COLLABORATE 12

TECHNOLOGY AND APPLICATIONS FORUM
FOR THE ORACLE COMMUNITY

Successful Traits That Make You a Valuable IT Asset

Session 303

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Soft Skills

- In today's marketplace, there is still a feeding frenzy for senior IT talent. Companies are paying more attention to soft skills and are not concentrating solely on technical abilities.

- Soft skills are just as important as someone's technical ability.

Soft Skills

- I believe that an ideal candidate/employee is one that has excellent soft skills.

- Unlike technical skills, these skills typically cannot be taught. Deep down, people have these soft skills and they just need to be brought out.

Resourcefulness

- What happens when you get stuck on a problem?

- What resources do you have available to use?

- Action Items
  - Build a library of reference materials like on-line documentation, books, quick reference guides.
  - Build of network of people that you can go to.
  - Subscribe to Blogs, Forums, etc.
  - Use OTN & Google

Organizational Skills

- Are you an organized person that prioritizes?

- Do you have the ability to successfully work on multiple projects at the same time?

- Action Items
  - Use a planning tool like a Day Planner.
  - Prioritize on a daily and weekly basis.

Problem Solving Ability

- What happens when you are confronted a technical challenge?

- Do you ask for help too quickly or do you spend too much time trying to solve the problem?

- Can you create new and creative solutions?

- Action Items
  - Try to solve the problem yourself but don't waste too much time.

Customer Oriented

- Is the customer always right?

- How do you handle an unreasonable customer?

- What if the customer asks you to do something that you know won't work?

- Action Items
  - Look at the customer's needs from their perspective.
  - You are the expert. Present alternatives to the issue at hand.

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Honesty & Integrity

- Is honesty always the best policy?

- What do you do if you identify a defect that may jeopardize the success of the application?

- Is there any situation when "stretching the truth" is O.K.?

  - Action Items
    - ALWAYS tell the truth!
    - Never overstate your capabilities.

Thirst for Knowledge

- Do you know everything?

- Do you search for better ways to do something?

- Do you spend time outside of work to learn something new?

  - Action Items
    - Allocate time each week to learning something new.
    - When a new tool or feature comes out, try writing an application with it.

Communication Skills

- Can you speak on level terms with the user or customer?

- Can you express your thoughts clearly?

- Can you conduct meetings effectively?

- Action Items
  - Think before you speak.
  - Think about how the other person is going to respond.
  - Communicate, communicate, communicate.

Good Attitude

- What happens when the going gets tough?

- Are you an optimist or a pessimist?

- Action Items
  - Always look at the bright side of things.
  - Be positive. If you are negative, others around you will be negative as well. "your attitude is contagious….is your worth catching?"

The Power of Attitude

Our lives are not determined by what happens to us, but by how we respond to what happens; not by what life brings us, but by attitude we bring to life. A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events, and outcomes. It is a catalyst…a spark that creates extraordinary results.

Interesting

What Makes 100%?

What does it mean to give MORE than 100%?

Ever wonder about those people who say they are giving more than 100%?

We have all been to those meetings where someone wants you to give over 100%.

What makes up 100% in life?

Interesting

- Here's a little mathematical formula that might help you answer these questions:

If:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Interesting

Then

K- N- O- W- L- E-D-G-E
11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96%

and

H-A-R- D-W- O- R- K
8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98%

Interesting

But,

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A-T- T- I-T- U- D-E
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1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100%

So, one can then conclude with mathematical certainty that while Knowledge and Hard Work will get you close, Attitude will get you there.

Longevity

- How long do you stay at companies?

- What are the reasons you left those jobs?

- Action Items
  - Every company has opportunities. Give it your best!
  - Ask yourself, is the next company I work for the last company I work for.

Goal Oriented

- Do you have short term and long term career goals?

- Do you want to get into management or do you want to stay technical?

- What is it going to take to get to the next level?

- Action Items
  - Set achievable short term goals on a quarterly basis.
  - Set achievable long term goals on an annual basis.

Hard Worker

- Are you an "8 to 5er?"

- Do you do whatever it takes to get the job done?

- Are you a workaholic?

- Action Items
  - Establish BALANCE between work and life.
  - Work smarter and harder, not longer.
  - Spend time on the high priority items first.
  - Don't be distracted by tasks that are not important.

Energy, Drive, and Initiative

- Do you look at what it takes to improve yourself?

- Do you look for opportunities to help your company or the client without being asked?

- Do you do more than you have to or just enough?

- Do you always exceed expectations?

- Action Items
  - Go above and beyond your day to day responsibilities
  - Accomplish one more thing each week.

Enthusiasm

- Do you love your job?

- Do you enjoy going into work each morning?

- Is there excitement in your voice and your actions?

- Action Items
  - Be passionate about your work.
  - Believe in what you are doing.

Trend of Performance Over Time

- Have you been successful at your previous jobs?

- Have you been promoted quicker than the average?

- Have you won any company awards?

- Action Items
  - See what it will take to get to the next level and do it.
  - Spend time with your manager and ask what it will take to get to the next level.

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Fast Learner

- How quickly do you learn things?

- Do you need training before you can be productive in a skill?

- Action Items
  - Don't wait for training to try new products.
  - Apply previous experience and relate it to the task at hand.

Team Player

- Are you a team player?

- Are you willing to help out a team member when they are in need?

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

Teamwork

- Fact 1: When you see geese flying in a "V" formation, did you know that as each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

- Lesson 1: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier when they work or travel on the thrust of each other, rather than working solely by themselves.

Teamwork

- Fact 2: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone; therefore, it quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power that the team provides.

- Lesson 2: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. With teamwork, everything becomes easier.

Teamwork

- Fact 3: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the flock working together.

- Lesson 3: As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities, and unique arrangements of gifts, talents, or resources.

Teamwork

- Fact 4: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

- Lesson 4: We all need to make sure our honking is encouraging. The power of encouragement is a strong attribute of teamwork.

Teamwork

- Fact 5: When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again.

- Lesson 5: If we had as much sense as geese did, we would stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Conclusion

- Even though there is a tremendous demand for IT talent, don't forget about soft skills.

- Always look to improve yourself.

- Find a job you love to do and be the best at it.

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