

6 Steps to Improving Employee Soft Skills – Along with Productivity and Profitability

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About the Speaker



Daniel White

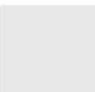
Organizational Development Consultant

Expertise in strategic planning,
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Experience teaching masters-level
courses in organizational development

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6 Steps to Improving Employee Soft Skills – Along with Productivity and Profitability





Learning Objectives

Understand what “soft skills” are and their significance in the workplace.

Learn how to identify employees who are struggling with soft skills.

Identify ways managers can help employees improve their abilities to adapt, resolve conflict, communicate and collaborate.



Polling Question #1



What Usually Causes Poor Performance?

It's usually not a lack of “technical skills.”





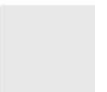
What Usually Causes Poor Performance?

It's almost always the soft skills.





WHAT ARE SOFT SKILLS?





What are soft skills?

Collaboration



What are soft skills?

Collaboration

Conflict resolution



What are soft skills?

Collaboration

Conflict resolution

Problem solving



What are soft skills?

Collaboration

Communication

Conflict resolution

Problem solving



What are soft skills?

Collaboration

Work ethic

Communication

Conflict resolution

Problem solving



What are soft skills?

Collaboration

Work ethic

Communication

Conflict resolution

Problem solving

Adaptability



What are soft skills?

Collaboration

Work ethic

Communication

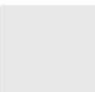
Emotional Intelligence

Conflict resolution

Problem solving

Adaptability

WHY ARE SOFT SKILLS IMPORTANT?





Are They Really That Important?





Polling Question #2



What Effect Do Soft Skills Have on Your Business?





Why are Soft Skills Important?

Single biggest predictor of performance in the workplace

#1

Source: Emotional Intelligence 2.0



Why are Soft Skills Important?

Accounts for 85% of financial success (only 15% is due to technical knowledge)

85%

Source: Carnegie Institute of Technology



Why are Soft Skills Important?

Accounts for 90% of the difference between star performers and average ones



Source: Harvard Business Review



Why are Soft Skills Important?

What effect do they have on your business?

- ✓ Better managers



Why are Soft Skills Important?

What effect do they have on your business?

- ✓ Better managers
- ✓ More engaged, productive employees



Why are Soft Skills Important?

What effect do they have on your business?

- ✓ Better managers
- ✓ More engaged, productive employees
- ✓ Increased bench strength



Why are Soft Skills Important?

What effect do they have on your business?

- ✓ Better managers
- ✓ More engaged, productive employees
- ✓ Increased bench strength
- ✓ Improved bottom line



Why are Soft Skills Important?

What effect will it have on you?

\$29,000 more per year!



Source: Emotional Intelligence 2.0



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE





Many soft skills have to do with
Emotional Intelligence
(EQ or EI)



Emotional Intelligence

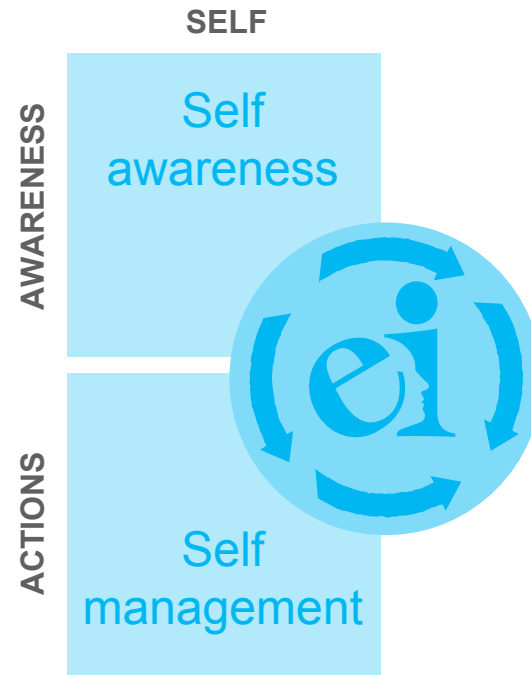
- Emotional self-awareness





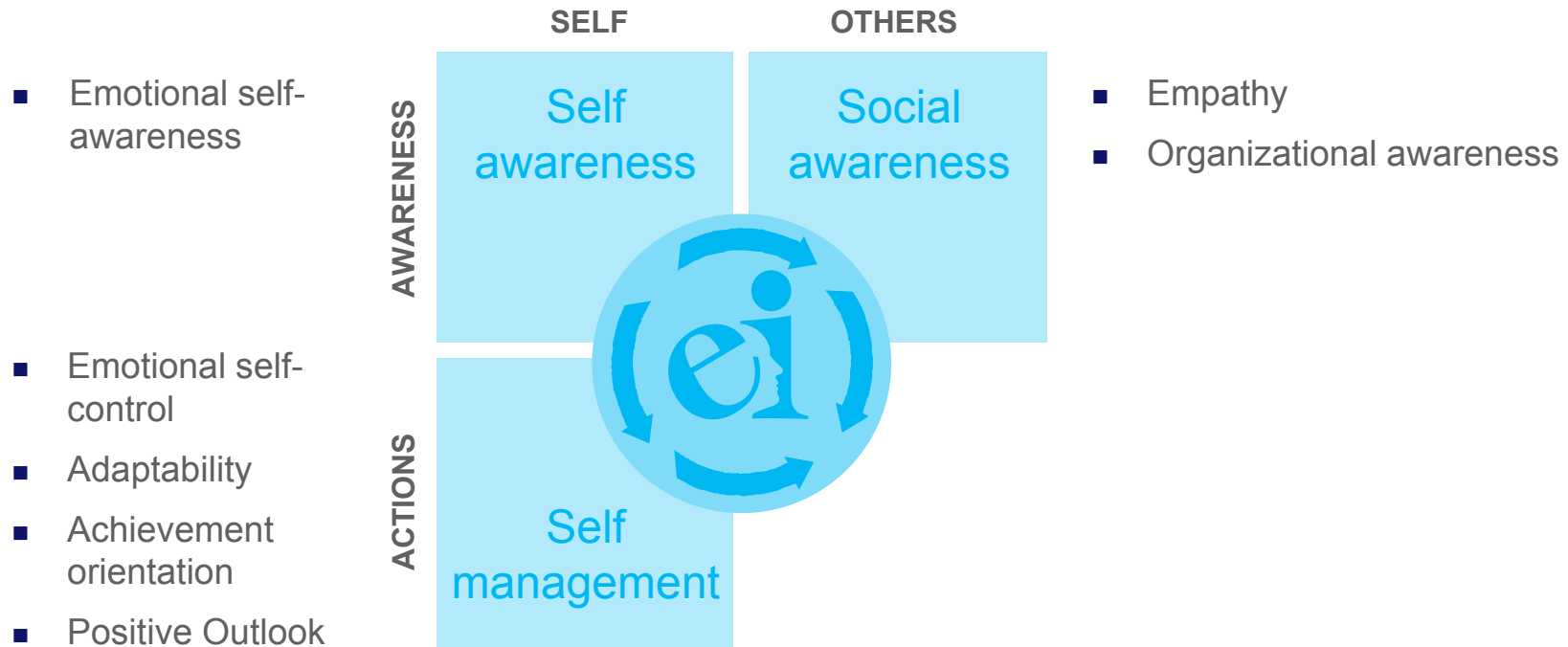
Emotional Intelligence

- Emotional self-awareness
- Emotional self-control
- Adaptability
- Achievement orientation
- Positive Outlook



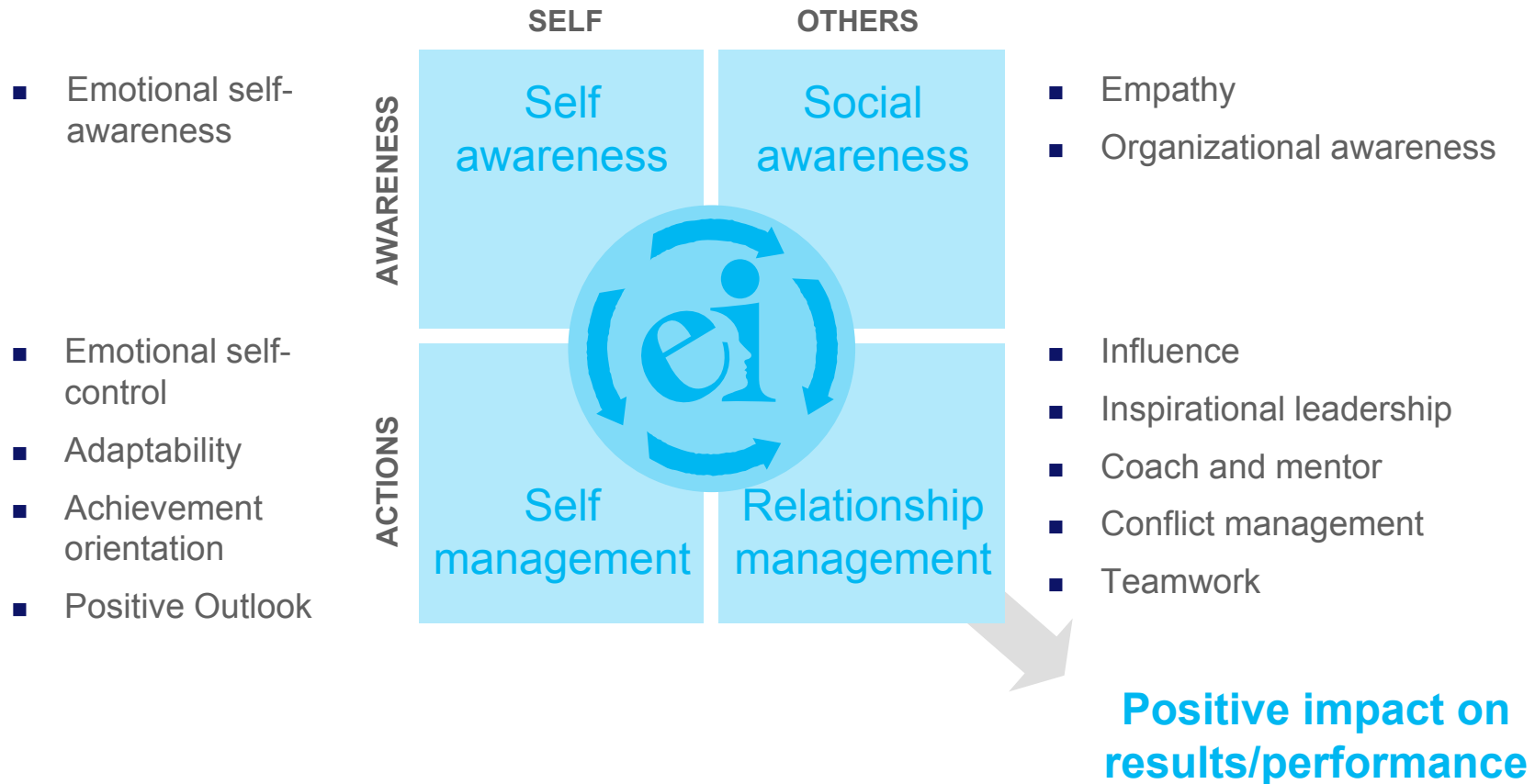


Emotional Intelligence





Emotional Intelligence





Polling Question #3



Important: Intelligence doesn't change;
but soft skills *can be improved*

HOW DO YOU RECOGNIZE SOFT SKILLS?

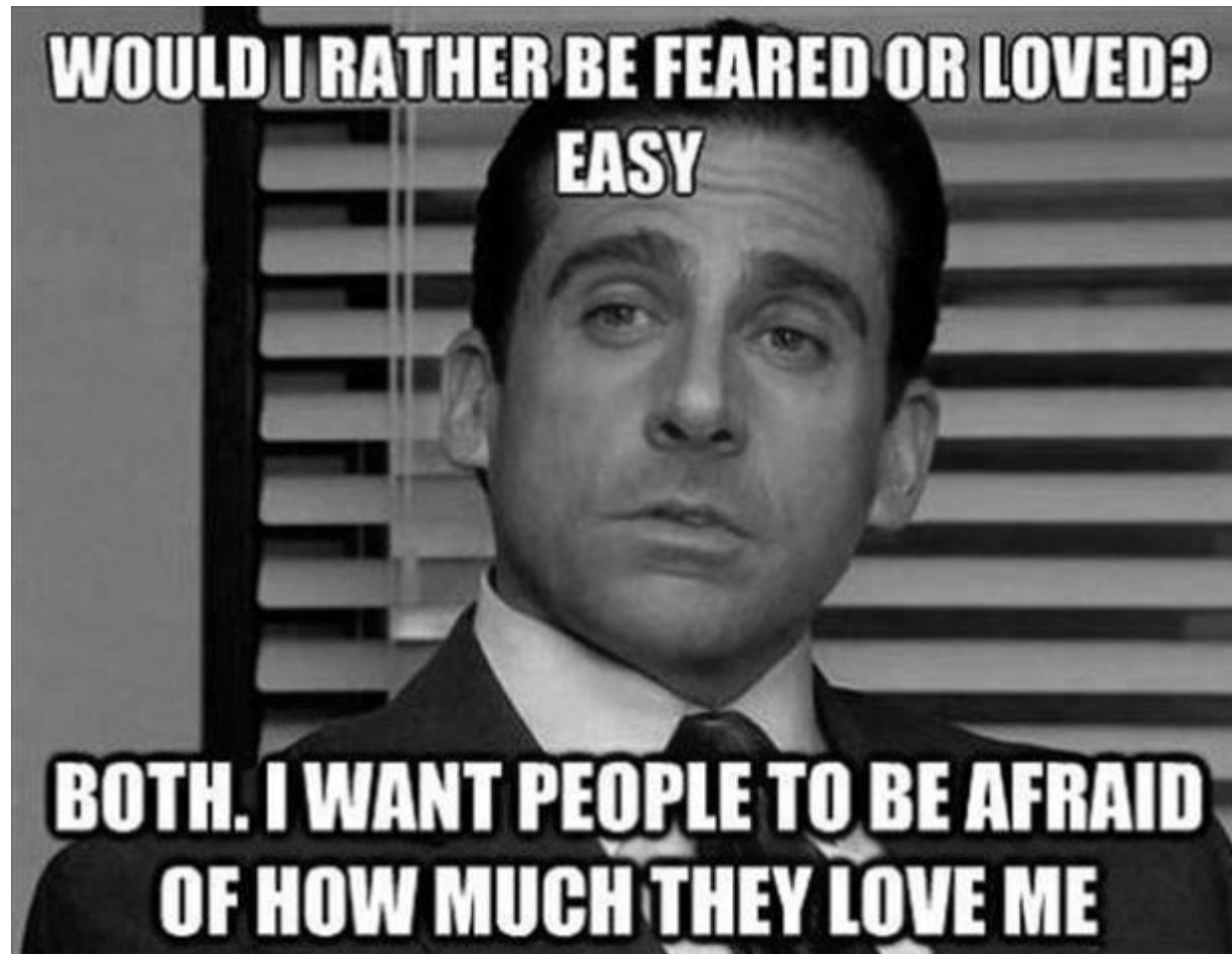




Sometimes it is easy to
spot a lack of soft skills ...

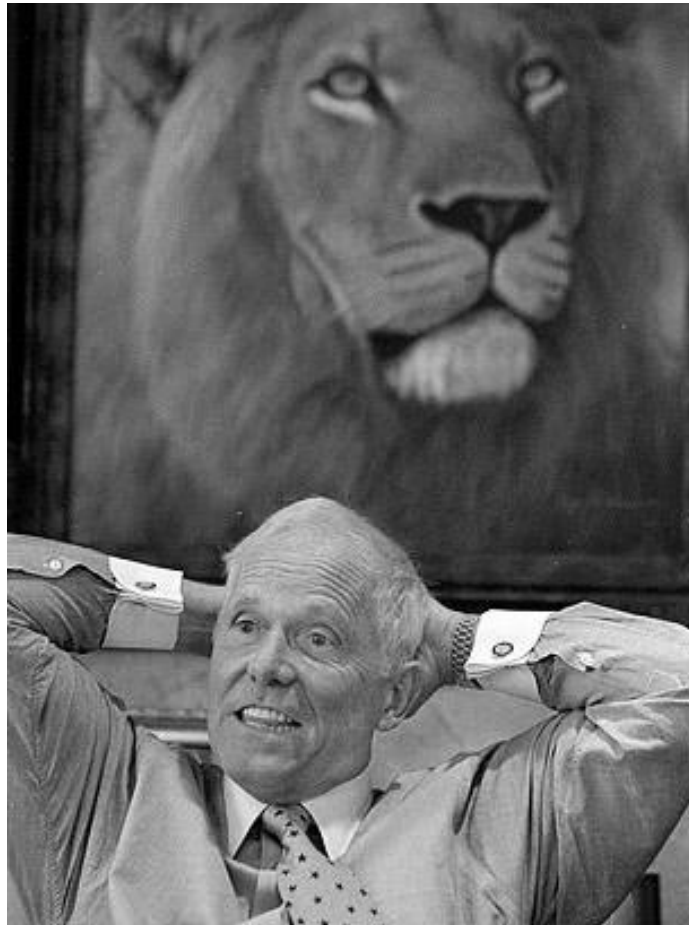


Michael Scott





“Chainsaw Al” Dunlap





Anna Wintour





Look for Behaviors

- ☐ Self awareness
- ☐ Self control
- ☐ Social awareness
- ☐ Relationship management



Helpful Checklist Sample

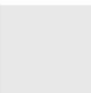
How to Identify Employees Struggling with Soft Skills

Check the box next to each behavior that the employee exhibits.

Employee: _____

- ☐ Misses social cues
- ☐ Cannot receive bad news without exploding
- ☐ Avoids conflict at all costs
- ☐ Will not accept change
- ☐ Does not work well on a team

WHAT GOOD SOFT SKILLS LOOK LIKE





Oprah Winfrey





Warren Buffet





Sam Walton





DO YOU HAVE SOFT SKILLS?





Do You Have Soft Skills?

Quiz



Quiz Question #1



Quiz Question #2



Quiz Question #3



Quiz Question #4

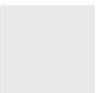


Quiz Results

How did you do?



SOFT SKILLS IN PRACTICE





It's one thing to know what you are supposed to do; it's another to actually do it.



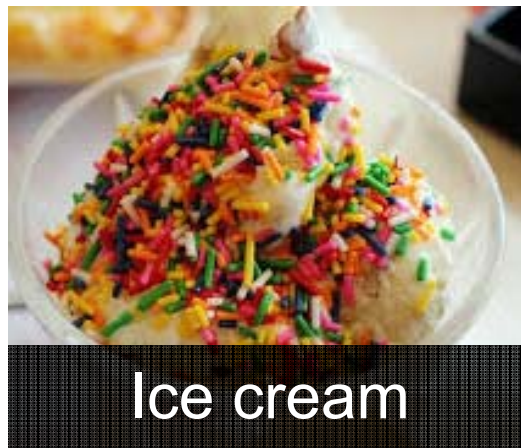
What's Healthy?



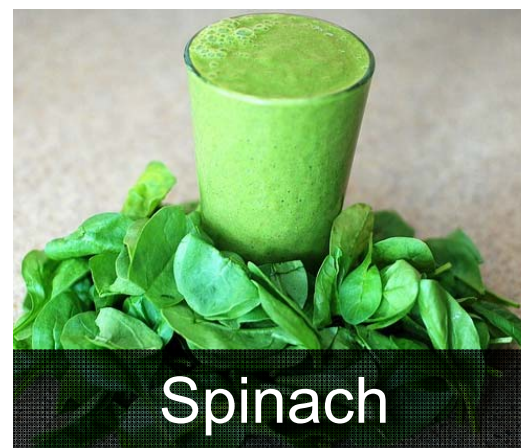
Funnel cake



French fries



Ice cream



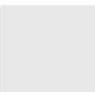
Spinach



Knowledge vs. Behavior

It is best to observe **behavior**,
and not just measure knowledge.

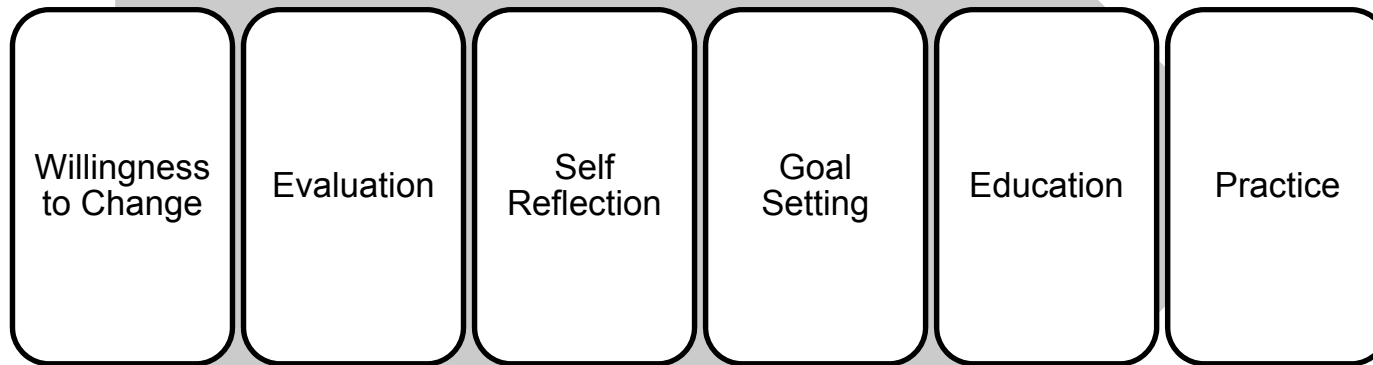
HOW CAN SOFT SKILLS BE IMPROVED?





How can soft skills be improved?

It is a **process**.





1. Willingness to change

Admit faults

See that
improvement
is necessary

Open to trying
to get better



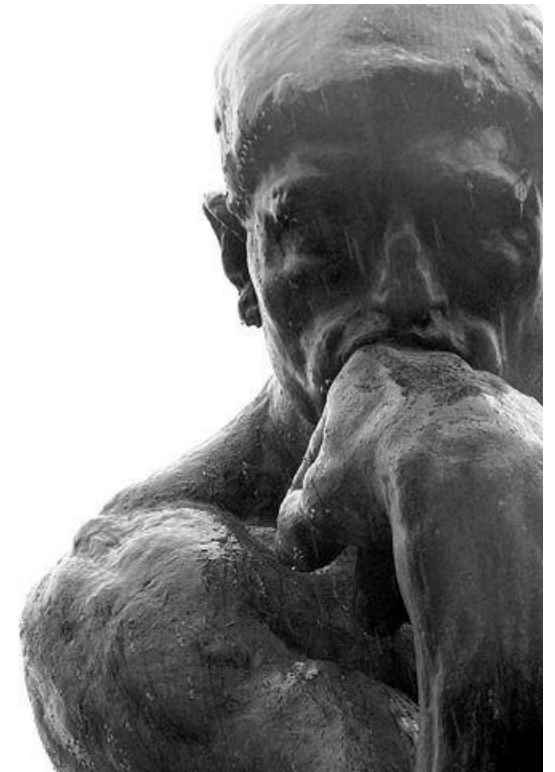
2. Evaluation





3. Self Reflection

- ☐ Understands tendencies, strengths, weaknesses
- ☐ Desire to improve





4. Goal Setting

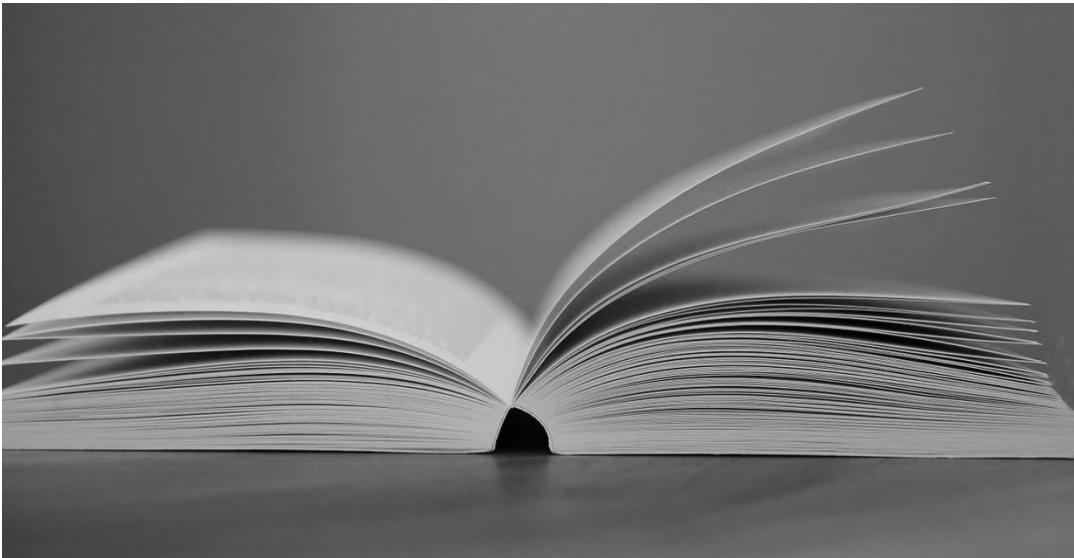


2 to 4 tangible goals
based on feedback
received



5. Education

Books/articles or other “tools” to help you implement best practices





6. Practice

- ☐ Try it out
- ☐ Get feedback about progress





Six Steps

1. Willingness to Change
2. Evaluation
3. Self-reflection
4. Goal Setting
5. Education
6. Practice



Polling Question #4



What if I have an employee
who is unwilling to change?



Unwilling to Change

Option #1: Manage around them.





Unwillingness to Change

Option #2: Help them understand the urgency to change.





Unwillingness to Change

Option #3: Let them go.





Polling Question #5



Review

Soft skills are extremely important to individual performance as well as to a company's bottom line.

To identify employees struggling with soft skills, start with their observable behaviors.

Soft skills can be improved!

Improving soft skills is a process of personal change that takes time.



Next Steps

- Identify employees with soft skills problems
- Feedback through assessments
- Develop process/program
- Outside help
- Have an important conversation



Real-Life Scenario





Thank you!

Daniel White

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