

North American Workplace: People Skills

By Kari Karlsbjerg | 승인 2020.10.08 10:12 | 댓글 0

Month Eight

Kari Karlsbjerg's "Canadian Employment Culture" column reports every Wednesday (local time) in the Korea IT Times. Today's article is the second story of 'Month Eight'

1. Soft Skills More Important Than Ever
2. People Skills
3. Culture Complicates Conflict
4. All Speaking is Public Speaking



Kari Karlsbjerg, author of "Everyday Vancouver"

Effective Communication

Good people skills are defined as the ability to listen, to communicate and to relate to others on a personal or professional level. While IT professionals spend a lot of time and effort upgrading their technical skills to ensure they are up to date, it is also worthwhile to spend effort improving their people skills too. Joel Garfinkle, one of the top 50 Executive Coaches in the USA, has compiled this list of excellent tips to improve your people skills and excel in the North American workplace:

- 1. Make communication a priority.** Take classes, read books, magazine articles or learn from successful communicators around you.
- 2. Simplify and stay on message.** Use simple, straightforward language. Remember that the famous Gettysburg Address by American President Lincoln was only about two minutes long.
- 3. Engage your listeners or readers.** Draw your listeners and readers into the conversation. Ask questions and invite opinions.
- 4. Take time to respond.** After you've listened (and understood) take time to "draft" in your head what you want to say.
- 5. Make sure you are understood.** Don't blame the other person for not understanding. Instead, look for ways to clarify or rephrase what you are trying to say so it can be understood.

6. Develop your listening skills, too. The best communicators are almost always the best listeners. Listen without judgment and don't be distracted by thinking about what you want to say next.

7. Body language is important. Studies show that 65% of all communication is non-verbal. Watch for visual signs that your listener understands, agrees or disagrees with your message.

8. Maintain eye contact. Maintaining eye contact demonstrates you care about your listeners.

9. Respect your audience. Simply show your respect by paying attention to what they say to show you care about their needs.

(source: garfinkleexecutivecoaching.com)

It is never too late to develop and strengthen your people skills, but you need to practice. You can learn a lot just by observing your coworkers with strong people skills and model your behaviour after them. Another way to gain valuable people's skills experience is by volunteering to serve on workplace committees and planning events. The extra effort you make on your communication skills will certainly contribute to your career success.

A Special Note about English Pronunciation

Anxiety about English pronunciation can be a factor behind many business professionals' reluctance to speak at meetings, despite their fluency in the language. Fortunately, there is a quick and simple technique you can use to increase your confidence with your English pronunciation that only requires a cell phone and an online dictionary. Use the 'speech to text' feature of your phone to show the words that you are reading out. If you have pronounced the words correctly, the words will be displayed correctly in text. If your phone can understand your English pronunciation, then you can feel confident that any English native speaker will too. However, if the phone text shows a nonsense word, then you know that have pronounced the word incorrectly and you will need to double check the pronunciation with online dictionary and repeat the word again until correct. Use this technique to practice and rehearse any important statements you need to make in English beforehand to improve your pronunciation and confidence.

This serial article is written by Kari Karlsbjerg , author of "Everyday Vancouver." Elaine Chu, co-author of "Everyday Vancouver" provides translation services in Korean. "Everyday Vancouver" is a must-read bilingual book for immigrants from Korea who are interested in Vancouver culture, or plan to study or get a job in Canada. Kari Karlsbjerg is currently a college instructor, and Elaine Chu is a Korean student representative at the Delta City Office of Education, helping their career in college. The book can be purchased from Amazon.