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Here's What Employers Are Looking for in Terms of Employee Readiness

From an employer's perspective, there's more to being an attractive job candidate than experience and hard skills. Sure, these are important and employers don't want to hire people that can't do the job, but oftentimes employers are just as interested in an employee's so-called "[soft skills](#)". Here's what's important to your potential employer.

Reliability

Showing up ready to work (both mentally and physically) means a lot to employers. You can make up for a lot of hard skill shortcomings with [reliability](#), but you cannot overcome unreliability (even if you're the most skilled worker on the planet). Being able to work when you say you can for as long as you say you can is a highly-desirable trait. Don't try to show up late and don't try to clock out early.

Professionalism

Sure, it's good to have a personality and workplaces are more enjoyable when employees are allowed to express themselves but there is a line. When your behavior, attitude, or dress crosses that line you are entering unprofessionalism territory. An employee that shows up in clean, work-appropriate attire and conducts his/herself in [a professional manner](#) (courteous, respectful, and humble) is an employee that is highly-coveted by businesses.

Ability to adapt and learn from criticism

You don't know everything. Your employer knows you don't know everything. So if you act like you do, it's a rather unattractive quality. The mark of a good employee is someone who takes criticism well. This means that instead of becoming offended, you use constructive criticism as a springboard for learning and becoming better at your job. [Here's](#) a good guide for how to handle constructive criticism if you are lacking in that ability.

Integrity

Integrity can be defined as being honest and having a strong moral compass. Employees value integrity because dishonesty in the workplace is a recipe for disaster. If you have integrity, you will treat customers, clients, and fellow employees respectfully and you will not actively harm the company (theft, sabotage, etc.). As [HomeAdvisor.com](#) says, "the integrity of a potential employee is just as important as their hands-on skills – sometimes even more so."

Flexibility

Employers are looking for someone who cares about their work, not just a paycheck. One of the best ways to communicate that you are this type of employee is to be flexible. Are you willing to work overtime? Can you stay an extra 20 minutes to help if need be? Are you a team player who can take on new responsibilities as they arise? Rigid employees are a turnoff to high-quality employers.

Thirst for learning

Employees who have no interest in furthering their own education and seem stagnant in their current state of knowledge are pretty unattractive. While it is on the employer to provide on-the-job training to better their employees, you can go the extra mile by doing what you can to continue your education on your own time. This may include attending conferences and seminars related to your job, or even taking classes at local colleges or trade schools that will give you a leg up at your company. This extra effort will not be overlooked by an employer.

As a potential employee, your "readiness" is a combination of your hard skills and these soft skills, which anyone can grow if they commit to it. A reliable, honest, flexible employee that needs a little bit of hard skill training is more attractive to most companies than an unreliable, dishonest employee that possesses an impressive technical skill set.