

Skills That Robots Can't Replace

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. **emotional intelligence** Noun /ɪ'məʊ.ʃən.əl ɪn'tel.ɪ.dʒəns/ the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically
Example: Managers with high emotional intelligence are better at resolving conflicts within their teams.
2. **creativity** Noun /ˌkriː.ɪ'tɪv.ə.ti/ the use of the imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work
Example: While AI can generate images, it often lacks the true human creativity needed for unique branding.
3. **candidate** Noun /ˈkæn.dɪ.dət/ a person who applies for a job or is nominated for election
Example: The hiring manager interviewed five candidates, but only one had the necessary communication skills.
4. **empathy** Noun /'em.pə.θi/ the ability to understand and share the feelings of another
Example: Nurses must show great empathy when caring for patients who are in pain or feeling anxious.
5. **interrupt** Verb /ˌɪn.tə'rʌpt/ to stop the continuous progress of an activity or process, or to break in on someone who is speaking
Example: It is considered impolite to interrupt a colleague while they are giving a presentation.
6. **networking** Noun /'net.wɜː.kɪŋ/ the action or process of interacting with others to exchange information and develop professional or social contacts
Example: Attending industry conferences is a great way to improve your networking skills and find new opportunities.



AI can write your emails, complete your spreadsheets, and create your designs. So, what can you do to protect your job? One answer is to focus on the tasks that AI cannot perform. For example, being a good team player, showing emotional intelligence, and demonstrating

creativity are essential human traits. These are known as "soft skills," and experts say they are more important than ever as AI becomes increasingly powerful in the modern workplace.

Soft skills are different from "hard skills," which you might learn through formal education or specific work experience. Hard skills include technical abilities like coding, driving a truck, or identifying diseases. While hard skills are necessary for many roles, soft skills are what truly set humans apart from robots. As workplace expert Madeline Mann noted, people may not remember their doctor's university, but they always remember how that doctor made them feel.

Not only can soft skills help you keep your current job, but they could also be the factor that sets you apart from other candidates during a job application. In a competitive market, having the ability to communicate effectively can be more valuable than technical knowledge alone. While these skills may come more naturally to some people, experts insist that there are practical ways to develop and improve them over time.

RocheMartin, a UK-based company, helps people develop emotional intelligence, including social skills and empathy. They suggest that you can improve your social skills simply through practice. This involves spending less time on social media and focusing on meeting people face-to-face. Engaging in real-world interactions, such as meeting friends for drinks or attending networking events, is a primary factor in building professional confidence.

It can also help to focus on just one specific social skill you really want to develop. A useful strategy is to find someone you know who is talented in that area, observe their behavior, and then try to replicate it yourself. By watching how successful communicators interact with others, you can learn how to handle difficult conversations or lead a team more effectively in your own workplace.

To develop empathy—which involves understanding other people's emotions—it is important to listen without interrupting and to try to put yourself in someone else's shoes. You might also use phrases like "I see" or "I understand" and share your own similar experiences to build a connection. Although AI is developing at a rapid pace, strengthening these uniquely human qualities is the best way to stay ahead in your career.

DISCUSSION

1. Which soft skill do you think is your strongest, and which one do you need to work on?
2. Do you think robots will eventually be able to show real empathy? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever had a boss who had great "hard skills" but terrible "soft skills"?
4. Is it "fair" for a company to hire someone with fewer qualifications just because they are more likable?
5. Do you agree that social media makes our real-life social skills weaker?
6. How would you feel if your doctor was a robot that was 100% accurate but had no personality?
7. In your culture, is it common to "network" to find a job, or is it based mostly on exams and grades?