constructs were rarely defined and often used interchangeably. Twenty-nine interventions studies had been published in the 30-year period. Results reflect a substantial and useful body of literature in this area of research while also conveying an opportunity for the development of a more systematic, unified, and theory-driven approach to understanding and addressing aspects of social effectiveness.

Selected Journal articles – New articles on other topics

Community integration and participation are important predictors of successful rehabilitation and recovery in individuals with severe mental illness (SMI). However, individuals with SMI still experience considerable psychosocial barriers to meaningful participation in social, community, civic, and daily living activities. Aims: The purpose of this study was to evaluate and validate a revised version of the Independent Living Skills Survey-Self-Report (ILSS-SR), the R-ILSS-SR, for use by rehabilitation researchers and practitioners in psychiatric rehabilitation settings. Method: One hundred ninety-four individuals with SMI were recruited from four mental health agencies in two states in the Midwestern and Southern United States. Factorial validity of the R-ILSS-SR was evaluated using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Findings: Principal components analysis of the R-ILSS-SR yielded a four-factor measurement structure (self-care, home maintenance, and health maintenance; meaningful activity/work; transportation; and job maintenance). R-ILSS-SR subscales also correlated with known predictors of community participation in the expected directions. Conclusions: This study validated the R-ILSS-SR as a measure of community participation in a sample of adults with SMI. The ILSS-SR is the only measure of community participation specifically developed and validated for adults with SMI. Given that community participation is an integral aspect of recovery for adults with SMI, the R-ILSS-SR can be used to assess participation in psychiatric rehabilitation research and practice.

Self-determination theory (SDT) can be used as a framework to assess self-determined work motivation and vocational recovery in people with serious mental illness (SMI). Vocational competency is a key SDT construct associated with self-determined motivation, rehabilitation engagement, and vocational recovery. The purpose of this study was to validate a brief vocational competency measure, the LSI-Vocational Competency Scale (LSI-VCS), which was adapted and abbreviated from the Life Skills Inventory (LSI), for people with SMI. Results confirmed a two-factor measurement structure and the two factors were labeled as job performance self-efficacy and job seeking self-efficacy. Both factors demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability and correlated with other SDT vocational constructs in the expected directions. The LSI-VCS is a brief and psychometrically sound self-report measure that can be used to assess vocational competency of people with SMI in psychiatric rehabilitation research and practice.

The researchers examined whether three predictors of post-school employment outcomes identified by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC, 2013) remained significant for five subgroups of students with (a) learning disabilities, (b) intellectual disabilities, (c) multiple disabilities, (d) emotional disabilities, and (e) other health impairments.


Children who are deafblind are one of the lowest-incidence yet most diverse groups receiving services mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. Despite this population's diversity, the development of communication skills is critical for all children who are deafblind, and is the foundation on which good transition planning can be built. The authors describe key research findings and other professional literature on transition planning and services guided by the quality of life principle. The role of the individualized education program and case law in transition planning is discussed. Through a person-centered approach to transition planning, a coordinated set of activities designed to support the young adult in moving from school to postschool settings and activities is identified. The authors conclude that effective transition efforts will involve extensive collaboration among school and agency professionals, families, and the young adult who is deafblind.


The purpose of this systematic review was to (a) systematically review the literature to identify National Longitudinal Transition Study2 secondary analyses articles published since 2009 that met the quality indicators for correlational research, (b) further extend the findings of Test et al. by identifying additional evidence to support the existing in-school predictors of post-school success, and (c) identify any new in-school predictors of post-school success for youth with disabilities. Based on the results of this systematic review, results of the analysis added additional evidence to nine of Test et al.'s predictors further expanding the literature base to support evidence-based predictors of post-school success. Limitations and implications for research and practice are discussed.

The reinforcement of ableism: normality, the medical model of disability, and humanism in applied behavior analysis and ASD. Shyman E. *Intelect Dev Disabil.* 2016;54(5):366-76.

The field of educating individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder has ever been rife with controversy regarding issues ranging from etiology and causation to effective intervention and education options. One such basis for controversy has been between humanism, and humanistic philosophical concepts, and its fundamental differences with behaviorism, and behavioristic philosophical concepts. These differences have long been debated, and the belief that the two orientations are generally mutually exclusive has been largely maintained. Recently, however, there has been some resurgence of interest in reconciling some of the fundamental humanistic and behavioristic tenets. Most of these discussions, however, center on specific interventional methodologies as its basis without delving more deeply into the underlying philosophical issues. This article will explore some fundamental humanistic concepts that ought to be reconciled in order for behaviorism to be considered a humanistic practice. While the notion that the possibility of reconciliation is maintained, the central argument maintains that much work needs to be done on the part of behaviorism both philosophically and methodologically in order for such reconciliation to be achieved.