



LinkedIn says "adaptability" is a key soft skill

The fourth soft skill identified by LinkedIn as being important to companies in 2019 is adaptability. List the word "adaptable" on your résumé as one of your personal skills, and, often, the résumé will receive more attention than if this word is absent.

What does it mean to be adaptable in the workplace? Adaptability at work means you are able to adjust to new or different situations. If, for example, your supervisor is replaced by someone whose work style is different, you adapt to the person quickly and without complaining.

Flexibility is another word for adaptability. Flexible employees are more valuable to a company because they aren't stuck in their ways—holding on to old procedures instead of trying something new. Flexible employees can be compared to athletes who are able to play different positions on a sports team and, therefore, are more valuable to the team.

- *Be ready to bend.* This is another way of saying, "Don't be rigid." Show you can change if you are out of step with your coworkers or boss.
- *Accept surprises.* Some surprises at work are not good ones, but they must be dealt with anyway. Recognizing this basic truth will help you prepare for unpleasant surprises that are out of your control.
- *Manage yourself.* Those you work with will form an opinion of your adaptability. Many problems are not caused by other people or events, but by your response to a problem or situation. If you become emotional, you will be seen as unable to handle stress. Remain poised, calm, and ready to tackle whatever comes your way.

Action: Augie is a Microsoft Windows specialist for a firm that employs 35 people. On any day, he may receive urgent emails from five coworkers who want help immediately. He also has many routine tasks he must handle. Getting these urgent requests for assistance makes Augie nervous and agitated. He wants to throw up his hands, and he blames the coworkers for being "technologically illiterate". "They need to leave me alone when I'm busy," he fumes. What recommendations do you have for Augie?

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Note to instructors: Stephen Hawking, widely respected as one of the world's most brilliant minds, was quoted as saying before his death, "Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change." Today's organizations look for hires who can be agile, nimble, and able to view change as an opportunity, not a threat..