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Decoding soft skills

This tool proposes to explain soft skills by breaking them down into job expectations and describing them through simple daily behaviours, to make them easier to understand.

This table can be used by the counsellor to prepare the period in the company, but it can also be explained and provided by the employer at the first meeting. It can be completed in terms of skills to fit exactly with the expectations of the company. Additional skills can also be explained.

Soft skill needed	What does this mean for the company? What do they expect from me?	What do I need to be able to do?
Mastering the language	Having sufficient knowledge to understand what is being said. Reading labels, posters, reports. Writing short sentences and take notes. Learning technical words in a short time.	I am able to understand what I am told, ask questions if I don't understand, read and write. I am trying to improve my knowledge of the language. It's a way of showing that I'm a fast learner: if I learn it quickly, it will be the same for the job. I make an effort to learn technical terms (I can make a vocabulary sheet and ask my colleagues for help).
Digital skills	Using the basic functions of a computer. Using e-mail Searching the Internet Using company-specific software	I can turn a computer on and off. I can use a keyboard. I can search for and open a program or a file. I can save my work. I can write a letter and send it by e-mail. I can do calculations. I can learn to use new software.
Managing emotions	Accepting criticism in a constructive way to improve myself. Managing workload without anxiety. Keeping calm in all situations.	I don't get angry or feel bad if someone tells me I made a mistake. I don't want to do it again. I think before I speak or act. I understand the reactions of my colleagues. If something bothers me, I tell the person in charge. If I get frustrated, I should not keep everything to myself. I should not get involved in external events that affect my emotions.

Ability to learn	Enjoying learning new things. Facing new situations. Having a desire to improve.	I am curious and willing to learn. I am able to retain what I am told. I have confidence in myself and my abilities.
Time management	Arriving on time. Following company practices for breaks. Meeting deadlines.	I am always on time for work. I tell the company if I realise I will be late, even if it is not my fault (e.g. the bus broke down). I respect deadlines (if I realise that I am not able to do so, I tell my manager immediately). I am able to manage the balance between quality of work and meeting deadlines. I manage my work so that I am not under pressure. I think about the consequences of my possible delay on the work of others (I ask myself: *if I don't finish on time, if I don't deliver the goods, what happens*?)
Motivation	Achieving the objectives. Setting goals to complete work on time. Working with passion. Showing interest in the work.	I am focused on what I am doing, without distractions (not using my phone, not listening to music). I am not absent or late. I do my best to achieve the objectives. I always finish the work I am asked to do.
Flexibility and adaptability	Adapting to sudden changes (in tasks and context, moving from one work team to another, change of manager) Coping with unexpected situations.	I am not afraid of a new situation: I remain calm and try to manage it as well as possible. I see every change as an opportunity to learn. If I am changed, I do not complain and I try to learn the new job with enthusiasm.
Teamwork	Integrating into a group. Not creating conflicts. Sharing information within the team.	I collaborate with my colleagues. I get on well with my colleagues. I ask for help and help when I can. I respect the work of others.
Communicate effectively (with words, gestures and tone)	Listening carefully. Speaking in an understandable way. Being polite (always greet, say "thank you", "please", "may I") Arguing opinion. Giving explanations when asked. Establishing and maintaining	I always greet colleagues when I arrive at work and when I leave. I ask questions: - if I have not understood what I have to do, I ask to repeat, - If I am not sure, I rephrase with a question to make sure I have understood. I answer the questions (to the question "*did you understand?*" it is allowed to answer "*no*").

	stable relationships over time Controlling gestures.	I do not look down when someone is talking to me or when I am talking (no matter if it is a man or a woman, an older person or a person with high responsibilities). I look people in the eye. I don't use first names with others unless asked to do so. I dress appropriately (I don't wear a cap during an interview, I don't go to work in slippers...). If I don't know, I ask my manager or colleagues. I pay attention to the tone of my voice and do not speak too loudly. If colleagues invite me to take a lunch break with them, I accept: it's a way of integrating into the company. If colleagues are chatting before starting work or during the coffee break, I can join them.
Critical thinking	Accepting criticism. Identifying opportunities for improvement	I can visualise a situation from different points of view. I can accept criticism without feeling offended or resentful, it is an opportunity to improve. I can evaluate the work I have done.