

SMART DRIVER[®] September 2020

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills (aka soft skills) are character traits and behaviors we exhibit when interacting with other people. From your attitude and body language to the words you say, everyone must effectively deal with others to do their jobs successfully. Below is a list of common interpersonal skills. Read this information and determine how you can improve your soft skills.

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

COMMUNICATION

When you deal directly with customers, both internally (dispatchers, mechanics, etc.) and externally (shippers, receivers, etc.), their first impression of you is derived by your verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Verbal communication includes more than what you say; it is also how you say it. Inflection, tone, and pace affect how others hear and interpret your meaning. Non-verbal communication includes making eye contact with others and facing them while you converse. In addition, your body language can communicate your emotions (positive or negative) to others. Even your appearance sends a message about you and your company.

FEEDBACK

Giving and receiving feedback are essential interpersonal skills. Being open to feedback, including constructive criticism, shows great maturity and self-confidence. If you look at the feedback objectively, especially if there is truth to it, then you can use it to grow. Accepting feedback makes you approachable, and others will want to work with you more. Similarly, give feedback to others in person or over the phone in a respectful way. Do not use social media or email to provide feedback. Your words can be easily misinterpreted.

LISTENING

Active listening is a great skill to add to your repertoire. When talking with others, be engaged. Avoid distractions, like checking your phone periodically, or exhibiting a body language that says you do not care what the other person is saying. In addition, keep an open mind. Hear what the other person has to say and pause three seconds before responding. Resist the urge to interrupt or impose a solution. Instead, ask probing questions to keep the person talking, and restate what you heard to ensure you clearly understand the other person's viewpoint.

RELIABILITY

Possessing a strong work ethic and showing your dependability speaks to your integrity. Your employer, customers, and teammates count on you to do your job and to do it well. Being a reliable worker reflects highly on you and the company. Examples of reliability include showing up to work on time and fit for duty, turning in paperwork accurately and on time, and practicing safe driving techniques.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

An aspect of a person's emotional intelligence is one's ability to maintain his or her composure around others, particularly in heated situations. Remaining calm under pressure without unloading your frustrations on others is important to teamwork and shows you are emotionally stable. This can be challenging for truck drivers due to their prolonged exposure to stressful driving situations, but we all encounter difficult people and situations at unexpected times. Be considerate of others, and hold your tongue or walk away if needed; doing so is a sign of an emotionally intelligent individual.

Note: These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive.

This material is intended to be a broad overview of the subject matter and is provided for informational purposes only. Old Republic Insurance Company of Canada does not provide legal advice to its customers, nor does it advise insureds on employment-related issues. Therefore, the subject matter is not intended to serve as legal or employment advice for any issue(s) that may arise in the operations of its insureds. Legal advice should always be sought from the insured's legal counsel. Old Republic Insurance Company of Canada shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss, action, or inaction alleged to be caused directly or indirectly as a result of the information contained herein. Used with permission by Great West Casualty Company.

Knowledge Verification

Driver's Name: _____

Emp/Unit #: _____

Please answer, and forward a completed copy to your Safety Department/Safety Representative.

1. Good first impressions can help you communicate effectively.
2. A strong work ethic and your dependability speaks to your integrity.
3. Body language can tell others if you are interested in their communication.
4. Using Social Media is the best way to provide feedback.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |

Answers:
1. True
2. True
3. True
4. False



INTERPERSONAL SKILLS