

S-Cube Project

Soft Skills Interview Schedule

Preamble

1. **Statement of Purpose.** A letter, explaining the context of the project is sent in advance to the interviewee. Check with the interviewee that s/he received and understood the contents of the letter. Have a copy to hand and re-cap if necessary.
2. **Consent** to be obtained from the interviewee via a signed form. Check that s/he understands the interview will be audio taped.
3. From the outset the interviewer will relay the following information to the interviewee:
 - **Confidentiality.** The identity of all participants in this research will be treated in the strictest of confidence. Any personal information divulged during an interview will not be associated or identified with any individual.
 - **Research not a Test.** The interview is not a ‘test’ of the individual or an organisation. The interview represents an element of research to inform the design of soft skills training for personnel who work in social enterprises (free of charge).

Participant Briefing

It is important that before using this questionnaire with interviewees that a brief discussion takes place where clarification is given as to how soft skills are being defined.

Soft skills are “*the Inter-personal and Intra-personal skills required to be effective in the workplace*”

(Bunk 1994 in FÁS¹)

Showcard No 1. (Soft skills 1-18) This is given to the interviewee to read. Allow time for reading. The interviewer can then give some practical examples of how some of these soft skills may be used in the work place, using the social enterprise model as a background.

Teach Back: The interviewer checks with the interviewee to confirm her/his understanding of soft skills to enhance validity.

Checklist:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Does the interviewee understand the background to the project?2. Does the interviewee understand the role of soft skills in social enterprises?3. Has the consent form been agreed and signed by the interviewee?4. Has audio-tape consent been given by the participant? |
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¹Downloadable at: <http://www.fas.ie/en/pubdocs/SoftSkillsDevelopment.pdf>

Details

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Q1a. Of the soft- skills listed here, on a scale of 1-10, which of these soft skills are most important/useful to your SE, or which do you think are most important to SEs in general - those with which you are familiar? 1=most important/useful; 10=least important/useful.

Effective leadership		Communication		Conflict Resolution	
Ability to influence		Personal effectiveness		Active listening	
Creative problem solving		Strategic thinking		Decision making	
Team building		Being able to convince		Flexibility	
Understanding relationships		Consultation		Self awareness	
Judgement		Resilience		Other	

Q.1b Of the soft- skills listed here, on a scale of 1-10, which of these skills exist at the highest levels in your SE or in SEs in general – those with which you are familiar? 1=most prevalent; 10= least prevalent.

Effective leadership		Communication		Conflict Resolution	
Ability to influence		Personal effectiveness		Active listening	
Creative problem solving		Strategic thinking		Decision making	
Team building		Being able to convince		Flexibility	
Understanding relationships		Consultation		Self awareness	
Judgement		Resilience		Other	

Q2. Can you identify a soft skill(s) from the supplied list or from your own knowledge that is/are really important to the effective running of your SE or SEs in general?

Probe: Why is/are these skill(s) important?

Probe: Can you give an example of how this/these skill(s) is/are important within [your SE or SEs in general]?

Probe: In relation to this/these soft skill(s), what is your assessment of the level of competence in [your SE or SEs in general]?

Q3. What other soft skills on the list are important and why?

Probe: any skills left out that are important?

Q4. Thinking about the soft skills areas we've discussed, what is your overall assessment of the skills for which there is the greatest need for training [in your SE or amongst SEs in general]?

Q.5 How would you like to see training in soft skills being delivered?

Q.6 Would a combination of the following training delivery types be of interest to you in soft skills training? (Please indicate yes or no, below)

- a) e-Learning,
- b) Workshops
- c) Tutorials

Yes

NO

Q7 If you were to engage in any of the training above, do you have any special needs to facilitate your learning? If so, please indicate those needs.

Showcard

<p>1 Effective leadership The ability to motivate people to work effectively towards goals in a collective fashion.</p>	<p>2 Communication Being able to impart information in a clear, precise and unambiguous way.</p>	<p>3 Conflict Resolution The ability to facilitate a process whereby conflict is resolved between parties.</p>
<p>4 Ability to influence The ability to offer reasoned debate on a subject, so as to persuade and gain agreement.</p>	<p>5 Personal effectiveness The ability to consider one's own personal effect on matters and measure effectiveness in that context.</p>	<p>6 Active listening Being able to engage with others in a way that assures them that you are listening and considering what is being said.</p>
<p>7 Creative problem solving Being able to approach problems from a number of perspectives, thus increasing the possibilities of success.</p>	<p>8 Strategic thinking Contextualising thinking into a wider sphere, so all possibilities and outcomes are visible.</p>	<p>9 Decision making Being able to reflect on all implications and considerations and arrive at an informed decision.</p>
<p>10 Team building Being able to generate a positive spirit and attitude amongst workers which incorporates positivity, happiness and positive outcomes for the company</p>	<p>11 Being able to convince The ability to win people over to one's own way of thinking by presenting rational and best ideas that show a better route and outcome to a concept or action.</p>	<p>12 Flexibility Being able to display an understanding that situations can change and consequently plans may have to be re-visited. Rigidity when dealing with human beings can be problematic.</p>
<p>13 Understanding relationships The ability to understand the dynamics between individuals and groups so as to read the 'sub-text' of how people are inter-acting and re-acting</p>	<p>14 Consultation Appreciating the significance in considering people's opinions, particularly when important decisions are to be made.</p>	<p>15 Self awareness The ability to know oneself, both physically and mentally at any given time and the effect that is having on oneself and others.</p>
<p>16 Judgement The ability to consider and comprehend all factors relating to reaching an understanding of a situation.</p>	<p>17 Resilience Being able to '<i>bounce back</i>' and resume effectiveness in the face of a set back or failure.</p>	<p>18 Other</p>