

English and Interpersonal Skills to Engineering Students

Ms. Sophia Lawrance Pondugala

Assistant Professor in English – H & S Department

K G Reddy College of Engineering & Technology, Hyderabad

Email: sophialawrence.p@gmail.com

Abstract: This paper aspires to analyze, research, study and explain the effectuality, importance and purpose of English language proficiency and interpersonal communication skills taught to engineering students in India. English is global language and it is used as an official language almost all around the world. English language is an enabler for international communication and widely used in the entire business world. Therefore, it is very crucial and essential for education, employment and entrepreneurship. Several studies report that many engineering graduates are unemployable in India due to lack of English proficiency, confidence and interpersonal communication skills. Students from native language medium find it challenging and difficult to orate and fluently speak in English although they have ability to read, write and understand. Hence, it is very important for students to improvise English communication proficiency and develop interpersonal skills to pursue employment and business opportunities. Interpersonal skills include a wide variety of social, soft, problem solving and surviving skills, though many are attributed only to communication, such as listening, questioning and understanding body language. They also include the skills associated with emotional intelligence, or being able to understand and manage one's own and others' emotions. Interpersonal Skills highly sought by employers and become increasingly prominent in today's technology-infused world. English Language and Skill Development courses offered in engineering colleges enhance the core competences among students and promote their capability, employability, productivity and sustainability in personal, professional, and social life.

Index Terms: English Proficiency, Learning English Language, Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Employability, Problem Solving

1. INTRODUCTION

English Language Proficiency is the ability of an individual to speak or perform in English language effectively and proficiently. Proficient speakers demonstrate both accuracy and fluency, and use a variety of discourse strategies. Proficient student can perform effect of all three modes of English communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational.

Interpersonal Skills are the competences facilitating interaction and communication with others where social rules and relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and nonverbal ways. They involve the ability to communicate, build and manage relationships with others. Often referred to as social skills, people skills, soft skills, or life skills, they tend to incorporate both innate personality traits and how one can be learned to handle certain social situations. Effective interpersonal skills can help during the job interview process and can have a positive impact on career advancement.

SOME KEY INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:
Communication
Active Listening
Emotional Intelligence
Dependability
Problem Solving
Adaptability
Flexibility
Positivity
Integrity
Honesty
Reliability
Creativity
Responsibility
Showing Appreciation
Planning
Stress Management
Confidence
Motivation
Empathy
Receptive Feedback
Rectification
Leadership
Patience
Team Work

2. DISCUSSION

1. **Communication:** Arguably the most important of all interpersonal skills, communication skills are at the core of engaging with different people. This skill can be continuously developed throughout the career and will be valuable to every role.
2. **Active Listening:** Active listening means listening to others with the purpose of gathering information and engaging with the speaker. Active listeners avoid distracting behaviors while in conversation with others. This can mean putting away or closing laptops or mobile devices while listening, and asking and answering questions when prompted.
3. **Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to keep one's emotions under control and navigate social situations with composure. This is an essential skill in any workplace, as we spend a sizable percentage of our life at work and naturally want to be surrounded with emotionally stable and considerate colleagues throughout that time. Employers are looking for individuals who can keep calm under pressure and avoid pushing their personal frustration onto others. This is invaluable in any position that requires teamwork or communication between colleagues.



Emotional intelligence is the foundation for critical skills.

4. **Dependability:** Dependable people can be relied on in any given situation. This can include anything from being punctual to keeping promises. Employers highly value dependable workers and trust them with important tasks and duties.
5. **Problem-solving:** Being able to approach a complicated task and engage your problem-solving to work through it is a highly sought-after quality in candidates. Problem-solving demands analysis, critical and lateral thinking or logical reasoning, and will always require initiative and persistence.
6. **Adaptability and Flexibility:** One doesn't have to be far into working life to know that things don't always go as planned. Being able to reassess, reflect and reset when projects or strategic direction change is an interpersonal skill that will help maintain momentum and reduce frustration throughout your career. Knowing one is flexible will also make others feel confident and comfortable working around them.
7. **Positivity:** Regarding oneself as an optimist. Being positive in the workplace is an excellent skill that has the ability to impact the morale of entire teams. It doesn't mean being naïve or ignorant about the realities of a situation, but it does mean seeing the best in work challenges and people. Teamwork and Collaboration: The ability to work together as a team is extremely valuable in every workplace. Teamwork involves many other interpersonal skills like communication, active listening, flexibility and responsibility. Those who are good "team players" are often given important tasks in the workplace and may be seen as the good candidates for promotions. There exists few roles in which one would work in total isolation, which means that collaboration makes the list of interpersonal skills that are highly prized in the workplace. Understanding how to incorporate various ideas, manage expectations and share the ownership of both successes and failures are key to strong collaborative ability. It's a skill that can be developed and applied in a variety of ways throughout one's career.
8. **Honesty, Reliability and Work ethic:** Whether it owns up to a mistake or being honest about the difficulties you're facing at work, employers want to hire and work with honest people. Being consistently honest and upfront will also assure colleagues and stakeholders that one is reliable, and that the promises or deals made can be kept. Reliability encapsulates one's work ethic and the integrity to see things through to the end. Simply being on time for work every day puts you on the fast track for promotion, and always fulfilling promises is a key way to earn social capital in the workplace. Qualities like loyalty and commitment constitute work ethic, and it is an important interpersonal skill to have. Showing an employer that you possess

strong work ethic and drive inspires trust and confidence in them, and you'll be seen as reliable, independent and able to self-motivate.

9. Ability to manage stress:

Every job comes with its periods of stress, some more than others. While not often the most pleasant parts of a career, knowing how to manage your time, emotions and relationships during periods of stress while still meeting deadlines is an incredibly important skill to have in the modern workplace

10. Empathy: This is the ability to put oneself in the other person's shoes and truly understand what they are saying or feeling without judgment or bias. People with healthy interpersonal skills score on empathy because they are good listeners, they are patient and don't jump to conclusions and are self-aware.

11. Confidence: Being confident and assertive about what one believe in, standing up for their ideas and confidently instructing others on what should or shouldn't be done are an important part of interpersonal skills. When combined with tact, confidence can earn respect.

12. Nonverbal Communication: Nonverbal communication is an often overlooked bridge between oneself and others. However, nonverbal cues can either make relationships stronger or damage them depending on how they're used and the context of the situation. Some forms of nonverbal communication include:

- (1) Eye contact,
- (2) Facial expressions,
- (3) Body language,
- (4) Gestures and Physical contact (such as shaking hands, touching an arm, pushing, etc.).

13. Being Respectful of Others: It's well known that respect can go a long way in fostering positive relationships and work environments; In fact, a survey by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) listed respectful treatment of all employees as the top factor contributing to employee job satisfaction.

- (1) Showing appreciation for employees' efforts and time;
- (2) Showing gratitude and courtesy;
- (3) Listening to what others have to say rather than listening only to respond;
- (4) Being respectful of others' ideas and opinions, even when they differ from yours;
- (5) Not disparaging, insulting, or attacking others; and Not taking credit for others' work; even if you build or improve upon someone else's work, be sure to acknowledge their initial contributions.

14. Being Receptive to Feedback: Feedback is necessary for personal and professional growth. However, no one likes to feel like they're being criticized. This is

why it's important to recognize the difference between receiving feedback and criticism. Feedback — whether positive or negative in nature — is like criticism in that it involves an evaluation of some kind by another person. However, a significant difference between these two terms is intent.

15. Negative or Bad Interpersonal Traits to control, eliminate and overcome:

(15.1) Over Thinking and Imbalanced Emotions
If one gets frustrated and angry easily, i.e. one who lets emotions get in the way without conscious control, you are more likely seen as an impatient hothead.

Emotional outbursts can be threatening to others and can result in low productivity in a team setting. Learn how to cool it.

How to fix?

- Quickly excuse, walk it off.
- Calm down by taking deep breaths.
- Drink a cup of tea or coffee.
- Be alone for the next 15 minutes.

Chances are, one would have calmed down by then and able to think clearer by the time one resume their work.

(15.2) Lack of Motivation and Self Confidence
It's normal to feel challenged, but one must learn to believe in them because if they don't, then no one will. Find out what is causing the lack of confidence and address this area of concern courageously. For example, if it's the lack of training, speak to mentor or arrange a training session to improve what's needed.

(15.3) Inability to Complete and Quick to Quit
If one gives up easily during challenging times, they can expect not to go far. Companies are always looking for people who are resilient through difficult times, given their best and encouraged teammates to stay the course as well.

(15.4) Reluctant to Coach and Learn
Those who are willing to help others in their career by sharing their knowledge and skills are seen as team players who can accelerate an company growth. If one who can't coach or mentor fellow teammates, or worse, reluctant to, then more likely to be perceived as a selfish person. Helping others through knowledge-exchange and providing feedback will not only accelerate their career growth, it will help enhance us too.

(15.5) Refuse to Network and Socialize
If one doesn't let people know how good they are in what they do, others might never find out. If one doesn't network well and connect with the right people, people will be the one losing out. One Learn to speak about achievements and skills with people of influence who can help them soar higher. When networking, one can practice:

(15.5.1) *Smiling*

People are more likely to warm up to someone who says hello with a broad smile than those with serious, grumpy expressions.

(15.5.2) *Asking questions*

Build your credibility by asking questions to the group you are interacting with before barging in with an opinion.

(15.5.3) *Listening*

After asking questions, don't forget that you need to listen to what they're saying first! Mastering the art of listening with sincerity can help you build a lasting rapport.

Bad Interpersonal qualities must be acknowledged, addressed and avoided through self-help, practice, seeking help from others and counseling.

3. CONCLUSION:

English Fluency and Interpersonal Skills add great value in making successful career.

Interpersonal skills must be included on a CV/resume under skills section

Resume skills section may look like this:

- **Technical skills:** MS Office, HTML, C, C++
- **Additional skills:** Effective team player, highly communicative and cooperative, active listener, flexible, innovative researcher

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