Preface

The third edition of *Soft Skills for the Workplace* is an overview of basic behaviors, etiquette, and protocol that a career-minded person needs in order to communicate effectively as a professional. Soft skills are the employability skills that help an individual find a job, perform well in the workplace, and gain success in a job or career. In today's workplace, employers look for people who have the job-specific skills to perform on the job as well as the expertise to interact with coworkers and customers. You may be the most qualified person in your field in terms of hard skills, but if you lack soft skills, you may have a challenge finding and retaining employment.

Soft Skills for the Workplace presents career-readiness skills requested by today's employers. By studying this text, you will learn how to build a foundation for career and personal success.

About the Author

Carol Volz is a Career and Technical Education certified teacher and author of CTE curriculum materials. Upon graduation from college, Carol taught professional communications courses to high school and adult education students. As her career expanded, Carol became a contributing editor/writer/author for various career textbooks and teacher support materials. Carol holds a BA in Business Education and an M.Ed. from Northern Kentucky University. She also earned a lifetime teaching certificate in the state of Kentucky.

How to Use This Text

Soft Skills for the Workplace is a nontraditional approach to learning basic employability skills needed in today's workplace. By studying this text, you will learn the soft skills that employers recommend, and require, of employees. Learning how to interact professionally with customers, coworkers, and employers is one sure way to prepare for a career.

As you make your way through the chapters, try to relate each topic to how you can improve your soft skills. By following these suggestions, you can make the most of what you learn in this text.

- Read the outcomes listed in the chapter opener. Each outcome relates to a major heading in the content, is repeated in the chapter summary, and is applied in end-of-chapter questions and activities. The connection of outcomes throughout the content helps you focus and apply important information as you read each chapter.
- Pay attention to the illustrations. Each illustration highlights important information. By studying these, you will extend your learning and improve retention and application of the content.
- Read each case study in the chapter and focus on the subject and event that led to the situation. Relate the behavior to other examples with which you are familiar and how these behaviors affect a person's image.
- Complete the end-of-chapter activities. By doing so, you will be able to self-assess your learning. This self-reflection is important to help you improve your professionalism for the workplace.

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New to This Edition

The third edition of *Soft Skills for the Workplace* is revised to include updated content that reflects important soft skills needed in today's workplace. New content, as well as 21st-century workplace terms, are included. Specific enhancements are as follows.

- **Chapter 1 Professionalism** provides students with insight on how to be a professional in the workplace. There are minor updates in content, including a discussion on empathy versus sympathy. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 2 Professional Ethics** helps individuals earn professional success. The chapter title *Ethics* is now *Professional Ethics*. The content now includes current ethics issues in the workplace, with an emphasis on work ethic. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 3 Self-Management Skills** discusses the skills that enable an individual to control and make the best use of personal time and abilities. New topics include patience, decision making, and personal planning tools. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 4 Workplace Etiquette** introduces the importance of appropriate behavior on the job. The chapter title *Etiquette* is now *Workplace Etiquette*. The content now addresses on-site and off-site (remote) workers.
- **Chapter 5 Attire** addresses workplace attire and the importance of understanding how to dress appropriately. Also discussed are uniforms and why they are sometimes required. Attire for on-site workers and off-site workers is covered in this edition. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 6 Communication Skills** introduces the basics of communication. The chapter is a fundamental English chapter and remains primarily intact. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 7 Verbal and Nonverbal Communication** introduces the role of verbal and nonverbal communication in the workplace. The chapter is a fundamental English chapter. It includes an updated discussion on personal space and social distancing. The case study has been replaced.
- **Chapter 8 Speaking Skills** discusses how to make introductions and apply proper telephone techniques. It includes expanded coverage of leading formal meetings, including virtual meetings. Social distancing for personal introductions is addressed.
- **Chapter 9 Listening Skills** summarizes how to become a good listener and listen with purpose. The chapter is a fundamental communications chapter and remains primarily intact. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 10 Written Communication** introduces writing etiquette and the art of writing letters, e-mails, and thank-you notes in the current workplace. The chapter has been reorganized for better flow, with long blocks of text broken up for better readability. The case study is new.
- **Chapter 11 Writing and Interviewing for Employment** provides a standard overview of the documents required to apply for a job and summarizes how to interview for employment. Information about virtual interviews and the hiring process for remote workers is included.
- **Chapter 12 Teams** highlights teams in the workplace and discusses conflict resolution. Information about on-site, virtual, and hybrid teams has been added.
- **Chapter 13 Diversity** covers topics including diversity, cultural awareness, and intercultural communication. It has been updated to reflect current views on diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- **Chapter 14 Confidence** is a capstone chapter about personal confidence and advancement in the workplace. The chapter remains intact.
- **Appendix A Unspoken Workplace Rules** is a quick guide to the behaviors expected of every employee. This appendix remains primarily intact but provides new guidelines for company-issued equipment.
- **Appendix B Punctuation** provides rules and examples of correct usage of basic punctuation. This appendix remains intact.

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Focus on Professionalism

Soft Skills for the Workplace will help your students jump-start their career in the competitive work environment of the 21st century. To stand out in the employment crowd and compete for a chosen career, each person entering the workforce must develop essential soft skills.

The unique approach to this text presents content in a format that is condensed, to the point, and can be completed in a brief amount of time. The easy-to-read style and meaningful applications introduce behaviors for successful interactions with employers, coworkers, and customers.

Just the Basics

Each chapter introduces basic soft skills needed for career success as recommended by employers. The topics covered are some of the most requested essential workplace skills that can help students develop professionalism and succeed in a chosen career.

Learning Outcomes

At the beginning of each chapter, learning outcomes define the goals to be accomplished while reading the chapter. Each outcome is aligned with the content headings, as well as with the summary and questions and activities at the end of the chapter. The alignment of learning outcomes provides a logical flow through each page of the content so that students may build on individual knowledge as they progress through the chapters.

Before and After You Read

Through completion of a pretest at the start of Chapter 1, an opportunity is provided for students to evaluate their prior knowledge of soft skills. A posttest in Chapter 14 will help students evaluate their progress after the completion of the content.


CHAPTER 1

Professionalism

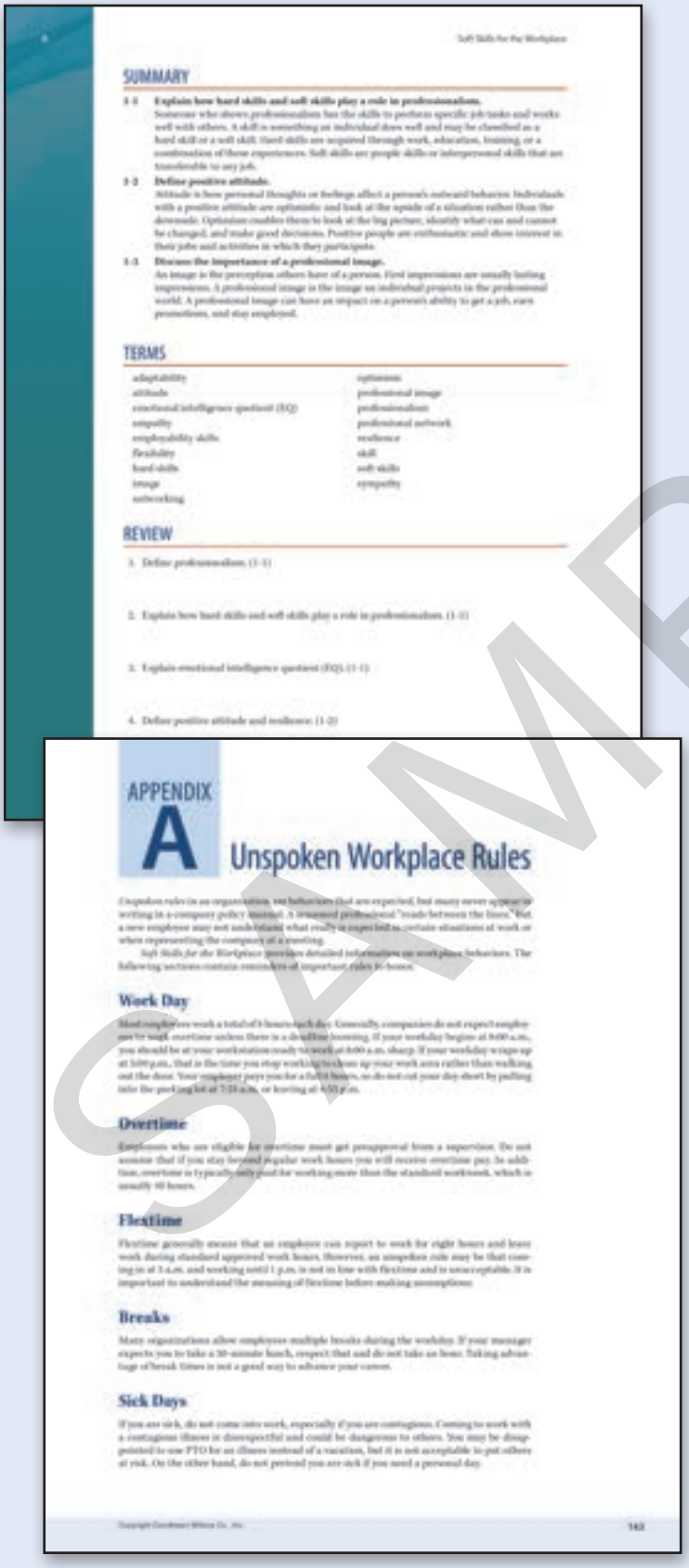
LEARNING OUTCOMES

BEFORE YOU READ

Skills of a Professional

Hard Skills

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Case Studies

Real-world case studies illustrate the importance of mastering soft skills. Each case includes a workplace situation with questions that provide an opportunity to analyze and summarize opinions while identifying the soft skills that are addressed.

End-of-Chapter Content

End-of-chapter material provides an opportunity for review and application of concepts.

- A concise **Summary** reiterates the learning outcomes and provides a brief review of the content for student reference.
- The **Terms** list identifies important soft skills terms covered in the chapter.
- **Review** questions highlight basic concepts presented in the chapter so students can evaluate their understanding of the material.
- **Application** activities provide an opportunity for self-reflection so students can relate the topics to their personal lives.
- **Internet Exercise** activities provide additional research opportunities for greater understanding of selected concepts discussed in the chapter.
- **Skills Practice** activities provide an opportunity for students to engage in hands-on application of the content to perfect their soft skills. These activities use prebuilt digital resources that are available for download. The link to these files is provided at the point of coverage.

Appendices

Appendices for workplace rules and punctuation are included at the end of the text. These appendices highlight grammar mechanics and examples for reference as students complete writing assignments.

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TOOLS FOR STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR SUCCESS

Student Tools

Student Text



Soft Skills for the Workplace is a nontraditional approach to learning basic employability skills needed in today's workplace. Well-developed soft skills help an individual find a job, perform effectively in the workplace, and gain personal success in life and career.

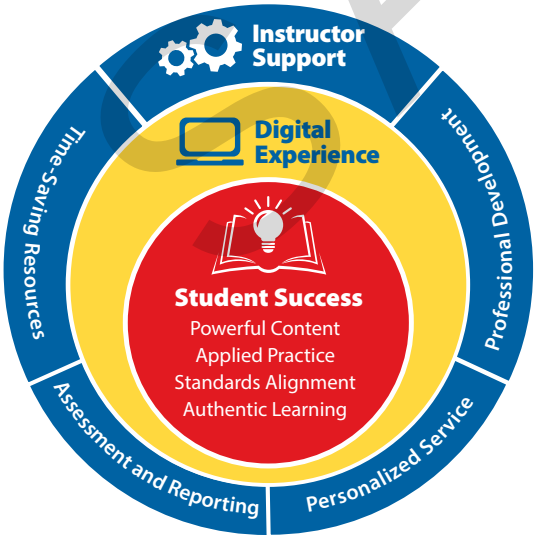
G-W Digital Companion

- For digital users, e-flash cards and vocabulary exercises allow interaction with content to create opportunities to increase achievement.
- Videos enrich learning by demonstrating soft skills. They bring realism and provide a relevant connection with content that has been learned.
- Activity files provide an opportunity to engage in hands-on application of the content to perfect soft skills essential in the workplace.
- A pretest and posttest help evaluate knowledge of soft skills prior to and upon completion of learning the content.

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- Provides easy-to-use access and navigation
- Includes accessible resources for all learners
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For instructors, the Common Cartridge includes the Online Instructor Resources.

Online Instructor Resources

- The **Instructor Resources** provide instructors with time-saving preparation tools such as answer keys, editable lesson plans, and other teaching aids.

See www.g-w.com/soft-skills-for-the-workplace-2026 for a list of all available formats.

Professional Development

- Expert content specialists
- Research-based pedagogy and instructional practices
- Options for virtual and in-person Professional Development

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