



### Context Setting

**S**oft **S**kills leads to **W**isdom, Sudhir Aggarwal.

#### Target and Achievement:

- People go to School, College, and other Academic institutions. People have a target to achieve in terms of marks, ranks, ... to obtain subjects & streams, colleges & institutions, ... of their preference. People get Educational and Professional Qualifications.
- People go to workplace in whatever roleplay, people do have a target to achieve like monthly paycheck, periodic bonus & incentives, annual promotions & incentives, recognitions, ... People get Professional Experience & Expertise. This is about hard skill.
- Soft Skills doesn't have such a target to achieve. Soft Skills doesn't offer any such outcome like two cases. However as one grows, mostly, the relevance of Soft Skills grows and hard skill role gets moderated.

Soft Skills makes a person with difference, distinguished, and naturally matured in everything one does across all facets of lives. Soft Skills is different than and beyond hard skills.

Soft Skills is all about a person 'walk, talk, and laugh'.

'Soft Skills helps a person Staying Relevant'. Staying relevant in today's modern times is among the biggest challenge in all facets of the life for everyone.

'Soft Skill', is a mantra for a person to broaden one's Wisdom and enhance one's perspective to think differently and look @ matters in life differently. Soft Skills helps people look @ subject-matter in larger context and more holistically.

Soft Skill is Common Sense. Soft Skills is a Framework.

Soft Skill is something, if someone believes-in, it can do wonders for the person. Soft Skill enables a person to look within, engages oneself, and find more answers than continuously in the state of Q's (Questions).

Soft Skill helps one move into leadership gear like a continuous journey.

Soft Skill is an addiction, more one gets into – more one wants to go deeper – and spread the fragrance of it.

Soft Skills help one being a wise person and wise worker. People need to work hard as there is no substitute to hard work. People can be smarter, but Soft Skills makes one Wiser.



Soft Skills helps one shifting the gear from being a Manager to a Leader. There is a fine line in being a leader. Soft Skills helps people develop traits & characteristics like give space to others, be a guide than a controlling person, focus on innovation with calculated risk & exit options, learn the art of managing insecurities, and other similar.

There are certain aspects in the life, if acted wisely, carefully, thoughtfully, and consciously by design – these can change a person altogether to oneself and others around. Some to mention here:

- ‘Agree to disagree’ is an art and a great skill to have. One not agreeing with another person is NOT about disagreement between two persons, mostly it is two persons having different point of view or perspective about a given point. At times, the subject-matter gets dragged beyond a point leading to egos, people taking positions, ... The art of explicitly calling out ‘agree to disagree’ in a given situation respectfully can save both or all sides logically. At a later point of time, such matters can be taken up in new environment, with additional information/ data point, resources, people, ... Most times, a following discussions may not even be required. Avoid casualties.
- People may have great point and point of view, but how to put across is equally critical. Under the internal or external influence of many factors and/or certain backgrounds, people find it difficult to either put across their point or bring their interventions & perspective to the table. Some of these points of views may be gamechangers.
- Mutual Trust – Mutual Respect. Among many-many winning strategies in the World, more so in today’s times. This alone can-do wonders, as this sets the basic rules of engagement of engaging on face value & in same spirit. Else most times, people carry biases, backgrounds, agendas, ... and live in mental denials. People are often less misunderstood as background music doesn’t play, people don’t remain engaged in reading other person’s background agendas, ... this surely helps maintain required protocols appropriately.
- There is nothing Right or Wrong in the World. Anything and Everything on the earth is situational and contextual. It has two aspects to this theory (a) A given subject-matter may be Right for a person in one given situation and Wrong in another given situation. Person may be Right in both situations, as circumstances may be different. (b) likewise, for others, everyone comes with a background & perspective. Hence, it is critical to try understand the perspectives of two before being judgmental and calling right or wrong.

This helps one understand & accept different perspectives and look at subject-matter in larger & wider context.

- Art of saying NO. ‘Yes, But approach’ is among the finer one works well. First, people don’t like blatant ‘No’. Two, People come with expectations, aspirations, and certain baggage in their engagements. Three, People wants to be heard, listened-to, understood, and expect certain level of protocols & respect. By far, Else, this alone proves to be disastrous without anything being wrong under the garb of ‘misunderstood’.



- Communicate Bad News. Bad News and/or Not to pleasant news is very part of life across various facets of life. It is critical to capture bad news, understand in terms of implications & impact (mostly -ive from one's perspective), and communicate appropriately. This could be from denial of a promotion against the expectations/ aspirations to cancellation of large & strategic contract with financial and/or legal implications. The flipside of communicating bad news asap leads to start working on resolution and hold back the potential implications at certain level.
- Try to be dispassionate, it is easier than done in human being case. Still, very critical to maintain and sustain. One becomes better objective on the subject-matter, gets better understood & acceptable among others, subject-matter gets discussed in larger perspective, ... with focus on outcome in broader context.
- Speak-up with Zero expectations. Wow!, this looks unrealistic; but absolutely achievable. One shall represent an issue, make a proposal or suggestion, ... with zero expectations means, one shall not focus on immediate reactive action. The outcome may result-in something in larger perspective as one's point may be part of larger story. One's point may be considered very little or largely or sometime not at all, however one shall just focus on one's responsibility & commitment to speak-up and leave rest to the destiny of the system and people in system.

Soft Skill cannot be taught, not available in market, there is no capsule available in any form, no age bar to focus on Soft Skills though it gets tougher if delayed by design, ... Soft Skills is all about attitude-habit-believe-belief-&-commitment.

A Bold Statement "Soft Skills has nothing much to do with one's socio-economic-geo-political-educational background". People with best of 'Soft Skills' with moderate & humble of such backgrounds have done wonders and can-do wonders.

***E***veryone, all the times and allover, engages with people of different socio-economic-geo-political-education backgrounds at the same time. 'No 2 Persons' think alike or act alike or may have everything in common. One cannot change the people in World all the times, or rather anytime meaningfully to suit oneself. The only choice is to finetune oneself to align with people of different backgrounds at any given point of time. This applies to all facets of our lives, i.e. Social, Personal, Educational, and Professional.

### **Soft Skills and the Life**

As said, one cannot change the whole World or even minuscule of this Globe. One cannot change oneself 1:1 for everyone, i.e. cannot align self with everyone on earth - one engaged with. Soft Skills is a Framework. One needs to understand, align, configure, implement, and continuously remain in loop to meaningfully adopt the 'Soft Skills Framework'. It is both, Science and Art.



Soft Skills is all about talk to self, know & analyse oneself objectively, know one's abilities & capabilities, know one's limitations, ... This alone can help one live & let others a good life.

Communication is among the single most significant & integral to Soft Skill, Communication can do wonders either way. Communication is all about what one says, how one says, what one not says, what not to say, ... through choice of words, one's tone, how one says, level of voice, ...

Communication covers all aspects of communication, including and not limited to, verbal, written, body language. Sometime, body language communicates much more effectively and with a very different intensity than choice of words.

Communication happens with oneself (rare than it shall happen), within teams, across organisation internally and/or with external stakeholders. This applies to all facets of the life, hence gets extended appropriately.

More so lately, people are assessed & judged on 'sentiments' in our communication as positive statements carries negative spirit, built with sarcasm. This is gaining significance with evolution of technology-led disruptions (on positive note), where people engage impersonally and reacts with bias/ perceptions/ ...

Soft Skill, "aap ke sochne-dekhne-samajhne-bolne ka andaaz badal deta hai" (Soft Skills can change one's way of thinking, looking, understanding & comprehending, speaking @ things), Soft Skills focus, by design, can do wonders for a person. It can Transform people 360 degree. Likewise, otherwise if not consciously focused and/or avoided by design.

Presumably people tend to send their next generations to academic institutions, mostly beyond their reach, assuming some of the traits of Soft Skills as give. It is not so, because it is about 'I, Me, and Myself'. That is how kids of same family, all the pupils in a class, and all the people of a group are different, act differently, perform differently, grow diversely, ...

A brief touch upon professional World as it has multiple & diverse perspectives. In Service Industry more so, though across Industries, as people are among most valuable Assets and Contributors to the Growth of any organisation.

Soft Skill gets further sensitive and critical, when it comes to Professional life. The interests and impacts are much larger for all stakeholders involved individually & collectively; stakeholders may or may not be directly connected, but acting under influence or vested interests; encompassing self, teams, organisation – horizontally & vertically, customers, partners, and every ecosystem player.

People are Face and Ambassador of the Company. People carries, reflect and demonstrates Company's Core Values, Culture, and Mindset. People even experience changed environment and work culture, as they engage with or relocate to new geography like India to USA/ Europe/ Asia Pacific Countries, ...



In a way, People are Plant & Machinery in Service Industry. Modern day's World is very different than ever, it is fast changing as never before, the obsolescence has lost its meaning by the pace of transformational transformation, and so on.

People needs to continually update and upgrade all-round skills to learn about newer technologies, advancements, tools, products & solutions, protocols, way of doing things, ... The onus lies on individuals to keep themselves appraised and updated. People around and Organisation can facilitate only. The real value lies in application, in whatever we do. Beware, I repeat, obsolescence is no more relevant; either one is 'in' or 'out'.

It is in this context, Organisations need to identify 'Our People : Soft Skills' among the key focus and investments. Everyone, with no exception, in an Organisation needs to be integral part of this journey and focus on building an Organisation with a Difference'.

*Vineet Nayar (<http://www.vineetnayar.com/>), Vice Chairman HCL Technologies said "Employees First, Customers Second".*

[https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Employees\\_First\\_Customers\\_Second.html?id=Km8W\\_Ke9MgC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp\\_read\\_button&redir\\_esc=v#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Employees_First_Customers_Second.html?id=Km8W_Ke9MgC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button&redir_esc=v#v=onepage&q&f=false)

*One needs to have conviction, one needs to believe-in it, one must mean it. In a 'Customer is King' world, it is courageous to say so, however it doesn't refute that Customer is King. Both co-exists as both are mutually exclusive.*

Soft Skills, it is not that people don't follow Soft Skills in their life. Everyone does. It is more about understanding Soft Skills, focus on Soft Skills by design, follow consciously and believe-in it, experience the changes it brings in oneself, talk about Soft Skills and its impact, count on tangible & intangible gains in one's life, keep the target as 'Dil Mange More'.

Some of the other BAU (Business As Usual) experiences and changes one can observe of Soft Skills can be

- Among the firsts, focus appropriately on language. Try use proper language as per one's comfort and acceptable among relevant stakeholders. Please do make appropriate announcements, if one contemplates stakeholders of different background. Like Hinglish is very commonly language among certain part of India, but good to validate if everyone follows Hinglish.
- In modern World, learning new traits and protocols like mobile-protocols, email protocols, social media protocols, ... Make explicitly known to everyone, if making digital notes for two reasons (a) digital world is still new to the World and people around wrt. Concepts & practices like digital notes (b) not misunderstood by others if one if engaged with digital tools like email/ messaging/ surfing net/ ...
- Interaction is another key characteristic of Soft Skills, esp if one needs clarification, matters not understood, have a different point of view, ...
- Handshake of a person, Eye contact, ... These traits conveys how confident & dependable one is.
- Body postures across various facets of life, matters a lot; communicates much more than what one says
- The way, one dresses, one carries oneself



Soft Skills can make one believe-in oneself with right attitude. 'CEO is a mindset, not all about Title', a focus on Soft Skills can make one comprehend oneself in CEO's shoes and always be a CEO in whatever one does. It is all about commitment, ownership, accountability, communication, and Leadership. With Soft Skills focus, they come pretty naturally to one.

## **Leadership: CEO Mindset**

**Attitude**

**Communication**

**Walk-Talk-Laugh**

**Perspective**

**Ownership**

**There is Nothing Wrong or Right in World**

**Soft Skills → Wisdom**



**Soft Skills Sphere, an interesting insight**

Be Passionate	Be Self-Motivated	Be Honest to Self	Be Wise
Be Selfish	Mutual Trust Mutual Respect	Be Dispassionate	Be 80% HR
Cross-Functional	Agree to Disagree	Know YOUR 'NO(s)'	Know Your Day
Everyone Sells	By Design & Programmatic	Power of SWOT <sup>@</sup>	WANG <sup>@</sup> \$
Joint Investments	Pendown Thoughts	Make Notes	Summarise Discussions ART <sup>#</sup> Matrix
Art of Saying 'NO' <sup>*</sup>	Communicate BAD News	Always be in Succession Planning mode	Speak-Up

**\* Yes, But approach**

**# Activity-Responsibility-Timeline Matrix**

**\$ What Am Not Good @**

**@ Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat**

Evolution of Technology-led disruptions (on a positive note) is changing & transforming the lives of people. Most of them like mobility, social, and others are more to do with Soft Skills than so much hard skills from lay-person's perspective. These technology-led disruptive transformations are becoming BAU (Business As Usual) in life, in terms of hoe we engage, how we respond, ecosystem & extended ecosystem building & expansion, faceless, impersonal, emotional, sentimental, ... all the more important & critical to learn new protocols, new languages, new ways of representing oneself, take things on face value as they come, ...



Towards conclusion for now, Soft Skills makes one rock solid person with conviction and beliefs in the life. This alone keeps a person away from human being's biggest ever evils like ego, arrogance, over-confidence, attitude challenges, unrealistic aspirations, and more that puts a person on never-ending chase like 'MeToo', 'Dog eats Dog', 'I, Me, and Myself', ...

In conclusion, Soft Skills helps develop oneself in larger context, exploit one's strengths, hidden talent & personality traits, ... All this put together makes a person naturally a different person with always on never ending 'Dil Mange More' journey.

Focus on Soft Skills is a natural process of building Wisdom, make a person more acceptable across, look @ anything 'with and in' larger perspective, achieve Mission & Growth differently, ... Wisdom is no rocket science or an expensive commodity that one can acquire.

Wisdom is a way of life, Wisdom is about being natural in everything one does or doesn't do, Wisdom is 'Be Honest to Oneself', Wisdom is Value System one builds for self, Wisdom is practising one's Believes & Beliefs, Wisdom is all about one presents & represents oneself, Wisdom is Positivity, Wisdom is all about 'I, Me, and Myself'.

Wisdom is like fragrance; it spreads around.