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SIMON KUZNETS KHARKIV NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

**Guidelines to the training course "Soft Skills"
for Bachelor's (first) degree
higher education students majoring
in speciality 073 "Management",
study program "Logistics"**

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Theoretical principles, practical methods and techniques of effective communication necessary for career development, achievement of both individual and organizational goals, development of self-analysis skills, generation of new ideas, team management, self-motivation and teamwork are presented.

For Bachelor's (first) degree higher education students majoring in speciality 073 "Management", study program "Logistics".

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Introduction

Personal development and career success in the modern world are closely related to the development of universal skills (soft skills), which differ from special knowledge (hard skills) in their universality and applicability in any field of activity. Soft skills make it possible to easily adapt to new conditions, establish effective communication, change the field of activity and solve personal and professional problems. The training course "Soft Skills" aims to help students to study and develop soft skills.

The purpose of the training course is to provide theoretical training and formation of the basic skills of the 21st century (soft skills) that help students to realize their life plans and achieve life (including professional) goals, effectively respond to new challenges. The skills of the 21st century help a person to make life efficient, interesting, comfortable, to engage in his own learning and self-development.

The main tasks of the training are: assistance in the acquisition of general theoretical knowledge of the need to develop soft skills throughout life by higher education students; promoting the formation of basic skills of the 21st century (soft skills): critical thinking, leadership qualities, creativity, communication, cooperation, which will contribute to effective work with various modern sources of information, its critical analysis and understanding of information; mastering the latest methods of researching the reality of the future specialist; making students being aware of the role of 20th century skills for self-development, self-education of each individual; promotion of the acquisition of learning experience in cooperation with others; creation and implementation of their projects.

The tasks of the training are:

- studying the mechanisms of self-knowledge and self-expression;
- study of leadership qualities;
- mastering effective communication skills;
- mastering the methods of public speaking and time management;
- studying methods of working in a team;
- mastering methods of flexibility and adaptability.

The object of the training is the process of forming higher education students' systemic understanding of the relevance and necessity of forming and developing their own soft skills of the 21st century.

The subject of the training is modern concepts regarding the list and content of soft skills of the 21st century and methodical approaches to their formation and development. The results of training and competences formed by the educational discipline are defined in Table 1.

Table 1

**Learning outcomes and competences
formed by the educational discipline**

Learning outcomes	Competences that a student of higher education must master
LO3	GC9, GC12
LO4	GC11
LO9	SC5, SC15
LO15	SC6
LO16	GC9, GC11
LO17	GC3, SC9

The designations in Table 1 mean the following.

GC3. Ability to think abstractly, analyse, synthesise.

GC9. Ability to learn and master modern knowledge.

GC11. Ability to adapt and act in a new situation.

GC12. Ability to generate new ideas (creativity).

SC5. Ability to manage an organization and its divisions through the implementation of management functions.

SC6. Ability to act in a socially responsible and conscious manner.

SC9. Ability to work in a team and establish interpersonal interaction when solving professional tasks.

SC15. Ability to develop and demonstrate leadership qualities and behavioral skills.

LO3. Ability to demonstrate knowledge of theories, methods and functions of management, modern concepts of leadership.

LO4. Ability to demonstrate skills in identifying problems and justifying management decisions.

LO9. Ability to demonstrate the skills in interaction, leadership, teamwork.

LO15. Ability to act in a socially responsible and socially conscious manner on the basis of ethical considerations (motives), respect for diversity and interculturality.

LO16. Ability to demonstrate skills in independent work, flexible thinking, openness to new knowledge, being critical and self-critical.

LO17. Ability to conduct research individually and/or in a group under the guidance of a leader.

Topic 1. The content of soft and hard skills and psychological features of a person having soft skills and hard skills. Functional literacy of a person of the 21st century

Soft skills are personal, social and communication skills that help a person to effectively interact with other people, successfully perform tasks and solve problems. These skills are not specific to a certain profession or industry, but they are generally recognized as important for success in any area of life and work.

Soft skills can be divided into different categories or types depending on their characteristics and detection methods.

The main categories of soft skills include:

- 1) communication skills;
- 2) leadership skills;
- 3) creativity and problem thinking;
- 4) self-management and organizational skills;
- 5) social competence.

Hard skills are professional skills based on relevant knowledge. Such skills can not only be demonstrated, but also measured. These include: professional knowledge, use of computer programs, knowledge of a foreign language, etc. Usually, hard skills are more clearly defined than soft skills.

In particular, they are described in educational professional programs for each speciality and in handbooks of qualification characteristics of professions. The situation is different with soft skills. However, more attention is paid to them, especially now, in the conditions of behavioral economics, when in the professional sphere, a person's success depends 85 % on soft skills and only 15 % on hard skills.

Functional literacy is a set of knowledge, abilities and skills necessary for successful life and activity in society. It includes:

1) reading literacy: reading comprehension, finding and using information from texts of various types;

2) mathematical literacy: understanding mathematical concepts, using mathematical knowledge to solve problems;

3) natural and scientific literacy: understanding of natural phenomena, use of scientific knowledge to explain and predict events;

4) information and communication literacy: the use of information and communication technologies for searching, processing and creating information;

5) civic literacy: understanding and using one's rights and responsibilities, participation in society.

Training exercises

Exercise 1. A business card.

Goals.

1. Development of the ability to present oneself succinctly and clearly.
2. Development of self-confidence and self-presentation skills.

Doing the exercise.

It is necessary to prepare a short presentation about yourself within 3 minutes, which would include:

- a) first and last name;
- b) education and work experience;
- c) professional goals and interests;
- d) 1 – 2 interesting facts about yourself.

Tasks for the exercise.

1. Hold a competition for the best business card, where students will take turns presenting themselves.
2. Discuss the results of the competition, giving participants constructive feedback.

Exercise 2. Creating your own soft skills portfolio.

Goals.

1. Awareness and assessment of one's own soft skills.
2. Development of self-presentation and self-advertisement skills.

Doing the exercise.

1. Create your own list of soft skills that you possess.
2. For each skill, give an example from your personal life or work experience that demonstrates the application.

Tasks for the exercise.

1. Design your portfolio in a visually interesting and presentation-friendly form.
2. Conduct a minipresentation of your own portfolio.

A list of questions for self-study

1. Explore how soft skills and hard skills affect career growth and wages.
2. Analyze how functional literacy affects a person's life in various areas (education, work, personal life).
3. Consider the ethical aspects of using technologies for the development of soft skills and hard skills.
4. The role of mentoring and coaching in the development of key competences.
5. Study of problems associated with a low level of functional literacy.

Topic 2. Self-presentation and speaking skills

In the dynamic and competitive environment of the modern world, the possession of soft skills becomes not just an advantage, but also an integral component of success. Among them, self-presentation and public speaking occupy one of the prominent places. These skills not only allow you to confidently present yourself and your ideas, but also significantly expand the range of personal and professional opportunities, making you more persuasive, influential and successful in any field of activity.

Oratory is the art of public speaking, the purpose of which is to provide information, influence, and convince listeners. It involves the ability to build one's speech logically and consistently, to express oneself effectively and passionately in front of the audience, to represent and present oneself correctly, winning the sympathy of listeners, to understand body language and gestures and to use them perfectly and appropriately, to conduct polemics, debates (convincingly prove theses or refute them).

The term "self-presentation" presenting oneself to other people. In the English explanatory dictionary, it literally means managing other people's impression of you with the help of numerous behavioral strategies, which consist in presenting one's external image to other people. In the American tradition, self-presentation is considered as a form of social behavior demonstratively emphasized by the subject in the process of interpersonal communication [9].

In the process of independent work on the topic, it is necessary to pay special attention to the study of the following issues: the concept and general characteristics of public speaking and self-presentation; techniques and methods of public speaking; typical mistakes in self-presentation and public speaking; analysis of psychological aspects.

Training exercises

Exercise 1. Body language.

Goals.

1. Awareness of the importance of non-verbal communication.
2. Learning to use body language to enhance the effect of speeches.

Doing the exercise.

Divide into pairs. One participant in a pair will talk about an event using only non-verbal means of communication (facial expressions, gestures, posture). The second participant should watch him/her carefully and try to understand what is being said. After the exercise, students change roles.

The task for the exercise. Discuss the results of the competition and provide feedback to students.

A list of questions for self-study

1. Preparation for a public speech: defining the goal, researching the topic, choosing arguments, composing the text.
2. Peculiarities of self-presentation in the online environment: specifics of visual content, language styles, online etiquette.
3. Analysis of examples of successful people who master the art of self-presentation and public speaking.

4. Using verbal and non-verbal methods of self-presentation to create a favorable impression.

5. The structure and logic of the speech, including the introduction, the main part and the conclusion.

Topic 3. Setting goals and time management

In today's dynamic world, where the pace of life is constantly increasing and the flow of information is becoming increasingly turbulent, effective time management becomes not just a competitive advantage, but also a necessary condition for success. Time management and goal setting are key tools that allow a person to optimize personal and professional potential, achieve the set goals and realize ambitious aspirations.

Time management is a set of specific methods and principles of time management for tasks, events and projects [7]; it is a set of technologies for planning and organizing time, which a person applies independently to increase the efficiency of the use of time, as well as to increase the quality of tasks performed during work.

Goal setting is a purposeful process of formulating clear and measurable results that we strive to achieve. Goals specify the mission, act as a guide and motive for the behavior of all team members. And, on the contrary, the mission is an integrative declarative expression of goals.

Currently, there are many techniques for effective goal setting. One of them is SMART [13]. This is a mnemonic abbreviation, the components of which are criteria for setting tasks, for example, in project management, management and personal development. It is based on five key principles that serve as reliable guidelines on the way to success. **S**pecific (S), **M**easurable (M), **A**greed-upon (A), **R**easonable (R), **T**ime-bound (T).

SMART is an effective tool that provides the clarity, focus and motivation needed to achieve business or personal goals. It can also improve the ability to achieve them by encouraging you to define your goals and set an end date. SMART goals are also easy to use by anyone, anywhere, without the need for special tools or training. It is believed that compliance of the tasks with the given criteria significantly increases the probability of their completion and achievement of the overall goal.

Training exercises

Exercise 1. The Pomodoro Method.

Goal. Increasing the concentration and productivity of students' learning.

Doing the exercise.

Select the task you will work on. Set a timer for 25 minutes. Focus on a task for 25 minutes without distractions. After 25 minutes, take a 5-minute break. Repeat steps 2 – 4 four times. After 4 cycles, take a 30-minute break.

Exercise 2. SMART goals.

Goal. Learning how to set goals correctly.

Doing the exercise.

Formulate your goal. Check if the goal meets the SMART criteria:

- 1) Specific;
- 2) Measurable;
- 3) Attainable;
- 4) Relevant;
- 5) Time-bound.

If the goal does not meet the SMART criteria, refine it.

A list of questions for self-study

1. Determine the synergistic effect of combining the SMART method and the principles of time management.

2. Justification of the impact of clear formulation of goals, measurability of progress, reachability, relevance and time limitation on the effectiveness of achievement of goals.

3. Evaluation and comparison of the effectiveness of various time management methods and tools (the Eisenhower matrix, the Pomodoro method, calendars, planners, software) from the point of view of their impact on professional activity.

4. Review and comparative analysis of effective strategies and methods for overcoming procrastination (setting SMART goals, visualization of success, elimination of distractions, motivation, self-reward, methods of

cognitive-behavioral therapy) from the point of view of their effectiveness in the professional sphere.

5. Analysis of practical cases demonstrating the connection between effective time management and the growth of personal and professional productivity.

Topic 4. Emotional intelligence: self-organization and relationship management

The era of changes and transformations makes new demands on the individual, making emotional intelligence (EI) one of the most important skills for a successful life. EI is not just an innate trait, but a set of skills that can be developed and improved throughout life.

Emotional intelligence has different definitions depending on whose research you read. Three key researchers of emotional intelligence are John D. Salovey and Peter Mayer, Daniel Goleman, and Reuven Bar-On. Each of them gives his/her own definition.

John D. Salovey and Peter Mayer: "Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, access and generate emotions to assist the mind, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and reflexively regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth".

Daniel Goleman: "Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize one's own feelings and the feelings of other people, motivate oneself and effectively manage emotions in oneself and others. Emotional competence is an acquired ability that is based on emotional intelligence and contributes to effective work performance".

Reuven Bar-On: "Emotional intelligence is a set of non-cognitive abilities, competencies and skills that influence a person's ability to successfully cope with the demands and pressures of the environment" [11].

Emotional intelligence can be divided into 5 main elements [9]:

1. Recognizing, understanding and managing one's own and other people's emotions.
2. Expressing opinions.
3. Development and maintenance of social relations.
4. Overcoming challenges.
5. Using emotional information in an effective and meaningful way.

Training exercises

Exercise 1. Guess the emotion.

Goal: Learning to recognize emotions by facial expressions and non-verbal signals.

Doing the exercise: One participant becomes an "actor" and portrays a certain emotion without words. Other students try to guess what emotion the "actor" is portraying. An "actor" can use facial expressions, gestures, posture, and movement to convey an emotion.

Exercise 2. Emotional diary.

Goal. Learning to be aware of your emotions and track their causes.

The course of the exercise. During the day, write down your emotions that you feel in your diary. Describe how you feel the emotion physically (eg, rapid heartbeat, muscle tension). Think about what could have caused this emotion. Write down how you coped with the emotion.

Case. You work as a teacher in a high school. One of your students, Maksym, has recently become withdrawn and does not like to communicate with his classmates. His academic performance has decreased, he often misses classes. You noticed that Maksym sometimes cries in class.

Put yourself in Maksym's shoes. How do you feel? What could be the cause of your emotional state? Think how you can help Maksym. What actions can you take? Who can you talk to about this situation?

Task for the exercise. Formulate an "I-message" to talk to Maksym.

A list of questions for self-study

1. Analysis of strategies for the development of emotional intelligence to improve self-organization and overcome stress.

2. Justification of the importance of emotional intelligence for building strong and happy relationships in various spheres of life.

3. Study of the impact of emotional intelligence on leadership qualities and teamwork.

4. Development of evidence-based practical recommendations for the development of emotional intelligence to improve self-organization in personal and professional life.

5. Comparison and assessment of different models of emotional intelligence (for example, the Bar-On model, the Goleman model) and practical application of these models in relationship management.

Topic 5. Effective communication, networking and active listening

In today's world, where human relationships play an increasingly important role, effective communication, networking and active listening are becoming key skills for success in any field. These skills allow us to build strong relationships with people, build trust and cooperation, and achieve our goals.

Effective communication is not just the ability to clearly and succinctly express one's thoughts. It is a complex process that is based on a deep understanding of oneself and other people, as well as on the possession of a range of professional skills. Key components of effective communication are emotional intelligence, clarity, active listening, adaptability.

Networking is a social and professional activity aimed at solving difficult life tasks as quickly and efficiently as possible with the help of a circle of friends and acquaintances who work or have connections in one or another field. It is built on trust and long-term relationships with people, as well as mutual assistance. The idea is based on the theory of six handshakes, according to which there is a chain of acquaintances between any two inhabitants of the planet. On average, six people.

Active listening is the highest and most effective level of listening, as well as a special communication technique for achieving successful communication. The technique of active listening has verbal and non-verbal techniques. Non-verbal methods of active listening include: gestures and facial expressions, with the help of which the listener confirms that he hears and understands his interlocutor; eye contact with the interlocutor, but you should not look very intently, because it can be taken quite hostile; an open posture, that is, you should not cross your arms when communicating or make sudden movements. Verbal methods of active listening include: the tactic of asking "open questions" in order to obtain more information and show sincere interest in the interlocutor.

Training exercises

Exercise 1. Active listening.

Goal. Learning to listen carefully to the interlocutor and understand his emotions.

Doing the exercise.

One participant talks about a situation that caused his emotions. Another participant listens carefully without interrupting. After the first participant finishes, the second participant repeats his words, emphasizing the emotions.

Task for the exercise. The first participant gives feedback on how accurately the second participant understood his emotions.

Exercise 2. I-message.

Goal. Learning to talk about your emotions without accusations and complaints.

Task. Describe a situation that caused you emotions. Say how you feel using the phrase "I feel...".

Doing the exercise.

Explain why you feel this emotion. Say what you want to change.

A list of questions for self-study

1. Use of new technologies for communication.
2. The influence of culture on communication.
3. The role of empathy in communication.
4. What are the benefits of active listening in personal and business relationships?
5. What ethical principles should be followed when networking?

Topic 6. Leadership and teamwork

In the dynamic and complex environment of today's world, where challenges multiply and opportunities expand, the role of leadership and teamwork becomes increasingly important. Leadership goes beyond the simple possession of power, becoming the art of motivating, inspiring and

leading others towards a common goal. Teamwork, in turn, evolves from ordinary collaboration to the synergy that occurs when people with different skills and experiences join forces to achieve better results.

Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence both the environment and another individual, directing efforts to achieve a goal. A leader is not just a set of certain qualities and special features of a person, it is a certain way of life. The phenomenon of leadership by its nature is connected, first of all, with the regulation of interpersonal relations, which have an informal nature, so leadership is the bearer of functions and a means of regulating official (formal) relations within the framework of a social organization. Teamwork is a powerful tool for effective achievement of the organization's goals and the implementation of tasks set within it, as well as a tool for the personal and professional growth of each employee who is a member of this team.

Most often, researchers distinguish four types of teams:

- 1) work teams that solve current problems of the team;
- 2) project teams and development teams working on long-term educational projects;
- 3) parallel teams, which are temporary and concentrate on recommendations for solving certain problems;
- 4) management teams that unite all heads of the educational institution or the organization.

Training exercises

Exercise 1. A pyramid of people.

Goal. Development of teamwork, trust and cooperation skills.

How it works. The team must build a pyramid of people without using any supports. The team must work together to support each other and build the pyramid.

Exercise 2. Situational leadership exercise: treasure hunt.

Goal. Development of leadership skills, motivation, teamwork and decision-making.

Case. You are the captain of a pirate ship looking for a treasure map. You know that the map is hidden on the island, but you will have to overcome many obstacles to find it.

Tasks.

1. Form a team. Choose 4 crew members to help you in your treasure hunt.
2. Motivate the team. Inspire your people to hunt for treasure and rally them around a common goal.
3. Planning. Develop a treasure hunt plan based on available resources, time, and risks.
4. Decision making. Make the right choices during your treasure hunt to overcome all the obstacles.
5. Collaboration. Bring your team together to solve problems and achieve success together.

Evaluation. After completing the exercise, students evaluate the leader's actions according to the following criteria:

1. Leadership. Were you able to motivate and rally your team?
2. Planning. Was your treasure hunt plan effective?
3. Decision making. Did you make the right choices during your treasure hunt?
4. Collaboration. Have you brought your team together for a common goal?

Additional questions.

1. What difficulties did you experience when doing the exercise?
2. What did you learn from this situation?
3. How can you use this experience in your work?

A list of questions for self-study

1. Study and analysis of communication barriers in the team (unclear formulation of tasks, lack of feedback, cultural differences).
2. Theoretical justification and empirical study of synergy in teamwork, when the result of joint efforts exceeds the sum of individual contributions.
3. Determination of the optimal leadership style for different types of teams and tasks, based on scientific research.
4. The role of trust, responsibility and emotional intelligence in teamwork.
5. Using digital tools and platforms to support teamwork.

Evaluation criteria

Preparation and defense of a report in the form of an essay is a mandatory component of receiving a passing grade from the training course

"Soft Skills". In the process of defending the reports, they are discussed in the group and the students answer the questions of the teacher and other students.

Students prepare a report based on the results of the training course. The report should contain all intermediate tasks completed during the training course. Requirements for submitting practical results of the training course:

- presentation of up to 10 minutes using visual materials;
- answer to the question about participation in the training course;
- participation in the discussion of performance results by other participants.

Based on the results of completing the tasks of the training course, the applicants form a final report. Requirements for drawing up a report:

- 1) the volume should be up to 12 printed pages;
- 2) the report must contain the contents and completed tasks of the training;
- 3) the report must contain a description of completed tasks and obtained results;
- 4) it should contain meaningful summaries of acquired skills and competences.

Evaluation of each report in the form of an essay is carried out by responsible teachers-trainers according to the report data and protection results.

The final grade for the training course is determined by summing the points for the current and final control.

During the training course, the following control measures are used.

Current control: competence-oriented practical tasks (30 points), written control work (20 points), current laboratory works according to the topics (24 points), report in the form of an essay (26 points).

The maximum score based on the results of the comprehensive training is 100 points, the minimum passing score is 60.

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НАВЧАЛЬНЕ ВИДАННЯ

**Методичні рекомендації
до тренінг-курсу "Soft Skills"
для здобувачів вищої освіти
спеціальності 073 "Менеджмент"
освітньої програми "Логістика"
першого (бакалаврського) рівня
(англ. мовою)**

Самостійне електронне текстове мережеве видання

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