

5 Soft Skills to Showcase in an Interview

Your personality could push you out of the running for the job.

By [Miriam Salpeter](#)

Emotional intelligence, otherwise known as soft skills, is the category of skills most likely involved when [evaluating likability](#) or fit. Wikipedia defines them as "Personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. Unlike hard skills, which are about a person's skill set and ability to perform a certain type of task or activity, soft skills relate to a person's ability to interact effectively with co-workers and customers and are broadly applicable both in and outside the workplace."

Soft skills include: attitude, communication skills, time management, critical thinking and a slew of other categories that do not relate to intelligence.

There's no question that soft skills play a role in most, if not all, hiring decisions. So how can you demonstrate these skills during an interview? Eddie Earnest from HigherNext (www.highernext.com), a company that offers the Certified Business Laureate (CBL) certification tests and credentialing system, suggests the following tips to help highlight these five soft skills [during an interview](#).

1. **Work ethic.** Make sure to weave your thoughts about how important the company's mission and vision are to you and explain why you're willing to go the extra mile to help the organization succeed. One tenet of evaluating candidates is that past performance is a predictor of future results. Make sure you prove that you have a strong work ethic by giving examples from the past about how you went above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done. "Describe how you always complete projects efficiently and on-time, why you're punctual and persistent and how you balance your drive to succeed with the company's goals," Earnest says.

2. **Positive attitude.** Give examples of how you improved employee morale in a past position, or how your positive attitude helped motivate your colleagues or those you managed. Earnest suggests: "Some people are naturally bubbly and always upbeat. Others have a more tame and low-energy demeanor. Especially if you tend to be more low-key, smile when you shake the interviewer's hand and make an extra effort to add some intonation and expression to your responses."

Make sure you aren't boring or dry, or you could lose your chance to be hired.

3. **Communication skills.** Your interview is a great opportunity to demonstrate how well you communicate, so be sure you prepare and practice responses to showcase your best skills. Earnest

says, "Be concrete with these examples, and bring proof to the interview. Provide examples of materials you created or written campaigns you developed in past positions."

4. **Time management.** This is a crucial skill many employers seek in [their hires](#). Earnest notes, "It's especially important for candidates who want to work in a startup to know how to manage their time, tasks and responsibilities effectively." Be prepared to explain how you prioritize the most important items first, delegate the items that others can do and figure out a way to get things done in the confines of your resources on the job.

5. **Self confidence.** Earnest reminds job seekers, "You can demonstrate self confidence at the interview by the way you present yourself, including how you dress for the interview, the way you approach to shake hands and how you speak about your experiences during the interview."

If you're not particularly confident, practice acting like you are. [Make direct eye contact](#) when speaking with strangers. Listen to your own voice—is it shrill or timid? Rehearse speaking in a more confident-sounding voice. Don't forget about your body language, which is one of the first ways employers will gauge your confidence levels. If you tend to hunch over, make sure you think about sitting up during your interview.

Don't forget to think about soft skills when you prepare for interviews to be sure you demonstrate everything you have to offer the employer.

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