
Soft Skills Course Descriptions

Achieving Personal Goals

Trying to juggle all aspects of life can be overwhelming. Without guidelines and goals, it can be difficult to reach your personal hopes and objectives in life. This course has methods and techniques to help you define your goals and confirm your priorities. By following the Strategies and Tips, you will set high but achievable goals, develop an action plan, and follow through to successful achievement. At the same time, you will be able to anticipate and deal with roadblocks and diversions.

Applying Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

Having logical intelligence will give you a good start in succeeding in your job. But to be more effective you must also develop your emotional intelligence. Using the two together, you will get along much better with your colleagues and know how to get ahead at work. You will learn how to handle your emotions and gear them towards a positive outcome. This course will teach you how to respond proactively, communicate more effectively, and inspire others to do the same.

Applying Leadership Basics

Applying Leadership Basics provides the fundamental skills for leading a group: defining the task, establishing a vision, gaining commitment, and building relationships. It tells you how and when to use various leadership styles and gives smart techniques to help leaders direct the efforts of others. The Strategies and Tips in this module teach you how to foster innovation, provide appropriate direction, and develop and maintain positive relationships.

Appreciating Personality Differences

Getting along well with others and having to work with people that are just...different—isn't that the big challenge of life? This course will help you recognize different personality styles with their unique strengths and weaknesses. You will learn Key Points to appreciating others for who they are, working with their differences, and relying more on their strengths. You will learn tools for creating a more harmonious work environment as you come to appreciate the personality differences all around you.

Balancing Work and Family

Although most people must work in order to live, it is family that makes life worth living, and it's important to be able to balance the requirements of these two major efforts in order to satisfy our personal needs. This course has tools and techniques for identifying basic values and assuring that efforts and time are spent in ways that bring the most reward and satisfaction.

Basics of Effective Communication

Basics of Effective Communication examines the fundamental elements of communication and describes how you can send clear and consistent messages to a Receiver. It gives tips for choosing the right communication method and considering other important factors that impact effectiveness. It covers effective listening and feedback skills in practical and immediately useful Strategies and Tips.

Basics of Effective Selling

Selling is a complex and sophisticated process, but successful sales begin and end with the basic essentials. This course includes an overview of the selling process, and provides worksheets and checklists to take you from contact list through sales call and on to follow-up and referrals. There are tools for identifying the features and benefits of your product and service, doing a competitive analysis, and preparing your sales presentation. There are also practical tips on dealing with customers, handling objections, and using customer feedback to improve your own performance.

Becoming and Effective Team Member

The key to a team's success is the effort of each individual team member. As just one component of your team, it is up to you to do the best that you can for the team in order for it to achieve its goals and objectives. In this course, you will learn Tips and Key Points for developing a team-oriented attitude and learning to work with your teammates. You will soon see better team results as you develop communication skills, fulfill your roles and responsibilities, and encourage other team members to do the same.

Building a Successful Team

Your team may just be forming, or you may be renewing your goals for the coming year. You may have just gotten a new team member or even lost a few. This course will take you through the various stages of a team's development and give you Strategies and Tips for guiding your team successfully through the process. You will learn how to recognize and respond to your team's needs and help your teammates work together to build a successful and effective team.

Building Strong Customer Relationships

This course will help you get to know your customer as you use the tools that are provided to conduct customer audits and listen to customer feedback. There are techniques for developing a customer focus and gaining the commitment of all employees to excellent customer service. A company-wide customer friendly culture will be just one of the payoffs you'll get from using the methods and approach in this course.

Choosing a Child Care Provider

There are numerous options from which to choose a child care provider, and it's important to find the one that meets your needs the best. This course has guidelines and tools for identifying the essential services that you should expect, determining the competence of the child care staff, matching a child's needs with the provider's capabilities, and assuring that the child receives quality care while away from home.

Closing the Sale

Many potentially effective sales people are unable to complete the only element of a sale that results in income—closing. This course examines the issues related to preparing and setting the stage for a commitment to buy, looks at some of the reasons that this is such a tough step for many aspiring sales professionals, and gives techniques and methods for making sure it happens.

Coaching and Counseling

It would be naïve to think that all employees have the skills necessary to succeed without even being taught what these skills are. In addition, many people may have personal concerns that hinder work performance. By learning how to effectively coach and counsel, you can help your employees ease personal burdens and train them in the skills they need to be better employees. This course identifies situations in which coaching and counseling are necessary, guides you in planning the actual coaching or counseling session, and provides strategies for success.

Conducting Performance Reviews

Performance reviews are one of the most challenging responsibilities that leaders have, and this course will walk you through the process step by step and help you avoid many common pitfalls. There are ways to get the employee involved in the review process, and techniques to use in the performance discussion itself. You'll be given techniques for dealing with challenging situations and responses, and important suggestions for improving employee performance in the next review period.

Conflict Intervention

This course is valuable for anyone who must intervene when others are in a conflict. It addresses how to assess the climate of a conflict and understand the issues. There are methods to gather information, neutralize the situation, clarify points of view, and define the conflict. There are also techniques for brokering a win/win situation, gaining commitment from all parties, and following through for complete resolution.

Creating an Effective Sales Team

Leadership is the most important element of a sales force's success, and it has some unique challenges. In this course, a sales force leader will learn how to get a sales team organized, motivated, and focused on results. There are suggestions and tools for creating a cohesive team, developing a high level of commitment to goals, and coaching sales professionals for improved performance.

Creating a Strong Leadership Team

This course delivers the key elements of how to create a leadership team that is a model for the rest of the organization. The Strategies and Tips are practical tools and methods to create and maintain a shared vision, define roles and responsibilities, and determine mutual goals and priorities. Key Points also include techniques for avoiding power struggles and resolving issues to keep leaders focused and aligned.

Dealing with Difficult Customers

There are the usual customers that everyone dreads. And there are those surprises that come in yelling and threatening. No matter the situation, a difficult customer can ruin your mood, make you lose other customers, or even bring harm to the work environment. This course will identify tools and ideas for diffusing a customer's anger and creating win/win situations for you and your customers. You will learn Tips to creating better customer satisfaction without letting the difficult customers bring you down.

Dealing with Violence in the Workplace

More often than we care to admit, society and the workplace are becoming more violent. This course has tools and methods to help the manager or supervisor recognize potentially violent situations before they need attention, and then to take positive action to avoid or eliminate the potential problem. There is a wide array of techniques to help leaders use communication, conflict intervention, and interpersonal skills to diffuse dangerous situations.

Delegating

This course takes you through every step of the delegation process from beginning to end. You will learn how to define the task and determine to whom it should be given. There are tips and techniques for monitoring the project's progress without micromanaging, and methods for coaching and developing employees along the way. There are also tools and methods to help you get the most value from every assignment.

Developing a Child's Critical Thinking Skills

Critical thinking skills are essential for children to have as they learn to make decisions and solve problems. This course addresses what adults can do to teach children how to think through and reason in age-appropriate ways, preparing them for the greater responsibilities that come as the child matures. There are diagnostic tools, activities, and communication techniques that adults will find very helpful in working with children to develop these important skills.

Developing a Strategic Plan

This course will lead you step-by-step through the development of a strategic plan, beginning with a powerful mission statement, analysis of your organization's strengths and weaknesses, and assessment of your competitive position. It includes tips on how to communicate the plan throughout the organization, convert it into action by developing supporting tactical plans, and reinforce results at all levels.

Discharging Employees

There are strict legal requirements as well as personal accountability when discharging an employee. This course covers all the critical aspects of termination, including information about the law and how it impacts the process and your decision. You will be given methods for identifying when discharge is appropriate and tools to help you prepare for the meeting. You will also learn specific techniques for communicating the decision and handling difficult employee reactions.

Disciplining and Redirecting Employees

The Strategies and Tips in this course will help a manager to improve overall performance by knowing when and how to take corrective action with problem employees. There are specific disciplinary methods in this course, and techniques to ensure compliance. There are also tools and techniques for developing workable solutions with the individual involved and direction on what can be done if efforts are not successful.

Executive-to-employee Communication Strategies

You might have the feeling that your employees are scared of you because of your position. As an executive who is concerned about your organization, it is up to you to gather feedback from your working level employees and to build trusting relationships throughout the organization. This course offers suggestions and techniques for building up the communication highway between you and your employees. You will learn ways to open up more to your employees as you see things through their perspective.

Financial Basics for Non-financial Managers

This course helps a non-financial manager make sense of the terms and concepts that are used in managing the financial aspects of a business. It explains basic financial structure and discusses the financial information you must have to run a business. You will learn how to read financial reports and understand the purpose and limitations of each. You will also get tools and methods to give you a complete picture of your financial position.

Guardianship Decisions for Elderly Loved Ones

Being designated as a guardian for an elderly or otherwise disabled loved one can be a daunting responsibility. This course will remove some of the apprehension and fear by providing specific directions for determining appropriate care alternatives, alerting you to pitfalls, giving you ideas for maintaining the loved one's quality of life, and enlisting the support of caring others as you strive to fulfill guardianship responsibilities.

Intercultural Business Etiquette

International business is common, as companies expand and sell on the Internet. This course addresses how to build positive business relationships with other cultures using tools and techniques to help you interpret body language, respect customs, and understand audiences. There are suggestions for recognizing and responding to conflicting priorities, different dress codes, and other details such as the proper etiquette for gift giving in the international business arena.

Internet Basics

Although the Internet has been an integral part of many people's lives for several years, there are many who are just now taking advantage of its many resources. This course is for those who have little or no previous exposure to the Internet. It includes the most common Internet terms, basic navigation information, an overview of the resources available online, and important security information.

Interviewing Job Candidates

This is a practical course with tools and methods to help you prepare to get the results you want. You will learn how to define exactly what you're looking for in a job candidate, and be given checklists and discussion guides for asking the right questions to get relevant answers. The course addresses the most common legal pitfalls and how to avoid them, as well as issues you should consider when evaluating a candidate.

Interviewing Skills for Job Candidates

Job Candidates will find that this course gives them the A-to-Z of interviewing for a new job. The Strategies and Tips provide specific recommendations for valuable preliminary work, and tools to prepare for the interviewer's questions. Key Points will help you promote your best image and create a positive impression. You will learn how to follow up with the interviewer and how to negotiate the best offer if you are selected.

Leading Effective Meetings

Meetings can be much more effective if the leader follows a few easy rules. This course outlines those rules, starting with important preparatory decisions and activities to create a focus and set the foundation for a worthwhile meeting. It includes powerful tools and techniques for managing the group interactions, dealing with disruptive behaviors, and bringing the meeting to a close. There are techniques for making sure your meeting gets the results that you intended.

Leading Effective Teams

This practical, hands-on approach to team leadership addresses the three essential elements of creating an effective team: focusing on results, providing structure, and building positive interactions and teamwork. You will be given tools to help you document the purpose of your team and account for all the tasks that need to be done. You will learn techniques to help you keep the team on track, and tools to measure the productivity and effectiveness.

Managing a Virtual Office

More and more companies are finding that flexibility for employees in both work hours and work location help them attract and retain the best talents and actually improve productivity. This course identifies the potential benefits and pitfalls in managing a "virtual" workforce, gives guidelines for maintaining communication, monitoring productivity, and encouraging peak performance. There are methods for assuring alignment and consistency, and suggestions for preserving important working relationships without the traditional work structure.

Managing Change

Poorly managed change can account for a huge amount of lost productivity. This course covers the most essential elements of living with and managing continual change. There are simple and straightforward techniques for dealing with the inevitable resistance, methods for setting goals and developing a plan, tools for understanding the personal and professional stresses that all employees experience, and suggestions for rebuilding trust and developing commitment to the changes that are implemented.

Managing Projects

The Strategies and Tips in this course will take you through the steps of managing a project, from defining the requirements to managing the implementation. You will be given tools and methods for organizing the project activities, focusing on customer needs, and leading the project team to successful completion. There are suggestions for resolving plan and budget conflicts, assessing and documenting changes, and assuring effective coordination and communication, including holding formal project reviews.

Managing Stress

The tools and techniques in this course will help you understand and diagnose the stress in your life, identify the stressors you can and cannot control, and assess your readiness to make changes. There are methods to help you develop a systematic approach to eliminate stressors, manage your time, and implement short-term and long-term coping mechanisms. You'll develop a plan of action and learn how to avoid or address your own personal roadblocks.

Managing Your 401K

More and more companies are providing a 401k as a benefit. Human resource managers frequently counsel their employees on the mechanics and planning of their 401k programs. This course provides a foundation for you to know how to appreciate vesting, select wise investment packages, and understand diversification. You will also be given tools and strategies for understanding and managing your involvement in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds.

Mastering Cold Calls

There are some specific strategies that can help a sales person become more confident and competent in making cold calls, and this course has them. It describes both the technical and the psychological techniques and methods to help you overcome your apprehension and conduct a call that gets results.

Motivating Employees

The difference between a just surviving business and a thriving one is the energy and commitment of its people. A motivated and dedicated workforce is the formula for long-term success. This course gives practical suggestions for identifying group and individual motivating factors and mobilizing them to energize employees. There are tools, techniques, and methods for revitalizing the workplace and encouraging initiative in each person in order to move everyone forward.

Moving from Trainer to Performance Consultant

Taking a step up in your career is an exciting time. Now is your chance to help your clients with their overall abilities, not just a few key skills. The move from being a trainer to becoming a performance consultant can be difficult if you aren't aware of certain strategies and tips. This course will help you identify the steps to gaining the skills you need while building your client base. There are job aids, tools, and methods to help you make this career transition smoothly and successfully.

Negotiating for the Sales Professional

An effective sales professional knows how to meet customer needs while assuring reasonable terms and profit for his or her own company. This course has techniques for identifying customer expectations and determining how to meet them in a way that both parties are satisfied by the results. There are checklists and discussion guidelines to help a sales professional master this essential communication skill.

Organizing Your Workspace

The stacks, books, and little pieces of paper can seem overwhelming. Disorganization hinders work performance and creates feelings of stress and anxiety. By learning to organize your workspace, you can reach better levels of performance. This course will identify techniques for organizing your work areas, shelves, drawers, and files. It will also give you tips for maintaining this organization as well as giving suggestions for managing your time and schedule.

Overcoming the Loss of a Loved One

The Strategies and Tips in this course will help someone learn how to understand the impact of losing a loved one and anticipate the emotions they can expect to experience. There are tools to help the bereaved accept the loss and define ways to deal with the changes they will face. There are also techniques to help them acknowledge and deal with their emotional pain and support their need to grieve.

Personal Financial Planning

Without wise financial planning, the future may not be what most of us hope for, and even the present may be less than comfortable. This course contains the essential principles of planning for both short- and long-term needs and has many tools and references to provide guidance for planning and using personal financial resources. It gives tips and worksheets for setting financial goals, managing credit and debt, building your assets, and limiting your financial liabilities.

Presentation Skills

One of the biggest fears for managers and others is speaking in public. You will receive worksheets and checklists to help you plan and present your remarks for the most impact, and you will learn how to deal with the anxiety that so often accompanies such assignments. The course includes tools and techniques to help you determine what the audience wants and needs, methods to gauge their needs, and a structure for organizing and formatting a good presentation.

Preventing Sexual Harassment—Employees

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility, but employees may not know exactly what to do unless things are spelled out fairly clearly. This course addresses the issues related to sexual harassment: how the law applies to employees, things to avoid in the work environment, and specific employee responsibilities. There are tips to help employees examine their own attitudes and behaviors, and warnings about things they might be doing unintentionally that give the wrong impression.

Preventing Sexual Harassment—Leaders

Leaders have a particular responsibility in preventing sexual harassment, and this course spells out just exactly what their role is. They will be given critical information to tell them what the law expects and direction on how to meet these legal requirements. The course provides tools and tips for promoting a harassment-free environment, and suggestions on how to set a positive example for others. It also includes an example of an effective policy statement.

Providing Effective Feedback

Many people have good intentions to provide helpful feedback, but don't know the simple rules and techniques for doing it. This course includes tools to develop helpful feedback and use it to motivate employees. It has techniques and methods to foster a nurturing environment, convey your improvement ideas, check for understanding, and help others learn from their mistakes.

Qualifying Sales Prospects

Everyone must manage the time and energy they have to get the most results for their efforts. For sales professionals, part of this efficiency comes from qualifying sales prospects. This course has tools, techniques and methods for making sure that you are following sound principles as you qualify prospects and determine where to invest your time for the best potential pay-off.

Recognizing and Avoiding Burnout

The Strategies and Tips in this course will give you the tools to assess your own emotional state, locate the stressors in your life, and evaluate your expectations, a major contributor to burnout. You will be given guidelines to identify the various stages of burnout and methods to recognize where you are in the process. The course focuses on giving you practical techniques for managing your own frustrations and anger and getting back on track.

Recognizing and Managing Anger

After learning to identify the different sources of anger, you will be given tools and methods to help you determine the emotional roots of your own anger and recognize how it manifests in your life. Tips will help you recognize your responses to anger, and give you tools to manage it. You will also be given powerful techniques that will help you use your anger to gain positive outcomes.

Recognizing and Responding to Signals of Violence

Violent acts emerge from a history of behavior in which the signals have been present and ignored. This course stresses prevention of such behavior, and identifies what the most common signals of potentially violent children are. It gives suggestions for responding in ways that will help you prevent further occurrence or even escalation, identifies when to get professional help, and lists many important and easily available resources.

Recognizing Employee Performance

Motivated employees don't just happen—they are the result of effective leadership. You will learn how to lay the groundwork for successfully recognizing employee performance, and find out how to identify the recognition methods that your organization offers. There are suggestions for powerful non-monetary rewards and ideas on how to use the job as a way to recognize and motivate. There are also techniques to help you deliver recognition effectively through coaching and feedback.

Setting Performance Goals and Expectations

Productive and motivated employees are those who clearly understand what is expected of them in terms of performance and behavior. This course has tools and methods for collaboratively establishing goals and specific performance criteria for all employees. There are tips to help you obtain commitment to the goals and methods to help you review performance goals regularly. It also includes documentation guidelines and techniques to help you get results through effective feedback and positive reinforcement.

Solving Problems as a Team

This course identifies some of the most useful group problem-solving techniques that teams can use. You will learn how to encourage collaboration on your team, work through problems together, and combine methods for complex problems. You will be given tools and techniques to help you follow a standard problem-solving process, and get team consensus and support. The course also includes tools to aid you in tracking results and implementing corrective action.

Succeeding as a Supervisor

A supervisor is a critical player in an organization's success. Here is where the most valuable resources, particularly the workforce, are either maximized or wasted. This course details the most important elements of successful supervision, with attention to both people and organizational skills. There are tools and techniques for making the most of the talents of the work group, personal skill assessments, and methods for organizing and managing the work flow.

Successful Negotiation

Negotiating is a thread woven through not just your time in the work environment, but also in daily living. Knowing how to negotiate successfully will improve your interactions with customers, coworkers, and even family members. This course will give you the strategies and techniques you will need to help you define opportunities in which negotiating would be appropriate and to create a win/win situation in each of your negotiations.

Telephone Sales Skills

This course identifies the specific selling techniques and strategies that sales people need to be effective over the phone. It gives suggestions for relieving the anxiety of picking up the phone; checklists to make sure you are prepared for that all-important conversation, and techniques for polishing your over-the-phone approach.

Telephone Skills for Quality Customer Service

Telephones are an everyday part of business and often aid in your customers' first impression of your company. This course identifies telephone skills needed to be successful and more professional. It provides strategies to enable you to give your callers the quality service they deserve. You will learn tips for handling the telephone, ways to manage the discussions, and how to influence your customer's perception of the company.

Time Management

This course addresses the nuts and bolts of time management—tools for setting goals, keeping logs, and planning your time. It includes methods for identifying low pay-off activities and time-wasters, along with suggestions for getting rid of them. It provides tips for organizing your materials and your surroundings for more efficiency, and has other practical suggestions for taking control of your time and your life with simple, tried-and-true tools and techniques.

Understanding and Using Contracts

In almost every business transaction a contract is made. This course will tell you how to know when a true contract has been made, identify when it is binding, and determine the limitations and scope of the agreements. It will also give you information and guidelines on how and when to sever the contract, how to modify it, and how to circumvent potential problems.

Valuing Diversity

This course provides an excellent base for the manager to learn about his or her own beliefs and to see the potential of a diverse workplace. There are tools and techniques to help a supervisor learn to recognize the positive contributions all employees make in achieving the goals of the organization. There are suggestions for modeling and promoting organizational values and methods to gain involvement from diverse populations. The course also provides guidance on developing important organizational processes that support diversity, methods for soliciting participation from non-traditional contributors.