UGC-MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT
SKILLS GAP 2009: "Role of English and A Comparative Analysis of Soft Skill Teaching Vs Soft Skill Training"
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Synopsis

As important as technical skills remain, employers increasingly cite another challenge in workforce recruitment: a shortage of applicants possessing "soft skills." **The consensus definition of soft skills seems to be skills that involve the ability to interact and communicate positively and productively with other people**. An Internet search for "soft skills," yields results such as leadership, listening, negotiation, and conflict management. The Center for Career Opportunities at Purdue University defines soft skills as "the cluster of personality traits, social graces, **facility with language**, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark each of us to varying degrees." Their list of soft skills includes work ethic, courtesy, teamwork, self-discipline, self-confidence, conformity to prevailing norms, and language proficiency.

Definition of Training: The term training refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies. Some commentators use a similar term for workplace learning to improve performance: training and development. One can generally categorize such training as on-the-job or off-the-job:

Training differs from exercise in that people may dabble in exercise as an occasional activity for fun. Training has specific goals of improving one's capability, capacity, and performance.

Definition of Education: Education is a broad concept, referring to all the experiences in which students can learn something. Education is the learning of knowledge, information and skills

during the course of life. Informal education also includes knowledge and skills learned during the course of life, including education that comes from experience.

Education Vs Training: Education is concerned with the development of the mind, of the intellect, while training deals with learning specific skills. Education is a more personal activity, in that its main purpose is the enhancement of an individual's ability to use his mind for his own personal pleasure or gain. Training means developing skills that will be used more for **social and economic reasons** than for the self. **Which means that education should come first, training later.**

Many people don't understand the difference between education and training. Education is giving out information and communicating to your trainees. Training is about practice and building skills. Today's younger generation of employees wants to be trained, not educated. The question still remains, is training more effective or is education; in creating a labor pool of current and prospective students *"who are both employable and ready to deploy"*?

The aim of this research project would be to evaluate the effectiveness and quantify statistically, utilizing methodology that is appropriate for the above objective.

This project examines the relevance gap in **management research**. *Its focus is the nature of knowledge created by research at the interface between business and academia in the context of major changes likely to affect the nature of demand for such knowledge.*

Significance of the study: Industry recruiters have been telling the same story for many years about the importance of *interpersonal communication skills and teaming within the classroom*. The most important attribute new college grads can bring to the workplace is their ability to *communicate effectively in both oral and written format*. Unquestionably, industry sees that the student's ability to communicate, ability to cooperate and ability to work in diverse environments are the skills most sought after. *A more rigorous approach to the teaching of soft skills within the curricula is needed if educators are able to adequately prepare the student for the future.*

Industry leaders point out that the ultimate joy is to find the graduate who is both highly technically competent, who also possesses strong communication traits, leadership prowess,

ability to work effectively with others and who possesses a strong work ethic!

Recruiters continue to indicate that they are looking for new grads that possess qualities within the areas of communication, leadership and teaming.

It goes without saying that if it came down to decision between a candidate with technical qualities versus interpersonal traits; then the latter wins out most of the time. Recruiters take the position that they can more easily take the grad with the strong interpersonal and leadership qualities and provide needed technical training more quickly than vice versa.