



SOFT SKILLS

Who needs them? You do.

While your technical skills may get you in the door of the place you want to work, it's your people skills that open most of the doors when making career advancements.

With excellent soft skills, you can excel as a leader. Problem solving, motivating, team building and delegating are easier if you have good soft skills. Two items crucial for success are knowing how to get along with people and displaying a positive attitude.

The issue is that there is much less training for these undervalued soft skills than hard skills. Organizations expect people to know how to behave on the job and managers assume employees know the importance of being on time, taking initiative, being friendly and producing high-quality work.

That's why one of the initiatives of the Blount Partnership is working with the Blount County Public Library to offer **free** monthly classes to help employees take their career to the next level with soft skill sessions.

Additionally, the many human resource focus groups held at the Partnership office also focus on higher level soft skills addressed later in this article. A listing of all these seminars can be found on our website at www.blountchamber.com.

Some of the classes offered this year include: Project Management, Building a Team, Communicating and Listening Effectively, Empowering and Motivating Employees, Managing Conflict, Engage or Die, Addiction in the Workplace, Me Too?, Rolling Out the Red Carpet and Leading a Multi-Generational Workforce.



Soft Skills Gap

How do you as an employer know if you have a soft skills gap?

The answer is simple. When your workers have lots of technical skills, but an absence of soft skills, you have a gap.

Some examples include:

- If you are good at getting clients, but have trouble retaining them.
- If you have lots of turnover and spend lots of time retraining people.
- If you have managers but no real leaders.

It's important for employers to recognize the vital role soft skills play within your business and work on developing them throughout the organization. Areas to examine and evaluate include:

- Personal accountability
- The degree of collaboration
- Interpersonal negotiation skills
- Conflict resolution
- People's adaptability and flexibility
- The clarity of communications
- Creative thinking
- Inclusion
- Coaching and mentoring

Soft skills are increasingly becoming the hard skills of today's work force. Training in interpersonal and relationship-building skills is necessary and needed for a business to communicate and collaborate effectively.

These critical people skills are more important as organizations struggle to find meaningful ways to remain competitive and productive. Teamwork, leadership and communication are keys to soft skills development.

New Members

We'd like to welcome new members to the Blount County Chamber of Commerce who joined since last month. If you are interested in joining or finding out more information, please call 865.983.2241 or go to www.BlountChamber.com

Bill Cox Furniture
www.billcoxfurniture.com

Bruster's Real Ice Cream
www.brusters.com

CBD Plus USA Maryville
www.cbdplususa.com

Century Harvest Farms Foundation
www.centuryharvest.com

Creative Structures, Inc.
www.creativestructuresinc.com

Empire Distributors of Tennessee
www.empiredist.com

NovaTech
www.novatech.net

Premier Industrial Flooring
Todd Presley - (706) 308-3904

Realty Executives Associates - Carlton Hackney
callcarlton.realtor

The Showroom at Five Points
www.showroomat5points.com

Timhel Creative
www.timshelcreative.com

Townsend Cades Cove Gateway Alliance
www.exploretownsend.com

Just by joining, your membership fee is 85% tax deductible. In addition, you can use the website to post your events and news while offering deals and coupons to customers.

Blount Area Jobs

Are you looking for a job?

www.BlountAreaJobs.com

GET CONNECTED
FOR CHAMBER NEWS



EVENTS CALENDAR

The events calendar on BlountChamber.com allows the community to post its events directly to gain added exposure. These are great opportunities to connect and network with potential customers. Visit our website to receive notices of events and meetings you would like to attend – BlountChamber.com.

FEBRUARY

- 25 Southern Appalachian Studies Series at the Public Library
- 26 Networking 101: Connect, Create and Cultivate Relationships
- 26 King University Open House
- 27 Legal Issues for Seniors at Public Library
- 28 Coffee Club sponsored by Smoky Mountain Fund-Raising
- 28 Fourth Annual Nonprofit Fair at Maryville College

MARCH

- 1-31 Foothills Quilt Guild Exhibit
- 1 State Legislative Update
- 5 SMiles for Mardi Gras
- 9 Blount County Chamber Night with the Knoxville Ice Bears
- 14 East Tennessee Purchasing Association to host Diversity Business Expo
- 16 The Pistol Ultra Run
- 18 Women in Business
- 19 HR Focus Group - Engage or Die: How To Get and Keep Rock-Star Employees
- 22 Presidents/Administrators of Colleges Post-Secondary Update
- 28 Coffee Club sponsored by Kiwanis Club of Maryville held at Green Meadow Country Club
- 30 A Celebration of Southern Barbecue by Fred Sauceman

View more information on these events at www.BlountChamber.com

If you have any events you would like listed on our community calendar, click on *Event Submission* at www.BlountChamber.com

Soft Skills Session

Take your career to the next level with this free soft skill session. Soft skills are strengthened and developed over time, and are necessary if you desire to climb the career ladder. All participants will earn .5 CEUs per session for participating.

Time Management -- March 29, 2019

Technology can be an ally in managing your time and boosting your effectiveness at work. This updated session includes hands-on activities with the latest time management tools and techniques.

Register at www.BlountChamber.com

Business Counseling



Are you looking to start a small business or need help in your current one? Then check out the Tennessee Small Business Development Center that visits the Blount County Chamber every Thursday.

To schedule a FREE small business counseling session or to make an appointment with a representative from the Tennessee SBDC call Kasey at 983-2241.

Premier & Presidential Partners

