Soft Skills

A Business Buzzword for Bible Wisdom and Christian Character

This outline is to be used in conjunction with a table summarizing soft skills (here).

This outline is only introductory; the Internet has much information about soft skills.

An application of soft skills to child training goals and priorities is wise (here).

Introduction:

- 1. God our Father wants us to outperform sinners around us. He gave us a divine library of great wisdom.
 - a. The Bible contains God's wisdom for every part of our lives like no other source (II Tim 3:16-17).
 - b. He wants each of us to maximize our potential, pleasure, and prosperity. I also want this for you.
 - c. Recent study of John chapters 13-17 shows His personal, intimate, loving care for the 11 apostles.
 - d. Though He has chosen the base things of this world for His children, He helps them with wisdom.
 - e. We love Bible wisdom as evidenced by our extensive and practical commentary on Proverbs (here).
 - f. The Bible is full of financial wisdom, political theory, rules for relationship, etc. that are precious.
 - g. We rejoice when the world discovers Hittites or confirms a medical need for handwashing, human longevity at 70, circumcision on the eighth day, the water cycle, and certainly no less for *soft skills*.
- 2. We recently studied child training to outline priorities and training goals in another useful table (here).
 - a. Moses and Paul both commanded child training, but God inspired Solomon for most of the details.
 - b. We saw clearly that academic goals are inferior to spiritual, character, functional, practical goals.
 - c. When we think of the great men and women of the Bible, we see much more than a college degree.
 - d. We want their character and personal attributes that brought loving favor from both God and men.
 - e. They were winners in areas of life that are not part of academic scope and sequences anywhere.
- 3. Let us read the Bible about the fast track management program of Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1:1-4).
 - a. Ashpenaz was head of Babylon's fast track management program for very select candidates.
 - b. Genetic gifts ... no blemishes and well favoured ... are God's choice we cannot alter very much.
 - c. School learning ... skillful, cunning, understanding ... are His blessing along with our diligence.
 - d. Soft skills ... ability to function in a king's palace ... are personal attributes that we can acquire.
 - e. Potential ... for further training by the Chaldeans ... is only available for ambitious learners.
 - f. Superiority far beyond his classmates is what Daniel had by his great fear and love of Jehovah.
 - g. He went on to distinguish himself as exceptional in succeeding reigns of pagan kings (Da 6:3-5).
 - h. Taken from the first slides of *Great Men in Public* ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/great-men-in-public.pdf</u>.
 - i. Consider that Daniel and his God-fearing friends would have been taught Proverbs from youth.
- 4. The character traits and professional attributes taught in the Bible are called *soft skills* by the world.
 - a. We go to school and use study to acquire *hard skills*; we practice the Bible for ultimate *soft skills*.
 - b. Do not let the words *hard* or *soft* confuse you; they are business buzzwords for different skillsets.
 - c. *Hard skills* are job-specific, objective abilities; *soft skills* are personal and interpersonal attributes.
 - d. *Hard* is not better than *soft; hard* is easier to define; *soft* is more subjective; *soft* is more important.
 - e. Here is Wikipedia's short introduction to soft skills ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_skills.
 - f. Observe that 85% of professional success is due to soft skills and only 15% due to hard skills (<u>here</u>). Our goal is to grow in favor with God and men (I Sa 2:26; Pr 3:3-4; Lu 2:52). It should consume you.
- 5. Our goal is to grow in favor with God and men (I Sa 2:26; Pr 3:3-4; Lu 2:52). It should consume you. a. A great part of growing in favor with God is beyond delighting in Him ... it is how we treat others.
 - b. John the Baptist's ministry was to make a people ready for the Lord ... by reconciling with fathers.
 - c. Jesus taught loving enemies like God does is how we are the children of God (Matthew 5:43-48).
 - d. Paul taught GOS way of living for God's glory, without offence, to save others (I Cor 10:31-33).
 - e. A good name, or reputation, and loving favor from others is a choice by your conduct (Prov 22:1).

- 6. Much more could be said on this topic with great benefit, but it has been taught or will be in the future.
 - a. The Internet has very many articles giving excellent and detailed explanations for many soft skills.
 - b. The first and main point to grasp and embrace is the identity of soft skills and their greater value.
 - c. We must teach our children the abilities that are more valuable than academic scope and sequence.
 - d. We do not want to settle for a college degree and some hard skill for them to miss their best in life.
 - e. The Bible identifies traits that please God and men (the world sees them). Let us maximize them.
- 7. This sermon outline should be used in conjunction with the chart or table accompanying it (here).

DEFINITIONS

<u>*Hard Skills*</u> = Job-specific technical abilities to perform specialized tasks that cannot be done intuitively or without detailed and explicit training.

<u>Soft Skills</u> = Personal abilities to be highly productive and relate well to others to maximize overall business goals with colleagues or customers.

EXAMPLES

<u>*Hard Skills*</u> = accounting, carpentry, hairstyling, programming, surgery, truck driving, etc. <u>*Soft Skills*</u> = leadership, persuasion, work ethic, gracious, problem solving, teamwork, etc.

BIBLE EXAMPLES

<u>*Hard Skills*</u> = Tubalcain (Gen 4:22), Bezaleel (Ex 31:1-5), choir director (I Chr 15:22), creative designer (II Chr 2:12-14), tentmaking (Acts 18:3), tax collecting (Matt 9:9), etc. <u>*Soft Skills*</u> = David (I Sam 18:1-5; II Sam 15:18; I Kgs 5:1), virtuous woman (Pr 31:10-30), Daniel (Dan 6:1-5), Jesus (Lu 2:52; 4:22); Timothy (Phil 2:19-22), Paul (Phile 1:1-25), etc. <u>*Both Skills*</u> = Daniel and friends (Dan 1:3-4; 6:3-5), Moses (Acts 7:22), etc.

IMPORTANCE

<u>*Hard Skills*</u> = cut a tree down faster (Eccl 10:10), farm more acres faster (Prov 14:4), etc. <u>*Soft Skills*</u> = honor of kings (Pr 22:11,29), promotions (I Kgs 11:28), rule (Ex 18:21), etc. <u>*Both Skills*</u> = it takes soft skills to creatively leverage hard skills to make them more useful.

CONTRASTS

- A. *Hard skills* get you in the game to play (a job), but *soft skills* determine if you will win.
- B. Hard skills are easy to list on a resume, but interviews are almost exclusively soft skills.

PRIORITIES

- A. An MD has hard skills, but without soft skills ... patients, nurses, colleagues hate him; with soft skills he can build a large practice, be elected to boards, head departments, etc.
- B. A teacher has a set of hard skills ... but he or she will be more effective with soft skills.
- C. Some wives are considerably efficient ... but they hinder influence by lack of soft skills.
- D. Fools focus on a hard skill or college degree ... wise men leverage its 15% for success.
- E. A pastor with great people skills (soft) ... must also have great Bible knowledge (hard).
- F. Men with Bible knowledge (hard) ... may lose wives or children without emotion (soft).

- G. Why is speech the single most important class in school? It is the top soft skill to acquire.
- H. Evangelism requires Bible knowledge (or where to get it) but great soft skills to convert.
- I. Salesmen can learn a product better than the manufacturer and be unable to close a sale.
- J. Proverbs is God's book for practical wisdom and worldly success, and it is all soft skills.

PRACTICALITY

- A. Child training as summarized (table) is to teach soft skills more than hard (academics).
 - 1. See pie charts at the bottom of this outline for the small role of academic schooling.
 - 2. Soft skills can be taught thus all the Bible instructions, illustrations, and warnings.
 - 3. If you school children for professional success, and you should, soft skills trump.
 - 4. How do we grow in favor with God and men? By hard skills? No, by soft skills!
 - 5. If you want your children to beat worldlings, then reject their methods of mediocrity.
- B. The Bible in both testaments think Proverbs and Paul's epistles stress soft skills.
 - 1. While Solomon taught them for political success, Paul taught them for spiritual fruit.
 - 2. Why do we believe and say, Love Is the Greatest? Because it is, and it is a soft skill.
 - 3. Consider what the Bible teaches about employment soft skills in both directions.
 - 4. Consider all the emphasis on internal character and getting along in all relationships.
 - 5. We want to teach these to our children, but we as adults should embrace them first.
 - 6. Proverbs details speech (communication), diligence, restraint, honesty, respect, etc.
- C. A transferable skill is a hard skill e.g. train engineer, but it is leveraged by soft skills.
 - 1. Many call soft skills *transferable skills* since they work in any field or part of life.
 - 2. We use *transferable skill* for a hard skill that is recognized anywhere to get you in.
 - 3. Yet your success in any job, no matter hard skill training, comes down to soft skills.
- D. So go to school for a good-paying hard skill to separate you from most of the population.
 - 1. The hard skill, from a technical two-year degree to a doctorate, is to get you in a job.
 - 2. On the job you practice the many soft skills taught in the Bible, especially Proverbs.
 - 3. The world is Johnny-come-lately; Solomon wrote these skills down 3000 years ago.
 - 4. As Harvard and Stanford have confirmed, soft skills account for 85% of job success.
- E. A lumberjack can take down a tree with little thought like no one else should attempt, but he must have soft skills to make profitable sales and motivate crews to work hard.
- F. A credit analyst can tear apart a firm's statements and make a loan recommendation, but he must have soft skills to interact with the customer, loan committee, staff, etc.
- G. A CPA has a hard skill certified, but he/she must have soft skills to leverage it upward.

Conclusion:

- 1. If you follow closely, you can see that soft skills are exactly what causes favor with God and men.
 - a. From the emphasis of this study, soft skills take hard skills and leverage them for career upside.
 - b. But from the Bible's teaching of soft skills, they please God by us pleasing men as Christians.
 - c. Joseph, David, Daniel, and Esther brought great glory to God while prospering among pagans.
 - d. When such men are vetted and put on trial, all that can be brought against them is faith in Christ.
- 2. God our Father wants us to outperform sinners around us. He gave us a divine library of great wisdom.
 - a. He wants each of you to maximize your potential, pleasure, and prosperity. I want His will for you.
 - b. Recent study of John chapters 13-17 shows a personal, intimate, loving care for His like no other.

- c. We rejoice when the world discovers Hittites or confirms washing, and no less so with soft skills.
- d. The Bible contains God's wisdom for every part of our lives like no other source (II Tim 3:16-17).
- 3. A study like this should cause us to embrace each instruction and warning in the Bible to grow thereby.
 - a. Though He has chosen the base things of this world for His children, He helps them with wisdom.
 - b. We love Bible wisdom as evidenced by our extensive and practical commentary on Proverbs (here).
 - c. We should embrace every example and precept we find about growing in favor with God and men.
 - d. The Bible should delight our souls, not for the mere sound of words but for their sense and wisdom.
- 4. These soft skills should be grasped and taught to our children in conjunction with their priorities (here).
- 5. Thanks to Stephen Eastland for emphasizing the importance of soft skills for auditors at large entities.

For Further Study:

- 1. Great Men in Public ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/great-men-in-public.pdf</u>.
- 2. Getting Ahead on the Job ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/getting-ahead-on-the-job.pdf</u>.
- 3. Kingly Conduct ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/kingly-conduct.pdf</u>.
- 4. Bible Principles of Management ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/management-bible-principles.pdf</u>.
- 5. Men Growing Up (Maturity Curve) ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/growing-up-maturity-curve.pdf</u>.
- 6. Christian Work Ethic ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/christian-work-ethic.pdf</u>.
- 7. Proverbs about Success ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/topics/success.php</u>.
- 8. Character Traits ('C' Study) ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/c-character-traits.pdf</u>.
- 9. David's Character Traits ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/david-traits.pdf.
- 10. Joseph's Character Traits ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/character-of-joseph.pdf.
- 11. Transferable Skills ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/two-financial-concerns.pdf.
- 12. Christ-Like Men ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/christ-like-men.pdf.
- 13. Make Your Life Count (Measuring It) ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/make-your-life-count.pdf.
- 14. A Mighty Man's Life ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/a-mighty-man.pdf</u>.
- 15. Traits of Great Men ... <u>http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/traits-of-great-men.pdf</u>.
- 16. Many more documents, sermons, Proverb commentaries ... <u>www.LetGodBeTrue.com</u>.



Factors of Success

- Your degree is about 10% ... gets you in the game.
- Intelligence OTJ quickly doubles four years of B.S.
- Character, include wisdom, leverages intelligence.
- Alter your degree (100%), intelligence (0%), character (100% or 50%), time and chance (75% or 25%).
- You can be 200% better than worldlings ... 7 to 3.5!

