

Soft skill development in enhancing the career in the present environment after globalization in India

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<https://doi.org/10.56343/STET.116.015.004.002>
www.stetjournals.com

Article History

Received: 14.12.2021

Revised and Accepted : 04.04.2022

Published: 25.06.2022

Abstract

This paper examines the role of soft skill development in terms of English proficiency in the present Indian scenario after globalization. The concepts, viz., English for livelihood, importance of overcoming barriers of communications, needs for fulfilling corporate expectations, carrier growth and self-employability and English communication skills are discussed.

Key words: Carrier growth, Communication barrier, Communication skills, Corporate expectations, self-employability, soft skills, Role of English

INTRODUCTION

Communication in general, is the art of conveying the intended meaning and message from one individual to another or to a group. The world today has shrunk so much with the development of technology and it has become possible to reach and communicate with anyone through one Window. English is the language which connects people by default. It is the official language worldwide. A number of studies have consistently demonstrated that those who have an advanced knowledge of the English language are much more likely to advance their careers (Thomas, 2009; Steve and McMahan, 2012). In addition to this, these studies have also demonstrated that a strong command of the English language will lead to higher paying jobs, more social mobility, and a great deal of social success. No matter what career you choose, whether it is Engineering or History, having a powerful command of the English language will greatly support to attain success. This paper will highlight on how one can improvise oneself to become professional with good "people" skills and to think critically and strategically.

English has its unique importance in our country. It has played a crucial role in building modern India. At present, it is one of the major languages used for communication in the world. In our country we have people living in different states speaking different languages. English is a language which links us with the people of other states and the outside world. The prospects of employment for a person having knowledge of English are bright in every country. In India, people going from North to South for education or business mostly communicate in English language, and it is one of the reasons that it has become a link language. We must make the best use of English to develop ourselves culturally and socially so that we can compete with the best in the world of mind and matter. English language is our shortcut window to the world.

The world is developing in the field of science and technology. Scientific inventions in Germany, France and Russia can reach India only through the help of language "English" and India must keep up with the progress of the world in field of science. Therefore, English is inevitable for our country. In India, the official language in corporate world is English. A person can make rapid strides in the management ladder only if he can speak English fluently. If your English is poor, you will find yourself languishing at the bottom of the management ladder, even though you may have a brilliant brain and can come up with brilliant business ideas.

English for livelihood

Today, the ability to speak and write in English is considered very important by the recruiters at the time of recruitment. Let us discuss the expectations of corporate world in this regard. Business communication, today, includes a wide variety of activities like media relations, public relations that includes social media, broadcast and written communications, brand management, reputation management, speech-writing, customer-client relations and most importantly Inter - Intra personal communications. Employers would be happy to



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interview and recruit who have both communication skills in English and job skills. It lessens their burden of giving too much orientation training at the time of induction or on the job training.

The ability to express formal communication in oral as well as in written form is equally considered important by the prospective employers. As one moves higher in the vertical direction in the organisational hierarchy, it becomes naturally necessary for an employee to be good presenter, negotiator, and convener of meetings. The mastery over English will help a person to conduct his duties efficiently.

Barriers in Communication

Some of the important deficiencies found by the employers and recruiters in candidates for different jobs are depicted in Figure 1.

Many candidates don't know how to answer to the point at the time of the interview and can't phrase a simple formal letter or report. It becomes a handicap for the candidates who have good domain knowledge. Interviewers will be in dilemma when they encounter such candidates who have technical expertise, but poor communicational skills in English. Left with no other choice they may take the candidate, but will make sure that they are groomed and trained properly.

One can overcome the barriers if only one understands that Proficiency in English is of paramount importance when one is vouching for job. Though there may not be a demand from candidates to be expert in the language with excellent vocabulary. However, employers expect them to possess a good sense of English while communicating.

Creates Job Opportunity

Both private and government sector companies are gaining grounds and the job market has become competitive, bounding employees to be on their toes. In addition to the required relevant skills for the particular job, the ability to use English efficiently is very much necessary. It co-relates with many skills for effective communication like interpersonal, convincing and negotiation, and presentation skills (Alex, 2009).

Enhances Workforce

In the current scenario of liberalisation, globalisation and free movement of people, more and more multinational organisations are coming to India and starting businesses. English has, thus, naturally gained importance as one of the most essential requirements. It is apparent that if the companies don't build workforce who have effective communication skills or fluent in English, they would remain confined

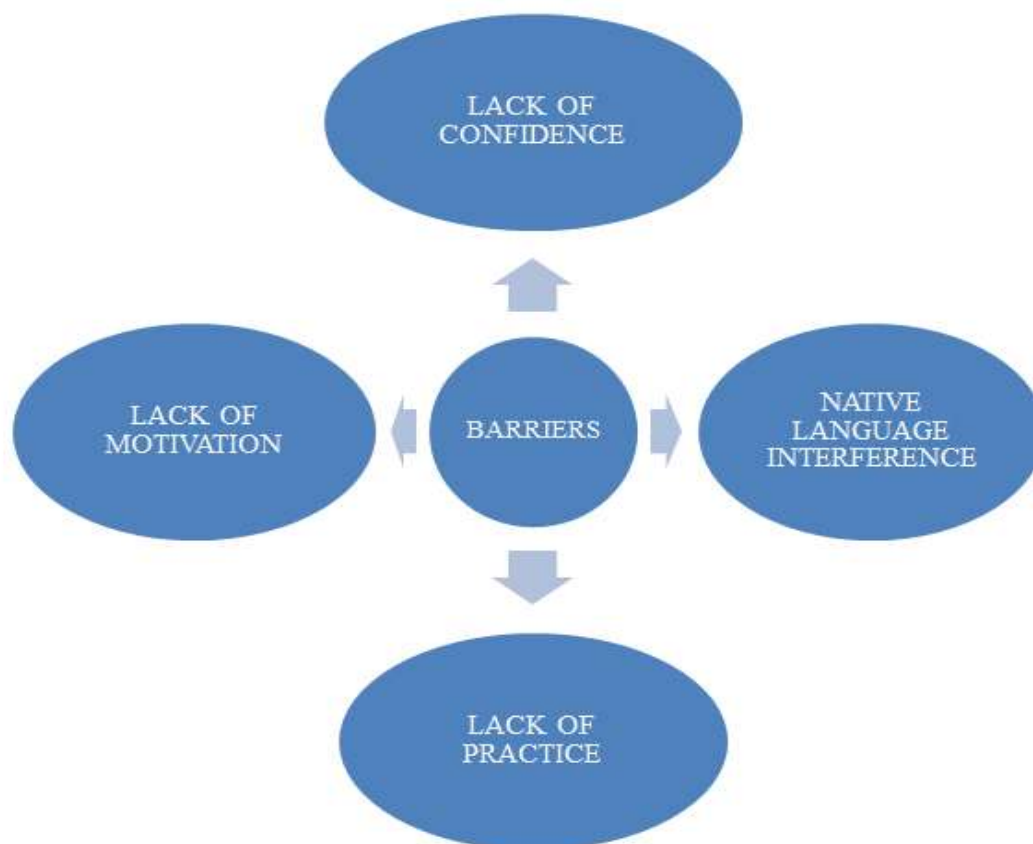


Fig. 1. Professional deficiency found in job seekers

to just a particular regional level. Staying connected with the rest of the world may not be viable.

Corporate Expectations

Organisations seek people who can effortlessly read and understand words in the form of notices, letters, instructions, reports and other forms of official documents (Alex, 2009; Varghese, 2012). Lack of verbal as well as written communication skills is one of the major deficiencies that employers and recruiters find in candidates. Even candidates who have good domain knowledge fail to express, when he/she couldn't communicate. Recruiters always seek for those who are armed with both communication and job skills.

Survival of the Fittest

India churns out lakhs of engineers, doctors and graduates in diverse streams who possess the same skill set. It is often the English language and communication skills, which has directly caused an increase in the competition among the candidates with same skill set.

Helps to reach globally

The world is gradually becoming a small place. Globalisation has inspired and stimulated the domestic companies to think and step beyond their nations. People are always enthusiastic about taking exigent and fruitful overseas assignments. As English is the official language in many countries, language never pops up as a barrier for those who intend to settle down in other countries. The US economy is a fine example of Indian people making their mark globally.

Career Growth

In the organisational hierarchy, as one gets promoted step by step in the vertical direction, it becomes naturally obligatory for an employee to be a better presenter, negotiator, and convener. In any chosen field, the mastery over English will help a person attain faster career growth.

Self employability

The value of English language in the job market cannot be undermined. With a good command over English language skills, one can enjoy the immense opportunities of self employment. You won't be

surprised to know that most of the work-from-home jobs require just a decent level of oral and written English. For those who are well-versed with the language, there are rewarding self employment options, such as English trainer, blogger, content writer, and more. English can help you make a sizeable amount of money today.

“Communication – the human connection – is the key to personal and career success “... Paul.J. Mayor

CONCLUSION

In this paper we saw that learning the English Language has become inevitable. In order to cater to the demands of students in their efforts to get good jobs in the corporate world, governments should bring changes in the English language syllabus at least at the graduation level. The emphasis should be on functional English. The syllabus should focus on practical oriented exercises and real life situations than mere study of literature.

So the need of the hour is strengthening the English speaking ability of the present generation to have an edge over other developing countries. Our Corporate sector still has an edge over other countries due to the fact that Indians speak fairly better English compared to other non-native speakers of English. The fact is that we have a large English speaking population, it makes easier for corporates and foreign universities to do their business here. The knowledge of English is important within India and outside to be employed as well as to move higher in one's professional life.

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