

LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



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PRINCIPAL
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
(AUTONOMOUS)
PALAYAMKOTTAI - 627 002.

Life Skills

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AASAAN PUBLICATIONS

Published by

Aasaan Publications

St. Xavier's College of Education (Autonomous)
(Re-accredited (4th Cycle) by NAAC at A⁺ Grade)

Palayamkottai-627 002, Tamil Nadu, India

Ph: 0462-2577630

Fax: 0462-2577631

Email: sxceaasaanpublications@gmail.com

Web: www.sxcdn.edu.in

First Edition: April 2024

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Printed at : Fathima Press, Palayamkottai.

Price: Rs. 250/-

ISBN: 978-93-84192-23-5

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**THE HUMAN TOUCH: EXPLORING THE
IMPORTANCE OF INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND
TACTICS FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT**

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Introduction

The African humanist philosophy, ethic, and ideology known as "Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu" is also referred to as "Ubuntuism." It is frequently translated as "I am, because we are or you are" or "humanity towards others," but in a more philosophical sense, it means "the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity." Indeed, ubuntuism is an intriguing concept that highlights how interdependent and interconnected people are within a community. It highlights the value of empathy, compassion, and social peace, which speaks to the idea that everyone is connected to one another and that one can only advance through the development and advancement of others. Ubuntu is really about community and the idea that everything we do affects other people and society as a whole. Since then, ubuntu has served as a social commentary on appropriate behaviour towards others. From a psychological perspective, this idea is known as interpersonal skills.

Interpersonal Skills

The collection of actions and strategies that a person employs to communicate with others in a successful manner is known as interpersonal skills, or simply put, the abilities that a person uses to communicate with others. It includes the capacity for interpersonal communication, relationship-building, and effective teamwork. It also entails the unconditional acceptance of others, which is essential for



fostering and maintaining human relationships. They are sometimes referred as "people skills," or communication abilities, which are crucial soft skills. Strong interpersonal skills are a valuable commodity that can assist someone handle complexity, change, and daily chores in both a personal and professional setting. Qualities which encourage wholesome relationship and a pleasant work environment, which will bring honours and beauty into our lives, as the formation of positive relationship can only occur via excellent interpersonal skills.

These abilities relate to a constructive mental computation and communicative process used in interpersonal and social interactions to achieve specific objectives. The ability to relate to people in a meaningful and socially acceptable way is known as interpersonal skills. They are a collection of abilities that make it possible to get along with people. These abilities also pertain to working under pressure, mentoring others, helping others, leading, negotiating, and collaborating effectively with individuals from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. It entails leadership, cooperating, sharing, listening, taking part, and showing respect for others.

Best Social Skills

Due to the large number of subskills that it encompasses, the concept of interpersonal skills is both exceedingly wide and thorough. Interpersonal skills include, for instance, effective body language, verbal and nonverbal communication, active listening, presentation skills, writing skills, self-assurance, a positive outlook, emotion control, teamwork, conflict resolution, open communication, relationship management, stress management, professionalism, work ethic, respect, teamwork, responsibility, dependability, leadership, motivation, flexibility, patience, empathy, and so forth. The author wants to summarise the most important interpersonal skills in order to condense the chapter.

Proficiency in Communication

Since communication skills deal with strategies for winning over many hearts, they are the most important interpersonal or people skills. When communicating with others, the communicator's vocabulary, tone, volume, rhythm, and emotions are all very important. A group of activities known as communication skills ultimately improve the quality of our lives. Effective communication improves our comprehension of other people and circumstances. Being a two-way process, it facilitates the sharing of innovative ideas, improved decision-making, and problem-solving while assisting us in overcoming differences, averting conflicts, compromising, and establishing mutual respect and trust. Strong communication abilities improve one's ability to interact with friends, peers, family, coworkers, superiors, and just about everyone else.

We receive, send, and process a significant number of communications every day in this day and age. However, understanding the emotions that underlie the information is just as important to effective communication as just exchanging facts. Effective communication can strengthen bonds between people in both personal and professional contexts.

Aspects of Effective Communication

While there are many various kinds of communication abilities, the author concentrate on some of the most important ones.

Paying attention

One of the most crucial parts of communication is listening. The first thing to learn while trying to get better at interpersonal communication is how to listen. A crucial component of getting information is listening. Inadequate listening can lead to disastrous outcomes. Understanding spoken or written material is only one aspect

of successful listening; another is being aware of the speaker's emotions at the time of communication. During a typical conversation, listening takes up 45% of our time. A stronger and more meaningful relationship can be developed if the speaker perceives and feels that the listener is understanding them.

In addition to fostering an atmosphere where people feel comfortable sharing thoughts, feelings, and plans, attentive listening can also help to plan and solve problems creatively. Thus, another essential interpersonal communication ability is listening.

Oral Communication

The main focus of verbal communication is speech, which is a crucial means of conveying our message. Written and spoken language can be used in verbal communication. The words we use can have a significant impact on how well we are understood by others. Good sense of humour in verbal communication, or opportune humour, can make us feel lighter and elevate us as exceptional communicators, which will improve our interpersonal skills.

Effective Nonverbal Communication or Body Language

Speak with our voice is just the beginning. In actuality, nonverbal communication is how we communicate significantly more information. Wordless cues such as body language, gestures, posture, body position, facial expressions, hand gestures, eye contact, tone and attitude of voice, tense muscles, personal space, breathing patterns, and even one's appearance can all be used in nonverbal communication. These are important to think about since they have the power to support or contradict the meaning of the words we speak. The subtle, unobtrusive, and effective method for maintaining positive interpersonal relationships is body language. Effective body language and strong communication abilities temper students' attention and leave a lasting impact, which increases their participation in the discussion. A

common term for nonverbal communication is body language and gestures. Interpersonal skills include writing, self-assurance, and presentation abilities. These can be developed as subskills through effective communication.

Controlling Emotions

Emotions and sentiments have a significant impact on interpersonal interactions and interpersonal abilities. Making judgements typically has a greater emotional impact than a cognitive one. Emotions driving nonverbal behaviour can impact how well others understand oneself. One cannot communicate his/her wants and experiences if they are unaware of their feelings. Frustration, misunderstandings, and conflict may arise from this. Thus, controlling one's emotions gives one the ability to comprehend both others and oneself.

Cooperation

Working as a team, whether cooperatively or not, enables efficient work and successful results. Respect and cooperation amongst participants are essential for a successful collaboration. Many of us believe it to be one of the most crucial aspects of the job. That isn't the case, though. Collaboration is necessary in all spheres of life: the workplace, the family, society, friendships, and relatives. So, cooperation is inevitable everywhere and with everyone. Working well with others, especially when faced with obstacles, is a valuable skill for both personal and professional settings.

Interpersonal skills such as being open to feedback are crucial for successful teamwork. One can advance both professionally and personally by being receptive to criticism. Examine every input, whether it comes from friends, parents, elders, superiors, or anybody else, as an opportunity to grow and never respond defensively. It may take some getting used to, particularly if the criticism is harsh, but always take a big breath and concentrate on how you might do better.

Relationship Administration

Establishing productive relationships is one thing, but maintaining them is quite another. This is yet another crucial ability. Love, respect for one another, and a commitment to work at the relationship are the foundation of healthy partnership. Both parties are truthful with one another in a healthy relationship. In the partnership, neither person fears that the other will betray their confidence because they both feel secure in it. When both parties bring these traits to the table—mutual trust, respect, responsibility, understanding, cooperation, and caring—the best relationships emerge. Our ability to build and maintain friendly relationships can have a significant impact on our social and mental health since it allows us to relate to others in good ways.

Conflict resolution is a crucial interpersonal ability that is necessary for anybody who want to succeed in relationship management. Nobody can avoid conflict; instead, one must be able to use conflict management skills to lessen or resolve it in order to reduce productivity. Compromise, assertiveness, empathy, negotiation, diplomacy, and negotiation are examples of good conflict management techniques that will contribute to a more peaceful and friendly atmosphere.

Good Mentality

A positive attitude is just the absence of a critical mindset and an acceptance of reality as it is. It is crucial to remain positive even under trying circumstances. Though challenging, it is achievable. Never speak poorly of people, circumstances, or the past since everything in life has something to teach us about people and events. In the event of a favourable incidence, we might enjoy ourselves, and in the event of a poor one, we might learn something important. Count the rainbows instead of the thunderstorms, then. The expression "All is well" is one

that we are all extremely acquainted with, and it is a great illustration of having an optimistic outlook.

Why Interpersonal Skills Are Important

The information, abilities, and competences needed to communicate with friends, teachers, adults, and other groups of people are provided by interpersonal skills. The following is a list of some of the main benefits of interpersonal skills:

- Social finesse requires interpersonal skills. Aristotle, the renowned Greek philosopher, once said that society comes before the individual since man is by nature a social animal. Because we are social animals, we must interact, greet, and move among a large number of people, which calls for the requirement for interpersonal skills.
- On a social level, having strong interpersonal skills becomes increasingly crucial. Man cannot survive alone; he or she requires a spouse, friend, associate, or other type of relationship in order to function in life. In this situation, interpersonal skills serve as the relationship's unseen glue.
- Every person is different, and their tastes are determined by their particular personality traits or sense of style. Interpersonal skills facilitate the understanding of an individual's personality styles, enabling the rapid establishment of a connection and interaction.
- Possessing interpersonal skills is essential for success in any kind of work. Interpersonal skills enable a person to adapt his or her style and collaborate well with others, from the interview stage to job performance, employment happiness, and job promotion.

- Interpersonal skills are essential for teamwork and interacting with a variety of people. Interpersonal skills enable group collaboration and engagement in every setting, including the job, family, society, friends, peer, and social associations.
- Interpersonal skills are essential for managing emotions that surface during disagreements and reacting suitably in any emotional circumstance. Emotional regulation is a major issue facing us in this day of rapid technology development, but it is one that can be readily managed with the aid of interpersonal skills.
- Insufficient interpersonal skills within the family, workplace, or group can result in isolation, annoyance, resistance, and eventually a life that falls short of expectations. Without those abilities, we would bring our friends, associates, and ourselves great suffering and agony.
- It facilitates empathy, which is necessary for responsible and fruitful relationships.
- It assists us in maintaining and fostering new relationships as well as fortifying the ones we already have.
- Working in a group is more effective and crucial for an individual; it just calls for cooperation, respect for group rules, and basic interpersonal skills. Thus, the key to success, pleasure, joy, and peace of mind is having strong interpersonal skills.

Tips for Improving Interpersonal Skills

A person's personality development must include the growth of their interpersonal abilities. One can become closer to others and develop better interpersonal skills by doing a number of practical things. Here are a few of them.

Observing and Listening Actively

The most important thing to remember when trying to improve your interpersonal skills is to always be prepared to listen to others. This entails paying close attention to what other people are saying, comprehending what they're saying, and reacting correctly. Asking clarifying questions, demonstrating knowledge through feedback, and paying attention are all necessary components of active listening. Maintaining eye contact, paying close attention to what people are saying without interrupting, and responding in a way that demonstrates empathy and understanding are all examples of active listening.

The ability to comprehend and experience another person's emotions is known as empathy. It entails putting oneself in the position of the other person, adopting their viewpoint, and demonstrating empathy and understanding. From another perspective, seeing how others employ their interpersonal skills can also be beneficial. Observe how others interact well, then incorporate these traits into your own relationship. It does not imply copying what they do. Observe them, take notes, cultivate those advantageous traits or abilities, and use them in our own way in the world.

Take Advice to Heart

Have an open mind and ask well-wishers, close friends, carers, or anybody you believe in for their opinion. It means to seek out constructive criticism or honest input from reliable sources.

Seek and offer helpful criticism to enhance relationships and communication. Accept criticism with openness and see it as a chance for improvement. Asking for input is important, but it shouldn't end there. A person can grow if they consider it and put it into practice. Conversely, refrain from criticising people and show empathy for them; this also applies to refraining from gossiping. Many of us occasionally mistake gossiping for feedback. That is untrue. One of the worst aspects of our nature that will ultimately ruin us is gossip.

Determine Which Areas Need Improvement

Determine our strengths and areas that need more work based on what you hear and what you learn from others. In order to determine the areas that require improvement on our own, we can also attempt SWOC analysis, introspection, or self-observation, believing that each person is the greatest judge of themselves.

Learn the Fundamentals of Communication Without Words

It was discovered that 55% of an audience's perception of a presenter came from nonverbal cues. This indicates that physical cues rather than words are used to convey most information.

Therefore, adopt suitable posture for confident and clear communication. Refrain from hunching over, crossing one's arms, or projecting a narrower frame of reference. Rather, occupy the available space, keep eye contact, and move about the area. Utilise every bodily portion that is correctly integrated when communicating.

Look for Chances to Establish Connections

There will be plenty of chances for one to develop interpersonal relationships. This could be associated with their industry, work network, friends, family, or any other particular group, or it could just be a collection of people that have similar interests or hobbies. Never pass up the chance to join and work with established or emerging groups. If such possibilities are not presented to oneself, then it is imperative that they be sought for or created.

Become emotionally intelligent

The capacity to identify, comprehend, regulate, and successfully express emotions is referred to as emotional intelligence. It entails social skills (establishing rapport, successfully communicating, and managing relationships), self-regulation (controlling emotions and

reactions), empathy (understanding and taking into consideration others' feelings), and self-awareness (knowing one's emotions and how they affect others). The ability to accurately read others and respect and react to their emotions are key components of interpersonal skills. Understanding and accepting the differences and perspectives of others can be facilitated by having high emotional intelligence.

Learn the Art of Timing

It entails maintaining a situation-appropriate sense of humour. It will undoubtedly contribute to improving the circles of relationships. Humour is not intended as a means of mocking or criticising people. Rather, it involves teasing, joking, and having fun without offending anyone. The reason stand-up comedians are so good communicators is that they have perfected the timing technique.

Smiling

God has given the human species one priceless and unique gift, which is the smile. A smile is the universal expression of affection. It is the greatest gift one can give to someone else. One of the keys to winning many hearts is to always be happy and to make people smile.

Flexibility and Self-Assurance

Adaptability and flexibility in a range of social and professional contexts are also included in interpersonal skills. This entails adapting behaviours, methods, and communication styles to the situation and the people involved. Building connections will greatly benefit from our ability to be adaptive and flexible in our interactions. This includes being receptive to differing viewpoints, taking into account other people's perspectives, and modifying our approach according to the circumstances and the people involved.

Being assertive entails speaking up with confidence, clarity, and respect while expressing one's needs, wants, and boundaries. It entails

speaking up for oneself while keeping lines of communication open and taking into account the opinions of others.

Thus, make an effort to become more aggressive by sharing one's own opinions and remaining open to hearing what others have to say.

Begins with an individual

The foundation of interpersonal skills is the individual. Assume responsibility and initiate communication; do not wait for or anticipate assistance from others. Start honing the talents regardless of the situation. Gaining confidence from this will enable one to continue growing and progressing. It will also help one win over many others, which will enable them to shape themselves into more effective communicators.

Conclusion

Dealing with people is an art, and it requires interpersonal skills. The battle for existence, an unparalleled population boom, and cutting-edge science and technology makes modern life more difficult and complex than it has ever been. When faced with challenging circumstances, people with strong interpersonal skills are usually able to regulate their emotions and react correctly, as opposed to becoming overwhelmed by them. Self-improvement goes hand in hand with improving interpersonal skills. Thus, let's strive to take ownership of and become experts in our own interpersonal abilities.

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Phone No. : 0462 -2577630

ISBN : 978-93-84192-23-5



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